

**FACTORS INFLUENCING THE DECISION TO HIRE AN EVENT
MANAGEMENT COMPANY - A CASE STUDY OF
THE WEDDING PLANNING INDUSTRY
IN BANGKOK**



SUKANYA YANTABUTR

**A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE GRADUATE SCHOOL
STAMFORD INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY
MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION
ACADEMIC YEAR 2016**

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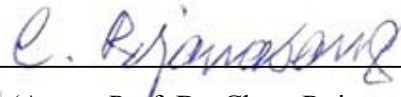
**The Research has been approved by
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Title: Factors influencing the decision to hire an event management company – A case study of the wedding planning industry in Bangkok

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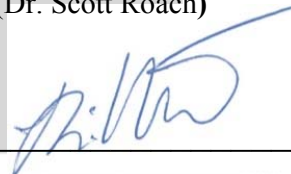
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ABSTRACT

The objectives of this study were (1) to determine what factors influenced the decision to hire an Event Management Company, and (2) whether the decision making process differed amongst single, engaged and married persons.

Research Methodology: The sample consisted of 315 respondents from 4 central business districts in Bangkok, obtained by convenience sampling. The research instruments employed were structured questions through a questionnaire, and in depth interviews. The data collected was analysed through the usage of data analysis software.

Research Findings: The findings of this research showed that the factors analysed affected the decision making process in hiring an Event Management Company, and that a difference existed between each group of respondents when comparing the decision making process. Single people had the lowest intention to hire an Event Management Company for their wedding.

Keywords: Event Management, Decision Making, Supplier Selection

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Events can nowadays be found everywhere. However, the first mention of the birth of the events industry in literature happened not so long ago, by Wood in 1982 (cited in Bowdin et al., 2006). Over the years, there have been numerous attempts at explaining and defining events. One of the most commonly accepted definition of an event is an organised occasion composing of different yet related functions, which was defined by the Accepted Practices Exchange (APEX) Industry Glossary of terms (Convention Industry Council, 2011). Professor Getz, a distinguished author and Foundation Director of the Australian Centre for Event Management, and often described as one of the pioneers of the development of the event industry, defines an event as being unique and has a blend of management, programme, setting and people (Getz, 2005). According to Bowdin et al., (2006), events can be categorised as a scale according to the event's size and impact.

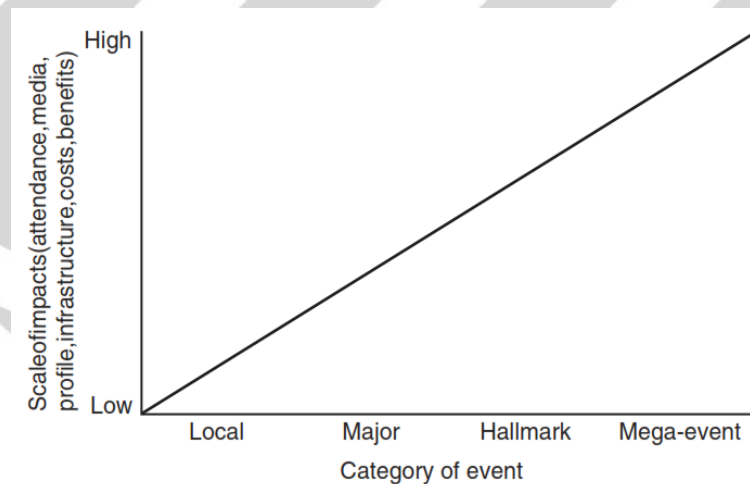


Figure 1.1 Categorisation of events

Source: Bowdin et al., 2006

One segment of the events industry is the MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conventions and Exhibitions) segment, which is one of the largest growing segments (Evans, 2015). Participants in the MICE sector are business travellers, who travel and

attend events on behalf of their company. Globally, authorities have been setup in order to help promote and assist in organising MICE, and CVBs (Convention and Visitor Bureaus) have been setup in cities to help promote and improve the industry. In Thailand, focus and attention has been shifted towards the MICE industry, with various organisations and associations such as the Thailand Convention and Exhibition Bureau (TCEB) being established in order to help improve and market Thailand as a hub for the MICE industry in South East Asia.

According to the Department of Business Development (2015), there are 2,553 actively registered Meeting and Exhibition Companies and Partnerships in Thailand. A simple Google search on specific event management and wedding organiser keywords yielded over 100,000 results per search (Appendix 1: Google Search Keyword results).

Marriage is a universal phenomenon. For women, the day they ‘tie the knot’ or get married is often considered to be one of the most important days of their life. According to the National Statistical Office of Thailand (2014), 295,519 marriages were officially registered across Thailand in 2013.

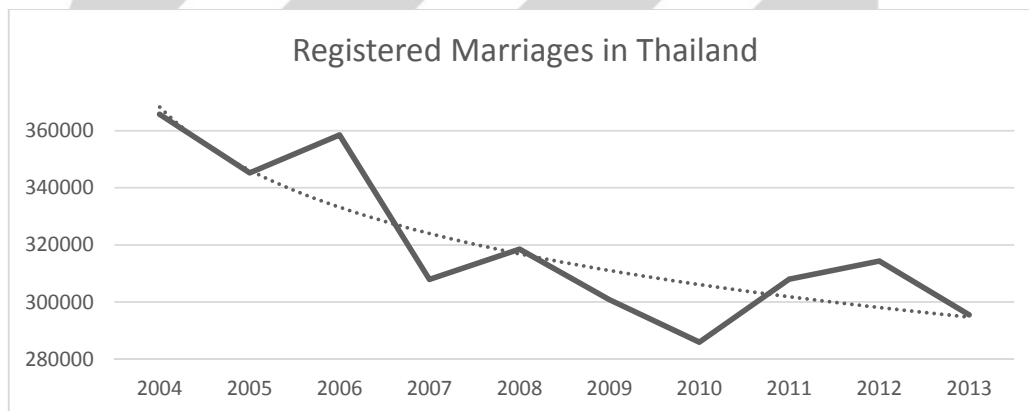


Figure 1.2 A graph showing number of marriages in Thailand, 2004 – 2013

Source: Adapted from National Statistical Office of Thailand, 2014: Online

In today’s society, couples are marrying later on in life. According to the United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2013), the mean age for marriage in Thailand has increased from 22.0 in 1970 to 24.1 in 2000 for

women, and 24.7 in 1970 to 27.4 in 2000 for men. The increase in age at marriage is often due to the fact that men and women in particular are now more likely to attend university, then focus on their careers and personal success prior to committing themselves into a relationship which furthers into a marriage (Cahn and Carbone, 2011). Furthermore, others wait longer to marry due to the fact that they have yet to find the right person, are not yet financially stable or are not ready to settle down (Luscombe, 2014).

In the United States, an estimated 2.17 million weddings were organised in 2015, with an average spend of US\$26,645, totalling to US\$57.89 billion (The Wedding Report, Inc., 2016). Of that, 2.1 million couples decided to hire the services of a Professional Wedding Consultant, spending US\$1.82 billion (Appendix 2).



Figure 1.3 Types of Professional Wedding Consultant Services used

Source: The Wedding Report, 2016: Online

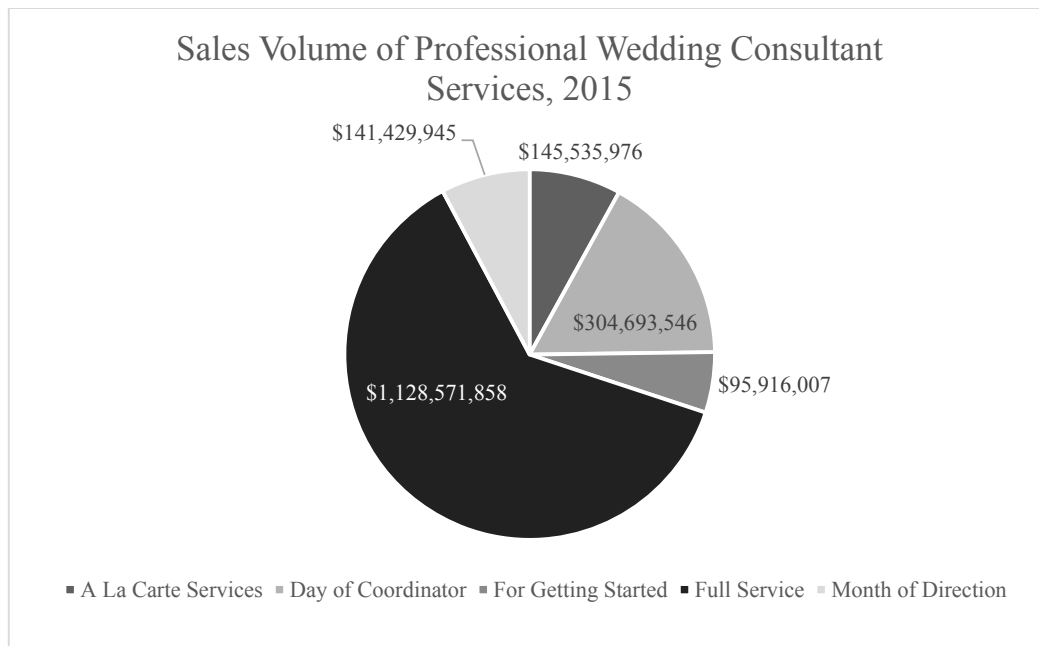


Figure 1.4 Sales Volume of Professional Wedding Consultant Services

Source: The Wedding Report, 2016: Online

The wedding and honeymoon market in Thailand is worth approximately 30 billion baht annually (Tourism Authority of Thailand, 2015). One niche segment within the weddings industry in Thailand are Indian weddings, which are usually an extremely large affair lasting a few days, and up to over a week. There has been a rise in business in Thailand with many Indian families, particularly millionaires and billionaires, coming to Thailand to organise their weddings and are spending up to 100 million baht for the extravagant affair (Wongsamuth, 2016). In 2012, the Indian wedding market in Thailand alone was estimated to be valued at 550 million baht per year (Roamer, 2012). In 2016, an estimated 400 Indian weddings are to be organised in Thailand, with an average spend of 10 million baht (e-NewsWire, 2016). With the increasing popularity of Indian weddings in Thailand, a new association, the Thai Indian Wedding Association (TIWA) was set up in 2015, in order to “promote, protect and preserve” (Thai Indian Wedding Association, 2015) the wedding industry for Indian weddings in Thailand, as well as to encourage the growth in this niche market.

1.1 Problem Statement

The author has determined one main issue that has been explored in this paper:

Why do a large number of people choose to hire an external Event Management Company to organise an event for them?

1.2 Objectives

The objectives of this study is to explore the factors influencing whether to hire an Event Management Company with a case of Wedding Planner in Thailand. The study will look into how different groups of demographics behave and their intention to hire.

1.3 Significance of the study

The results of this study will add to the limited amount of research previously conducted within the events industry, with a focus on events in Thailand as well as the wedding industry in Thailand, as the amount of research based on events and weddings in Thailand is extremely limited at the moment. Secondly, it will benefit other event management companies and prospective event management companies, as the study will attempt to determine what makes people and corporations choose to hire one Event Management Company over other competitors in the field. Lastly, this will help companies and individuals within the industry to further improve themselves and make themselves more attractive towards future clients.

1.4 Scope and Limitation of the Study

1.4.1 Scope

The research looked into why people decide to hire an Event Management Company, and what are the motives and reasoning behind their selections. The research focused on a population sample, where men and women were surveyed in the central business districts of Bangkok, across four different districts. The four districts which were used to gather data are Bangrak, Pathumwan, Sathorn and Wattana. Two versions of the survey was be available, in Thai and English, in order to increase the viability of people completing the survey. Due to the limited scope of the study, the questionnaire and results comparison focused on one segment of the Events industry, since there are numerous segments within the Events industry. The segment which this research

focused on is the weddings segment, thus single, engaged and married people were all surveyed, as they are all subject to different views and reasoning behind their decisions.

1.4.2 Limitations

Time was one of the major constraints in order to complete the survey in full, which was why a random population sample was selected in the four main business districts, in order to increase the chances of obtaining the largest population sample.

In conducting a quantitative study, validity and reliability was a cause of concern, as survey participants are not always fully willing to partake in the survey, or may have a limited time in order to complete the survey, and thus could eventually make up some of the answers rather than properly completing the survey in full and with total honesty.

Due to the limited amount of literature and theory available on the decision to hire in the events industry, the independent variables have had to come from various perspectives.

1.5 Research Questions

Research Question 1: Why do people hire an Event Management Company?

Research Question 2: Is there any difference in the intention to hire an Event Management Company amongst single, engaged and married people?

1.6 Research Hypothesis

- H1: A person's purchase decision factors will have a positive relationship towards the intention to hire an Event Management Company
- H2: Sociocultural factors have a positive relationship towards the intention to hire an Event Management Company
- H3: Word of mouth has a positive relationship towards the intention to hire an Event Management Company
- H4: Belongingness and love needs will have a positive relationship towards the intention to hire an Event Management Company
- H5: Esteem needs have a positive relationship towards the intention to hire an Event Management Company
- H6: Conspicuous consumption has a positive relationship towards the intention to hire an Event Management Company
- H7: There is a difference in intention to hire an Event Management Company among single, engaged and married persons

1.7 Definition of Terms

Event is a temporary public gathering of people for a certain purpose (Bladen et al., 2012; Sustainable Event Alliance, n.d.)

Event Management is the coordination and organisation of the activities required that has to be completed in order to successfully achieve the objectives of the event (Bladen et al., 2012)

Event Management Company is an individual or group of professionals organising events on behalf of their clients on a contractual basis (Bowdin et al., 2006).

Event Manager is a trained specialist who is able to plan, organise and deliver events (Brosekhan and Velayutham, 2008)

Business Events are events with a business and trade focus, and includes conferences, exhibitions, incentive travel, and corporate events (Bowdin et al., 2006).

MICE is Meetings, Incentives, Conventions and Exhibitions (Lau C. , 2009)

Special Event is an infrequently occurring event or a one-time event (Bowdin et al., 2006)

Marriage is defined by “a contractual arrangement, with rules determined by church or state” according to Friedberg and Stern (2003).

Wedding Ceremony is “a set of formal acts, often fixed and traditional, performed on important social or religious occasions” (Cambridge University Press, n.d.).

Wedding Reception, according to Callaway (2016), is a welcome to friends and family who attended the wedding, and is seen as the couple receiving the community for the first time as newlyweds.

Professional Wedding Consultant is an experienced person who has a career organizing weddings.

Hi-Society (Hi-So) is a birthright, someone born into a surname with tradition and a certain upbringing (Crook, 2007).

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter presents an overview on works which have previously been researched, providing the necessary background for the purposes of this research. The literature review concentrates on a number of topics surrounding marketing and the events industry. For a better understanding on how people decide whether to hire an Event Organiser or not, a review of literature is required. Three different perspectives have been reviewed, which are consumer behaviour perspectives, psychological perspective, and consumption society. Furthermore, a review on past literature related to the events industry supplier selection process was also conducted in order to gain an insight as to what knowledge has already been shared within the academic world.

2.1 Consumer Behaviour Perspective

In order to understand how decisions are made when organising weddings, it is important to look at the theories surrounding consumer behaviour, which looks at the underlying motivation behind a customer's purchase intentions (Funk, 2008; Noel, 2009). Consumer buying behaviour, which is different to organisational buying behaviour, focuses on purchases which are made for personal consumption (Sari, 2011; Fill and McKee, 2011; Kotler and Keller, 2012; Rani, 2014). Consumer behaviour also looks into what a customer needs and or wants and ends with how they become satisfied with what they have received, purchased or not purchased (Khan, 2008). Factors of the internal and external environment and influences are both important in determining a consumer's behaviour (Hawkins et al., 2006; Sakpichaisakul, 2012).

2.1.1 Purchase Decision Factors

When making decisions, there are four factors which are the underlying factors which help influence a consumer in making their purchase decisions. These four factors are psychological factors, personal factors, cultural factors and social factors (Rani, 2014; Brosekhan and Velayutham, 2008; Perreau, n.d.).

2.1.1.1 Psychological Factors

There are four main psychological factors which can influence consumer behaviour, which are motivation, perception, learning and belief and attitude (Perreau,

n.d.; Mott, n.d.). The two main factors which will be discussed are motivation and perception, as these two factors affect consumer behaviour within the events industry. Motivation, which is extremely hard to measure due to the fact that it works in the subconscious mind, is one of the main psychological factors which determines one's purchasing behaviour.

A person's perception depends entirely on their past experience and beliefs, and thus each person will have a different perception. When choosing products, buyers will either have a selective attention, where they focus on a particular stimulus; selective retention, where they have certain information that they remember from somewhere; or selective distortion, where something is interpreted differently based on their past experience (Perreau, n.d.).

2.1.1.2 Personal Factors

Factors such as a person's age, lifestyle, personality and personal income (Perreau, n.d.) all play a large part in influencing how one decides to choose or purchase a product. Age plays a large part in influencing a purchase decision as one's maturity affects the thought process of how to decide what, when, how, where, and why to purchase an item or service. Lifestyle also affects how one chooses to purchase product, such as a couple who are into hiking or the outdoors will be more likely to choose a rustic or ecological theme to their wedding. Personal income, which affects how much purchasing power one has, is one key vital part in determining what and how someone can purchase an item or service. For personally funded events, such as weddings, purchasing power plays an extremely important role in decision making, due to the impact it will have on the simplicity of the event and how much funding is required.

2.1.1.3 Social Factors

There are external social factors which can influence a person's decision, of which the two main groups are social groups, and family. The main group of these two is family, who play an extremely large part in influencing the buyer, which in the case of a wedding is the couple, with the bride being influenced more than the groom. Family plays an extremely large part in influencing other family members, however the

strongest influence lies between parents and their children (Mahalihali , 2006; Gross, 2000; Brady, 1950).

2.1.1.4 Cultural Factors

One's upbringing plays a large part in the way they think and act, and their culture or subculture that they identify themselves to belong in will also play a large determinant when making purchasing decisions. Within the wedding industry, culture plays an extremely important part in the deciding factor as to how a wedding is arranged, which parties are involved and how they are influenced by those around them. Western cultures are more likely to be individualistic, putting themselves, their thoughts, wants and needs ahead of others, whereas couples who grew up in the eastern parts of the world are more family orientated and pay more attention to what their families and those around them want, feel and like (Smith et al., 2013; Minkov, 2011; Hofstede, 1984).

Society nowadays often pays too much attention to those around them, instead of thinking about their own needs and wants. This is partly due to the social classes which is more often highly defined, and one's desire to be what one cannot be. Social media has played a large part the definition of the social class and the differentiation between social classes. Lower and middle class tend to want to be like what they see from the upper class through social media, or want to have what the upper class have. Social class plays an important role in events, and upper class tend to organise and attend more events, such as cotillions.

In the wedding industry, the trendsetters are the high society upper class and celebrities, who are able to arrange their weddings with the crème de la crème of the industry, sparing no expenses on any little detail. For Thai celebrity Araya (Chompoo) Hargate, who recently got married to high society bachelor Visrut Rangsrisinghpiat, spared no expenses at their fairytale wedding in May 2015. Rangsrisinghpiat provided Hargate's family with 108 million baht in dowry, spent over 10 million baht on the bride's three custom made couture wedding gowns, over five million baht on floral decorations, and close to a million baht on custom made chinaware for their luncheon (Thairath, 2015). After the wedding was dubbed as the 'Wedding of the Year' in

Thailand, many Wedding Consultancies began coming up with similar smaller scale fairytale themed decoration ideas and cheaper selections for couples who wanted a similar themed wedding but were unable to pay for the high costs associated with it (Rainforest (Thailand) Ltd., 2016).

To conduct this study, influential factors was the main field of study under consumer behavior, due to the fact that the author believes it to be the most relevant topic for Thailand owing to the country's societal nature. Furthermore, word of mouth can also be a topic of research due to its nature of being directly related to the social factors in decision making.

2.1.2 Word of Mouth

Word of mouth, which is also known as consumer to consumer interaction (Pavlou and Yadav, 2014; Yadav et al., 2013) is the interaction between two or more parties, who discuss a product or service. Word of mouth is considered to be one of the most influential types of marketing (Reynolds and Beatty, 1999; Kotler, 1999; Katz and Lazarsfeld, 1955), partly due to the fact that they are opinions that are directly expressed to them as a recommendation from a trusted source (Bughin et al., 2010). Between twenty and fifty per cent of all purchasing decisions occur after having heard about a product or service thru word of mouth (Onghai, 2012).

Two of the most common word of mouth methods that we see around are experiential word of mouth, and intentional word of mouth. Experiential word of mouth, which happens most often, occurs after a direct experience has been received with a product or service. However, this normally only happens when bad products or services have been received, and thus it is extremely hard to receive positive word of mouth from experiential word of mouth. Thus, when a positive word of mouth happens this way, it is extremely important, and especially in the events industry, it can be extremely helpful in receiving new clients due to the nature of the business where past experience is often looked at. The second type of word of mouth is intentional word of mouth, where celebrity endorsement is used in order to promote a product.

2.1.3 Engel, Kollat and Blackwell Model

When a consumer decides to purchase a product or service, they have a process that they go through, either in their heads or as a planned process. Engel, Blackwell and Kollat (1968), determined that a consumer will go through five different processes in order to make their decision. As described in Figure 2.1 below, firstly, they recognise that they have a need, then they begin the process of information search, followed by an evaluation of alternatives. They then make the purchase decision and a post purchase evaluation of their behaviour can be assessed. Based on these five processes, the Engel, Kollat and Blackwell Model was built, which is still widely used nowadays when studying consumer behaviour.



Figure 2.1 The Engel, Kollat and Blackwell Model

Source: Adapted from Engel, Blackwell and Kollat (1968)

2.1.4 Andreasen Model

The Andreasen Model (Andreasen, 1965), which focuses on the importance of information for the consumer during the decision making process as well as the consumer's attitude (Prasad and Jha, 2014), is another well known consumer behaviour model used amongst marketers and is considered to be one of the first consumer behaviour models. This model, however, does not consider repeat purchases, and thus can be limited in the way it is used due to the fact that marketers are required to focus on repeat customers as well as repeat customers are extremely profitable, and are more likely to spend more each time they purchase from the same place (McEachern, 2015; Baveja et al., n.d.). Nevertheless, Andreasen's Model, as shown in Figure 2.2, can be used within the events industry, as some types of events, such as weddings, do not have

repeat purchases, and thus this model can very well be used in order to determine a person's decision making process and attitude during a purchase decision.

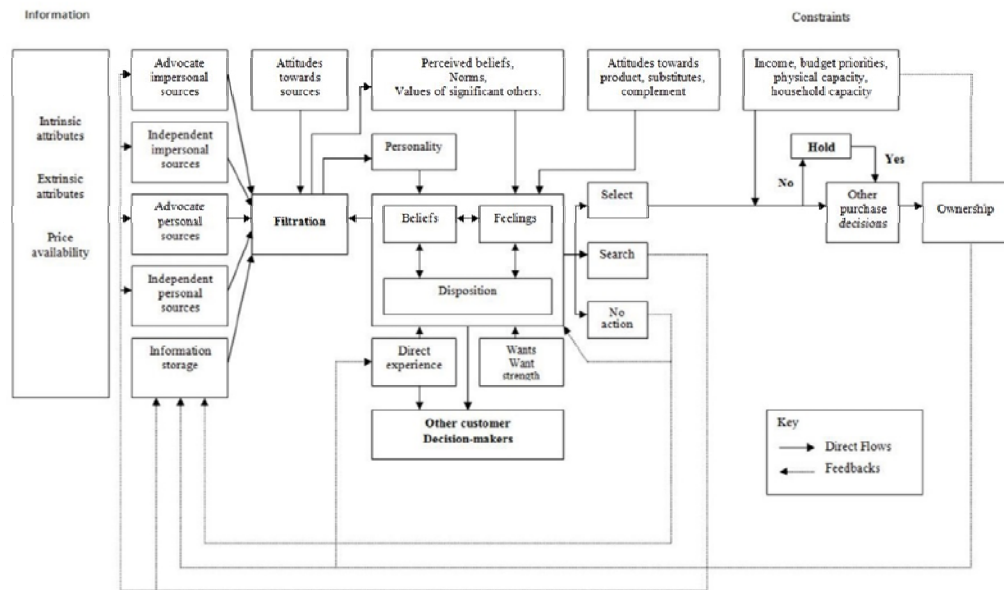


Figure 2.2 The Andreasen Model

Source: Andreasen, 1965

2.1.5 Nicosia Model

The Nicosia Model of Consumer Decision Process (Nicosia, 1966) is a model which focuses primarily on a consumer's buying decision for a new product. This model looks at how a company communicates with its customers as well as the customers tendency to act a in a certain way (Prasad and Jha, 2014). There are four different sectors to this model, classified as fields, starting from from Field 1 onto Field 4.

According to Figure 2.3, Field 1 looks at how the company handles communication with its customers, and the customers tendency to act a certain way once it receives the message from the company. Field 2 is the search and evaluation process of the customer, where attitude is the main influencer for the customer. Field 3, where a decision is to be made and an act of purchase is to occur, a customer's motivation is the main sector to explore as to why the action has occurred. Field 4, the

final field, looks at the feedback from the customer's purchase, the purchasing behaviour, and the experience from the product they have received.

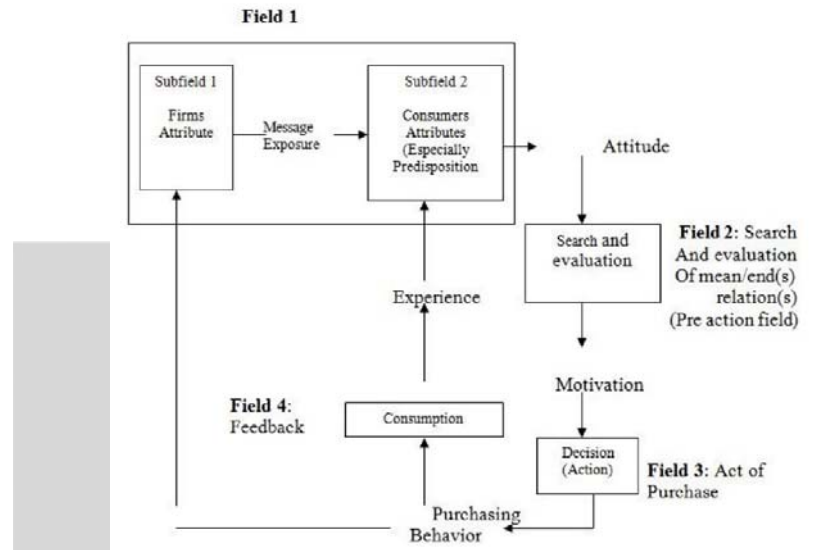


Figure 2.3 The Nicosia Model

Source: Nicosia, 1966

Within the Events industry, parts of the Nicosia model can be used in order to determine why a customer decides on choosing a company, especially if it is a new event they are organising, such as a wedding or a new cultural event that a town would like to organise in order to boost tourism.

2.2 Psychological Perspective

From a psychological perspective, how one feels, thinks, reason and selects all influences intentions to purchase. The environment from which a person is in is also a main component in determining purchase intentions. This is due to the fact that everyone does something for a reason, based on motivations, needs, wants and gut feeling.

2.2.1 Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs as a theory which is based on human motivations and needs. This theory looks at how one's strive for happiness and satisfaction inspires one to put in the effort to improve in life (Poduska, 1992). Maslow's theory is based on the concept of a mountain, where one starts climbing from the base at the very bottom,

and continuing up further towards the top. However, some people will stop at a certain height if they are unable to continue up to a higher level.

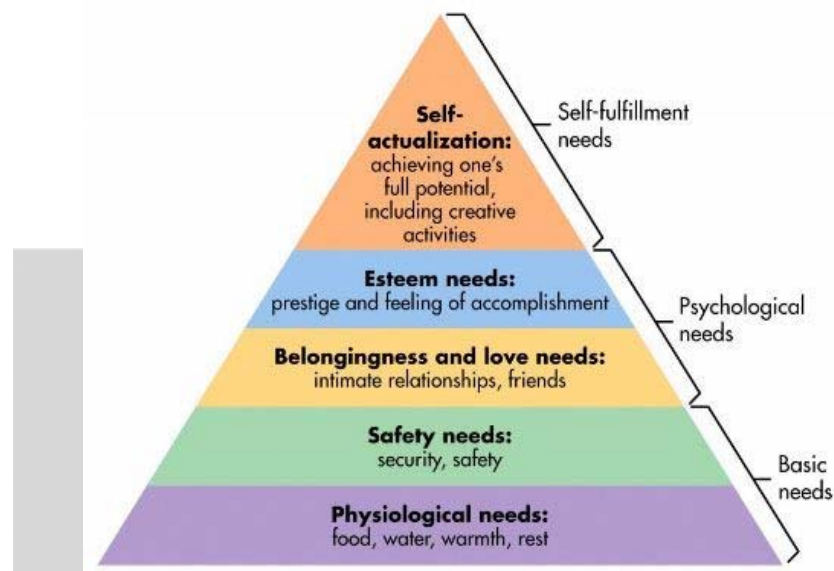


Figure 2.4 Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Source: McLeod, 2016: online

As shown in Figure 2.4, the first level, physiological needs, sees the basic needs of life being fulfilled. This includes having food, water, warmth and rest as a staple part of life. If these are not fulfilled, then one is unable to move up to the next level of needs. However, if they are all fulfilled, then one is able to move up to the next level, which is safety needs, where one needs to feel safe and secure in life, as well as having stability. Once the two basic needs are gratified, one can move up the mountain to the next base, which is belongingness and love needs.

This is the first of two psychological needs, where the importance of relationships comes in, including intimate relationships as well as friendships. One of the greatest ways in which to fulfil this need is to have friends, a sweetheart, a wife or husband, or relations with a group and feeling a part of the group or of a team (Maslow, 1943).

The fourth level of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs is Esteem, where prestige and feelings of accomplishment comes in. By having a feeling of accomplishment and satisfaction, "feelings of self-confidence, worth, strength, capability and adequacy of

being useful and necessary in the world” are obtained (Maslow, 1943). The final level in the hierarchy is self-actualisation, where the importance is to achieve one’s full potential. Self-actualisation looks at the desire for self-fulfilment, and reaching one’s full potential (Sze, 2015). However, only approximately 2% of the population are able to achieve self-actualisation (Shift, n.d.).

According to Bladen et al. (2012), the need for family ties and social relationships is one of the main motivating factors behind events, which are characterised by rituals and symbols which all have meanings in themselves. Getz (1991) also suggested that by attending events and festivals, it was a way in which people were able to satisfy their social-psychological needs. For a wedding, there are different aspects which can fulfil different levels of Maslow’s Hierarchy.

According to Gadoua (2008), survival needs can easily be fulfilled by having the mutual agreement to marry one another, safety needs are fulfilled by feeling safe with one another during the wedding and further into the marriage, love needs includes kindness, companionship and compassion between the couple, but also with family and friends who are invited to the wedding. Furthermore, weddings, which consists of costumes, vast arrays of food and drinks, speeches from family members and close friends, and people’s behavior within the festivities, all denote the meaning of a social culture and belongingness (Bladen et al., 2012).

Esteem needs can be fulfilled by the prestige and accomplishment from having organised a successful wedding celebration, and the feeling of having achieved success from having organised the wedding. Two levels of needs which have been reviewed in greater detail are belongingness and love needs, and esteem needs, due to the fact that they are easily relatable in weddings.

2.2.1.1 Belongingness and Love Needs

Human beings all desire, in one way or another, to belong in a group, to have friends, family, loved ones. Numerous different types of groups exist that one can be a part of, whether it be school friends, groups from clubs, groups and friendships arising from the workplace, religious groups and social groups. Villa et al. (1992) noted that there are many ways in which to foster belongingness, for example in the workplace

with work uniforms or subsidized apartment buildings. Similar to this example by Villa et al. (1992), belongingness is also encouraged in weddings. Bridesmaids are often provided the same dress or same style to show that they too are part of a group attached to the bride.

Wedding themes set by the bridal couple is also another way in which the couple provides the guests with a style to follow suit as to be an easily recognizable part of the wedding cluster. One other way in which a sense of belonging is highly visible in a wedding is through brand identity. For example, if a bride is wearing a Vera Wang gown or Christian Louboutin shoes, or had their makeup done by a famous professional artist, they would want that to be known to the wedding guests and may bring it up in conversations during the wedding planning phase or even at the wedding itself when being complemented. This is due to the fact that purchases made are often due to one's desire to associate with a brand identity, and "to become, in essence, a member of the community of owners of that brand" (Marsh et al., 2007).

2.2.1.2 Esteem Needs

Based on Maslow's theory and according to Fiest (1985), there are two different types of esteem needs, which are feelings of worth and confidence, and reputation. Feelings of worth and self-confidence is how one determines their own self-worth and confidence. Hall and Lindzey (1985) describes this to be ones requirements for strength, mastery, competency, self-assurance as well as independence.

Reputation looks at a person's perception of their own prestige and recognition that one receives in the eyes of society. Reputation plays an important role for marriages, especially in Thailand, due to the hierarchical society of the country's history. Families tend to take wedding ceremonies and receptions fairly seriously, being prepared to spend a lot of money in order to have the wedding look good and expensive, as to prove their social status and the reputation they hold in the society. The dowry in Thailand is a prime example of how reputation is shown at a wedding, as it is a way for the groom's family to show how much the bride is worth in their eyes.

2.2.2 Push Factor

Another theory which is related to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs is push factors. Push factors are part of a socio-psychological need of a person to do something (March and Woodside, 2005; Crompton, 1979), can easily be linked to one's desire for prestige and social interaction, linking to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (Mohammad and Som, 2010; Maslow, 1943). Furthermore, according to Jang et al. (2009), "push factors are internal to the person and establish the desire" for what one needs and wants. According to Kim et al. (2003), push factors can be considered as motivational factors which have arisen due to a tension caused in the motivational system.

Crompton (1979) identified seven different push motives, being escape, self-exploration, relaxation, prestige, regression, kinship enhancement, and social interaction. Following from Crompton's research, subsequent research has been conducted, including customer motivation in the hospitality industry (Jang and Cai, 2002) and a study conducted across four countries (Yuan and McDonald, 1990).

Numerous research has been conducted on push and pull factors in tourism, including tourists' decision making behaviour (Klenosky, 2002; Dann, 1977) and visitor satisfaction (Mohamed and Othman, 2010). According to Mohammad and Som (2010), fulfilling prestige is a push factor when people are motivated in order to pursue prestige and increase their social status. This group of people are willing to visit a place in order to impress friends and family, and often visit places that friends and family have previously visited.

A number of research in the events industry has also been conducted regarding motivation and push and pull factors. Woo et al. (2011) studied motivation across different festivals, and found that motivation between each festival was different, where rock events found a low motivation score and also scored low on family togetherness. Alghamdi (2014) studied visitor motivation in a segmented manner and separated the visitors by demographics. The study showed that Saudi people were motivated by cultural knowledge in order to visit festivals. Although quite a number of research has been conducted on events and festivals, little research has been conducted on push and pull factors within the wedding industry, with one main paper having been written

regarding push and pull factors on customer motivation for choosing wedding banquet venues (Guan, 2014).

2.3 Perspective based on Conspicuous Consumption

People attempt to impress others in order to gain a higher social status, and later on maintain the higher social status that they have gained. In order to achieve the higher social status, they tend to purchase expensive items or branded items in order to display their wealth and income, instead of purchasing goods in order to cover their real needs, just to show off their newly earned status. Weddings are similar in the fact that it is an opportunity for the bridal couple to show off their status, to boast about how much they can afford to spend on their wedding day alone, and to show to the world that they can have it all; corresponding to Veblen's critique of the leisure class to showcase the superiority of the host based on his Theory of the Leisure Class (Veblen, 1899), in this case, the bridal couple and their parents.

One of the most standard ways in explaining Veblen's theory of the leisure class, which is based on conspicuous consumption is that it is based on an "act of buying many things... not necessary to one's life, done in a way that makes people notice the buyer's having bought the merchandise" (Longman American Dictionary, 2008). Duesenberry (1949) and Shukla (2008) also looked into the psychological factors of conspicuous consumption, as well as the levels and degrees of spending. Moreover, Page (1992) also studied how conspicuous consumption focused on the "ostentatious display of wealth for the purpose of acquiring or maintaining status or prestige". Furthermore, Trigg (2001) also expands this definition by discussing the theory based on people's behaviour and idleness, spending great amounts of time and money on practicing leisure activities, and spending vast sums of money in order to consume luxury goods and services.

Veblen's theory on how the leisure class displays spending leisurely time before the public is their way of advertising their own superiority through conspicuous consumption (Heilbroner, 1999). McCracken (1987) also talks about the importance of conspicuous consumption due to its important role in the growth of the consumer society. Similarly, an explanation of conspicuous consumption by Weber (2011) is the

consumption of certain types of goods used to signal one's wealth status and in turn gain the esteem of others.

Traditionally in Thailand, weddings were not about the extravaganza at all. Marriage, guided by Thai law, only required a couple to register their marriage as a formality. However, couples who could afford the expenses would add a ceremony and reception to the registration, as a symbol of consumerism (Jampaklay and Lucktong, 2015). In order to understand the basis of where conspicuous consumption comes from in Thailand, it is important to understand the history of Thai society and the different classes that are used to associate with people.

According to Hays (2014), "hierarchy is based on age, occupation, wealth and residence". The hierarchical structure in Thailand is traced back to the established families since the days of the Chakri dynasty, where the family you came from, or the surname you used was what set your social status. However, according to Naphalai Areesorn, Editor in Chief at Thailand Tatler (quoted in Hays, 2014), since there has been new money in the late 1990's and early 2000's, the elaborate social structure which used to exist since the Chakri dynasty has changed quite a bit, with new hi-so's standing out due to the newly earned fortune or political network they have formed, which they want to show off with ostentatiousness.

Especially with weddings in Thailand, where sometimes the main showing off is done by the parents of the bride and groom, the competition lies upon who can have the most guests at a wedding, who can have the best location, who can have the most well-known VIP guests at the reception, or even who can have the biggest dowry. According to Nicks (2008), affluent families would expect well over \$20,000 from the groom's family, and celebrities much higher than that, such as when high society heir to the Fairtex Empire, Prem Busarakhamwong, proposed to singer Amita (Tata) Young, his family offered hers 100 million baht in dowry.

Other celebrities and high society personalities also had extremely large dowries, such as Porntip (Pui) Nakhirunkanok, who married American real estate magnate Herbert Simon, received a dowry of over 500 million baht; Bongkoch (Tak) Khongmalai's family received a dowry of around 250 million baht from businessman

Boonchai Bencharongkul; and celebrity Woranuch (Noon) Wongsawan, who married Pithi (Todd) Bhirompakdee, heir to the Singha kingdom, received over 100 million baht in dowry at their 5,000 guest wedding (Sanook, 2014). Basing this on Veblen's theory, the public displays of economic power, in this case, how much is being spent on the wedding, is the means of attaining and maintaining a social status (Veblen, 1899).

Table 2.1 High Profile Weddings

Year	Bride	Groom	Dowry
2012	Pornthip Skidjai	Natthawut Skidjai	5 million
2012	Panward Hemmanee	Capt. Nithi Boonyarattanaklin	10 million
2012	Taksaorn Paksukcharoen	Songkran Techanarong	50 million
2007	Amita Young	Prem Busarakhamwong	100 million
2010	Woranuch Wongsawan	Pithi Bhirompakdee	100 million
2012	Bongkoch Khongmalai	Boonchai Bencharongkul	250 million
2002	Porntip Nakhirunkanok	Herbert Simon	500 million

Source: Adapted from Sanook, 2014: Online

A conspicuous consumption society can also be linked to Maslow's theory on esteem needs, as the two theories are both based on reputation, worth and value, prestige and recognition, which further explains the psychological mechanics of how a consumer society lives and works.

This study also applied theoretical perspectives on consumer behaviour, psychological factors and psychological factors. The first theory which was analysed, Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, saw two different sections being focused on, belongingness and love, and self-esteem. The second theory, Veblen's Theory of the Leisure Class focused on the concept of conspicuous consumption. The following part looks at past studies related to event supplier selections.

2.4 Past Studies Related to Intention to Hire

When planning any event, the event owner, or the one in charge of planning the entire event, normally has many different things to deal with, such as numerous suppliers, venues, caterers and staff to name a few. Planning an event is like a project,

with many variables and components that have to be put together within a certain time frame, and in a certain budget.

Crouch and Richie (1998), one of the most widely cited authors, looked at factors which influenced conference sites, and conducted a review of 64 studies. The main factors which were looked were accessibility, local support, extra-conference opportunities, accommodation facilities, meeting facilities, information, site environment, and other criteria. Crouch and Louviere (2004) looked at convention site selection in Australia, by conducting research based on participant proximity, airfares, accommodation, transport time, weather, cost, food, entertainment, assistance, exhibition space and facilities.

Chen (2006) conducted a review of convention site selection in Taiwan, and researched five main factors, being meeting and accommodation facilities, costs, site environment, local support, and extra conference opportunities. DiPietro et al. (2008) conducted research on association members based on accessibility, extra conference activities, accommodation, image, reputation, safety, cost, and value for money. Hayat (2011) reviewed destination selection for Orlando, Florida (USA) for three different meeting planner types, being associations, corporate and third party. The research looked into a number of destination attributes and attributes that affected future bookings. Huo's (2014) research was focused on 6 Asian convention cities, looking at 6 main attributes in site selection, being meeting facilities, site environment, accommodation facilities, costs, local support, and extra-conference opportunities.

Weddings are the same, except for the fact that weddings are generally a once in a lifetime event, and as such, brides don't have any experience in organising any aspect of the wedding. While there is little research that has been previously completed on weddings as a whole event, some research can be found on wedding reception site selection.

Lau and Hui (2010) looked at attributes which influenced the selection of banquet venues in Hong Kong. Callan and Hoyes (2000) studied the larger context of banquets in the United Kingdom, looking at what attributes were important when selecting their venue. Daniels et al. (2012) examined the importance of 40 attributes of

newlyweds living in Washington, D.C. regarding the venue that they had chosen for their wedding reception. Guan (2014) investigated the different push and pull factors of couples in selecting wedding banquet venues in Chongqing, China. Farzana and Ilayaraja (2015) studied factors which couples used to make decisions on wedding services at a hotel in Trichy, India.

Apart from the above mentioned research conducted on wedding reception site selection, only three English research pieces has been found related to weddings in Thailand. The first, by Napompech (2014) studied factors affecting venue selection amongst Thai couples in Bangkok. The second research also by Napompech (2014a) focused on attributes influencing the selection of a wedding studio for pre-wedding photography. The third piece of research related to weddings in Thailand is a qualitative study by Pongsiri (2014) which reviewed the traditions of weddings in Thailand and the economic study of the competitiveness of the wedding industry in Thailand.

The below table summarises the research conducted relating to the events, conventions, meetings and wedding venue selection which assisted in the development of the current study.

Table 2.2 Site Selection Attributes (Conventions & Conferences)

Author	Facility Researched	Selection Attributes
Crouch and Richie (1998)	Site Selection	Accessibility, local support, extra- conference opportunities, accommodation facilities, meeting facilities, information, site environment, other criteria
Crouch and Louviere (2004)	Site Selection	Participant proximity, airfares, accommodation, transport time, weather, cost, food, entertainment, assistance, exhibition space and facilities
Chen (2006)	Site Selection	Meeting and accommodation facilities, costs, site environment, local support, extra conference opportunities
DiPietro, Breiter, Rompf and Godlewska (2008)	Destination Selection	Accessibility, extra conference activities, accommodation, image, reputation, safety, cost, value for money
Hayat (2011)	Destination Selection	Destination attributes, future booking attributes
Huo (2014)	Site Selection	Meeting facilities, site environment, accommodation facilities, costs, local support, extra-conference opportunities

Table 2.3 Site Selection Attributes (Weddings)

Author	Facility Researched	Selection Attributes
Callan and Hoyes (2000)	Stately Homes	Availability, location, accessibility, facilities, cleanliness, decoration, accommodation, services, price
Lau and Hui (2010)	Hotel & Chinese Restaurant	Staffing, service, cleanliness, quality of food and beverage, price, design, decoration, first impressions
Daniels, Lee and Cohen (2012)	Reception Venues	Rental costs, location, staffing, communication, facilities, capacity, equipment, food and beverage, reputation
Guan (2014)	Banquet Venue	Facilities, food quality, availability, decoration, price, social status, external satisfaction, indulgence, perceived image
Napompech (2014)	Banquet Venue	Service, quality, facilities, atmosphere, price, accessibility, vacancy, popularity, accommodation, external opinions and influences, word of mouth
Napompech (2014)	Photography Studio	Number of services provided, recommendations, expenses

From the research conducted, it can be seen that there is a gap in the research regarding specifics as to why couples decide to hire an Event Management Company, thus two research questions have been raised in order to answer the author's curiosity regarding this matter.

2.5 Conceptual Framework

2.5.1 Independent Variables

There are a number of factors which make up the independent variables for this research, which can be broken down into two main sections, which are consumption behaviours, and psychological behaviours. Three main factors from consumption

behaviour will be focused upon for this research, being purchase decision factors, sociocultural factors, and word of mouth. Three factors from psychological behaviours will be focused upon, from two different theories which are belongingness and love needs, esteem needs, and conspicuous consumption.

2.5.2 Dependent Variable

The sole dependent variable within the framework for this research is the decision to hire an event organiser. The intention of this variable is to see whether people would acquire external help or not in organising an event. Due to the large scope of the events industry, the author has chosen to focus towards weddings, which is an event that a large number of people go through in their lifetime.

2.5.3 Conceptual Framework Model

Independent Variables

Dependent Variables

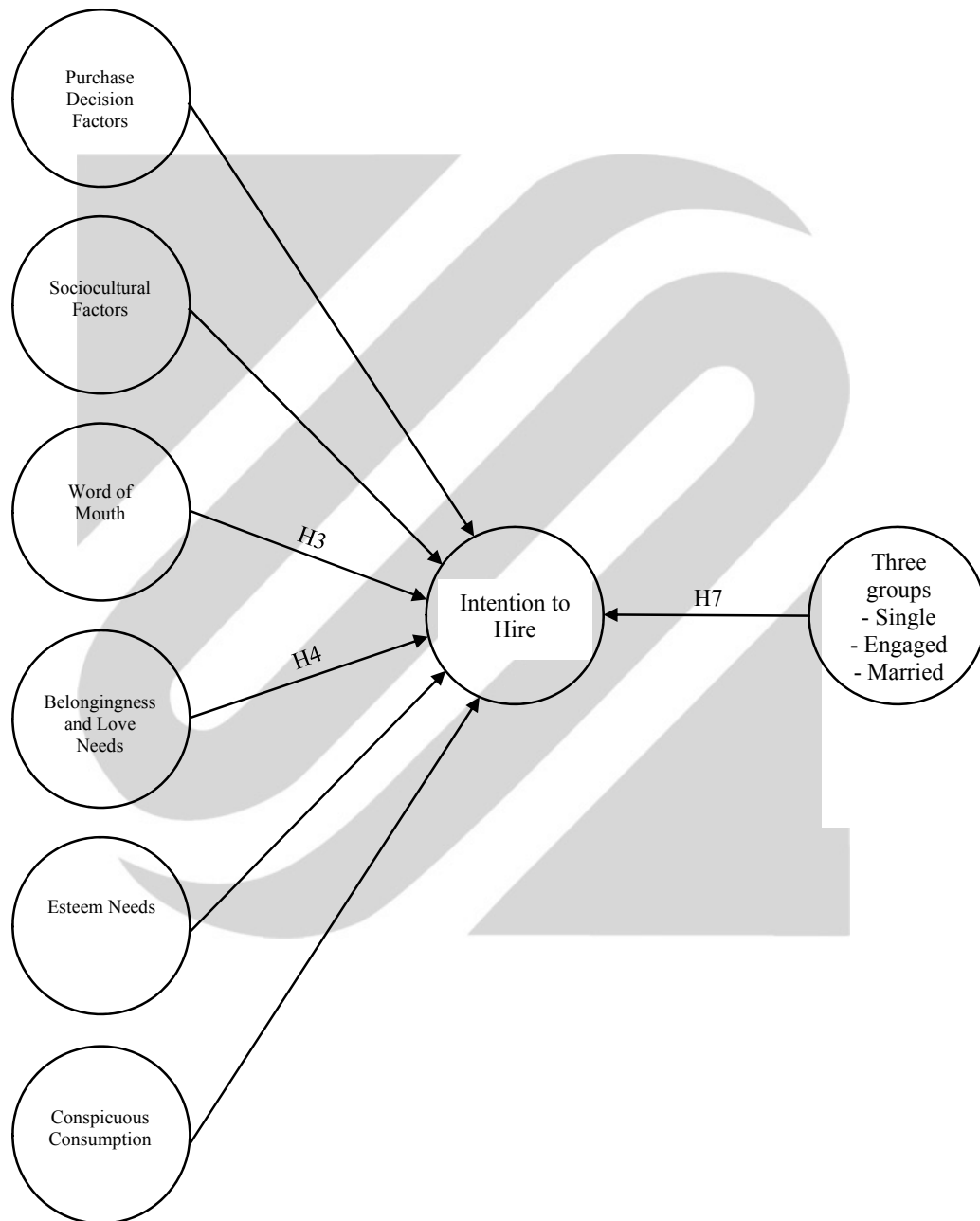


Figure 2.5 Conceptual Framework

2.6 Research Hypothesis

- H1: A person's purchase decision factors will have a positive relationship towards the intention to hire an Event Management Company
- H2: Sociocultural factors have a positive relationship towards the intention to hire an Event Management Company
- H3: Word of mouth has a positive relationship towards the intention to hire an Event Management Company
- H4: Belongingness and love needs will have a positive relationship towards the intention to hire an Event Management Company
- H5: Esteem needs have a positive relationship towards the intention to hire an Event Management Company
- H6: Conspicuous consumption has a positive relationship towards the intention to hire an Event Management Company
- H7: There is a difference in intention to hire an Event Management Company among single, engaged and married persons

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

From the requirements of the research questions, the author determined that a mixed quantitative and qualitative study was to be conducted as it is exploratory in nature (Patton, 2002) and thus seek to generate inductive rather than deductive approaches. The methodology looked into the population and sample size which is required, the research design, the data collecting procedure, as well as the data analysis process.

3.1 Research Design & Methodology

A mixture of qualitative and quantitative methodology was used in order to complete the survey, with text based data and numerical data being formed as the answer to the questions. Quantitative questions were used in the questionnaire in order to obtain data which is more easily expressed and compared. Furthermore, quantitative style questions assisted the author in obtaining data which can objectively measure reality and subjected to statistical treatment, in order to support the hypotheses previously made (Williams, 2007).

Leedy and Ormrod (2001) explained that there are three different classifications of quantitative research, which are descriptive, experimental, and causal comparative. Descriptive research assists the author to identify a situation in its current state, whereas experimental research seeks to investigate a treatment of an intervention into a study group, and measure what the outcomes of said treatment are. Causal comparative research, on the other hand, is used to examine the relationship between independent and dependent variables, which for this research, is the method which was used. After completing the quantitative research, qualitative research was conducted to support the quantitative research.

Qualitative data is produced through focus group discussions with the respondents (Curry et al., 2009). Interviews, at the basic level, are considered to be conversations with a goal to understand the subject's point of view (Kvale, 1996). Gill et al. (2008) believes that by using interviews to conduct research, it assists the author to "explore the views, experiences, beliefs and/or motivations of individuals on specific

matters". Individual interviews, which provide great detail and depth compared to standard surveys (Clifford, n.d.), have been used in order to obtain insight into the interviewee's decision making process. According to Sewell (n.d.), conducting qualitative interviews are useful for evaluating and exploring individual differences between experience and outcome.

According to Gall et al. (2003), there are three different formats of interview design, which are (a) informal conversational interview; (b) general interview guide approach; and (c) standardised open ended interview. The informal conversational interview relies on spontaneity, and relies on the interaction between the interviewer and the interviewee in order to guide the process (McNamara, 2008). The lack of structure of this type of interview is similar to an off the top of your head type interview, where maximum flexibility is encouraged (Turner, 2010).

However, at the same time, the lack of structure can also cause inconsistencies throughout the interview process as well. The general interview guide approach has slightly more structure than the informal conversational interview, however is still flexible enough to allow for follow up or probing questions which follow the structured initial questions (Turner, 2010). McNamara (2008) also adds that this type of interview design allows more focus on the interview questions, but adaptability is still available to obtain information from the interviewee.

The third type of interview design, the standardised open ended interview, has the most structure out of the three types of interview design, where each interviewee is asked the exact same question each time, however the questions are written to provide the interviewee to answer with open ended answers (Gall et al., 2003). According to Creswell (2007), however, allowing interviewees to answer with open ended answers may cause issues with coding the results, as the answers tend to be rich in qualitative data.

3.2 Sampling Design

3.2.1 Target Population

The target population of this research is varied in order to obtain a wide field of respondents based in four main central business districts in Bangkok. Using the non-

probability sampling method, a non-random population sample was classified into three different segments, being single men and women, engaged men and women, and married men and women. As the quality of responses is more important than the quantity of respondents, the author has attempted to spend as much time with each respondent as possible, instead of trying to gather a large number of respondents.

3.2.2 Sampling Method

A non-random sampling method was used in order to select the respondents to participate in the survey. Convenience sampling, which uses arbitrarily selected respondents (Skowronek and Duerr, 2009), was conducted due to lack of resources. To improve the results of the sampling, diversity was used in order to add strength to the sample. Furthermore, in order to reduce the amount of bias which may occur, a control and assessment of the representativeness of the sample has also been conducted. A larger sample has also been used in order to assist in controlling the uncertainty. It should still be noted, however, that by using convenience sampling, there is no evidence that the sample group is a true representation of the population (Trochim, 2006).

3.2.3 Sample Size

In qualitative research, it is difficult to determine how big of a sample size is required, and the question can be answered differently by different people. According to Edwards and Holland (2013), qualitative interviews focus on the increased level of flexibility and lack of structure. Gobo (2004) views that probability samples in qualitative research are very rarely achievable. Wolcott (cited in Baker and Edwards, n.d.) finds that the sample size depends on resources available, the importance of the question to the research as a whole, as well as the satisfaction of the committee members. For Bryman (cited in Baker and Edwards, n.d.), the sample size is not determined, however research is required “until saturation is achieved”. He also understands that by doing this, sampling, data collection and analysis has to be combined, rather than being completed as a stage by stage linear process.

Furthermore, this also causes a problem when proposing the research to a committee, as normally, a definite number is required from the beginning. Mason (cited in Baker and Edwards, n.d.) advises that it is more important to “consider whether a greater or fewer number of interviews would produce the desired outcome”. Similarly,

Jensen Bryman (cited in Baker and Edwards, n.d.) realised that the quality of the analysis was more important than quantity. Thus, a definite number has been used for the quantitative section, and to further achieve quality in the questions, an additional stage of focus group was conducted in order to achieve more in depth answers.

Based on the thorough literature review conducted, data was collected by conducting a survey with respondents, using a mixture of qualitative and quantitative questions. Non-random sampling was used due to the lack of time available in order to survey the entire population.

As there is an infinite population, a measurement of proportion (Kumar, 2010) was used to estimate the sample size. The formula used in order to calculate the sample (Black, 2012) is:

$$N = \frac{Z^2 pq}{e^2}$$

A 90% confidence level was used, corresponding to a Z Score of 1.96. The 90% confidence level was chosen due to the fact that extreme accuracy was not required as is in clinical studies (Simon, 1986), and 90% confidence level is acceptable in social sciences and census research (U.S. Census Bureau, 2013). A standard deviation score of 0.5 was used in order to ensure a conservative sample size is obtained (Kumar, 2010). A 5% margin of error was allowed in the sampling. Using the above formulae and the provided information, the sample size is determined. The results of this is a minimum of 270.6 persons were to be interviewed, however, as the author would like to segment the sample group, a total sample size of at least 300 was required, allowing for 100 people as the sample size per group of single, engaged and married people.

3.3 Data Collecting Tools and Procedures

The process of data collection occurred between the months of November and December 2016, around four different business districts of Bangkok. The locations chosen reflected high foot traffic locations, in order to obtain a high variety of population in order to complete the random sampling. The focus group occurred in January, at a quiet location in Bangkok to be determined at a later stage.

The questionnaire which was filled out by respondents, with the guidance of the author, included an information section at the top with an ethical consent form, to provide detail about what the research is about, why the respondent has been asked to participate, what taking part in the study involves, benefits and risks involved, promises of confidentiality, and rights to withdrawal.

The bilingual questionnaires in English and Thai have been developed using past research as samples, and have been checked by a Ph.D. professor in the field to ensure the efficiency and efficacy of the questionnaire. A variety of answer formats were used, including the five point Likert scale and multiple choice.

The questionnaire (Appendix 4) has been divided into three sections, as follows:

- Section 1: Demographics based questions, close ended, multiple choice
- Section 2: Questions based on independent variables and dependent variables, close ended, Likert scale
- Section 3: General consumption behaviour questions, close ended, multiple choice

In order to measure each of the independent variables, a number of questions have been produced for respondents to answer based on a Likert Scale. Questions based on influential factors measures a respondent's personality and purchasing power. To measure sociocultural factors, questions surrounding cultural upbringing and influencers were asked. Questions related to word of mouth looks at recommendations. Psychological perspectives has questions related to belongingness and love and questions based on esteem. In order to measure conspicuous consumption, respondents have been asked to answer questions based on their indulgence for luxury.

The focus groups focused on qualitative open ended questions (Appendix 5) which allows the author to obtain more in depth answers from the questionnaires.

3.4 Data Analysis Method

To analyse the collected data, the author used the Statistical Program for Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 24 in order to assist in conducting the analysis. Two different analyses were conducted in order to answer the two research questions. To answer the first research question and hypotheses 1 thru 6, the Pearson's r coefficient, also known as the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient analysis was used to see whether

there is a relationship between each independent variable with the dependent variable. Pearson's r coefficient evaluates the linear relationship between two values (Hall, 2015). According to White and Korotayev (2004), the results of Pearson's r coefficient is a number between -1 and 1, where a result close to 1 signifies a strong positive correlation, or a strong association between the two variables being measured. A result close to -1 signifies a strong negative correlation, where there is a strong negative association between the two variables being measured. A result close to 0 signifies that there is little or no correlation, or no association between the two variables being measured.

Table 3.1 Correlation Values

Values	Correlation
-1.00	Perfect negative correlation
-0.80 – -0.99	Very strong negative correlation
-0.60 – -0.79	Strong negative correlation
-0.40 – -0.59	Moderate negative correlation
-0.20 – -0.39	Weak negative correlation
-0.01 – -0.19	Very weak negative correlation
0.00	No correlation
0.01 – 0.19	Very weak positive correlation
0.20 – 0.39	Weak positive correlation
0.40 – 0.59	Moderate positive correlation
0.60 – 0.79	Strong positive correlation
0.80 – 0.99	Very strong positive correlation
1.00	Perfect positive correlation

Source: Adapted from White and Korotayev, 2004

Secondly, to answer the second research question and hypothesis 7, analysis of variance (ANOVA) will be used to test the difference between the three groups on their intention to hire an Event Management Company. ANOVA was selected as the method of data analysis as it tests the differences between two or more means (Lane, n.d.). This is due to the fact that the author wanted to test whether there are any differences between the three groups of single, engaged and married people as to their decision to hire an Event Management Company.

3.5 Validity and Reliability

In order to ensure the validity and reliability of the research, a pilot study has been produced and sent to 10% of the sample size, or 6 random respondents as a trial run. Furthermore, obtaining advice and approval from academicians in completing the questionnaire was also another way of obtaining final approval for the survey prior to releasing it for completion by the population sample.

3.5.1 Reliability Analysis

Reliability analysis was conducted on Likert Scale questions, to determine whether the scales used consistently reflects the construct being measured. Cronbach's alpha was used to establish the internal consistency reliability.

Table 3.2 Reliability Scores

α value	Reliability Scoring
$\alpha > 0.9$	Excellent scales
$0.7 < \alpha < 0.9$	Good scales
$0.6 < \alpha < 0.7$	Acceptable scales
$0.5 < \alpha < 0.6$	Poor scales
$\alpha < 0.5$	Unacceptable scales

Source: Adapted from Bhatnagar et al, 2014; George and Mallery, 2003; Kline, 2000

Nunnally (1978) has indicated that an alpha score of 0.7 and above is considered to be an acceptable reliability coefficient. However, numerous research has allowed for α -scores of over 0.5 to be acceptable. White et al. (2012) indicated that the α -score of 0.5 was considered to be a fair reliability and was acceptable. Furthermore, Hinton et al. (2004) also allow α -scores of above 0.5, stating that α -scores of between 0.5 and 0.7 were considered to show moderate reliability.

The alpha scores for the different subsections are shown in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3 Summary of Alpha Scores

Subsection	α-score	Number of Items
Purchase Decisions	0.687	5
Sociocultural	0.577	7
Word of Mouth	0.827	5
Belongingness & Love	0.804	5
Esteem	0.813	5
Conspicuous Consumption	0.862	5
Intention To Hire	0.852	4

Based on Cronbach's alpha, it can be seen that the most reliable subsection of the Likert Scale questions was Conspicuous Consumption, scoring the highest α -score (n=0.862) followed by Intention to Hire (n=0.852). The lowest α -score was sociocultural factors (n=0.577) signifying that the statements are not closely related to one another enough.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH FINDINGS

This chapter presents findings from an analysis of consumer demographic data and their intentions of hiring an Event Management Company when planning their wedding. Quantitative data collection occurred between 1st November 2016 and 15th December 2016 in Bangkok, Thailand. In total, 315 respondents completed the structured survey questionnaire. In addition, qualitative data was also collected via in depth interviews of single, engaged and married persons in Bangkok during the same period. Linear regression analysis and findings of people's intentions of hiring an Event Management Company are presented as follows:

4.1 Demographics Analysis

4.2 Inferential Analysis

4.3 Hypotheses Significance Summary

4.4 Qualitative Analysis

4.1 Demographics Analysis

Personal data collected from the questionnaires were analysed and presented in the following tables. Responses were analysed as a group, and also separated by marital status.

Table 4.1 Personal Data classified by Marital Status

Marital Status	Frequency	Percentage
Single	60	19.05
Engaged	91	28.89
Married	164	52.06
Total	315	100

Findings revealed that the majority of respondents were married (52.06%) followed by engaged (28.89%). The mode of this variable is married. It means that most respondents were married.

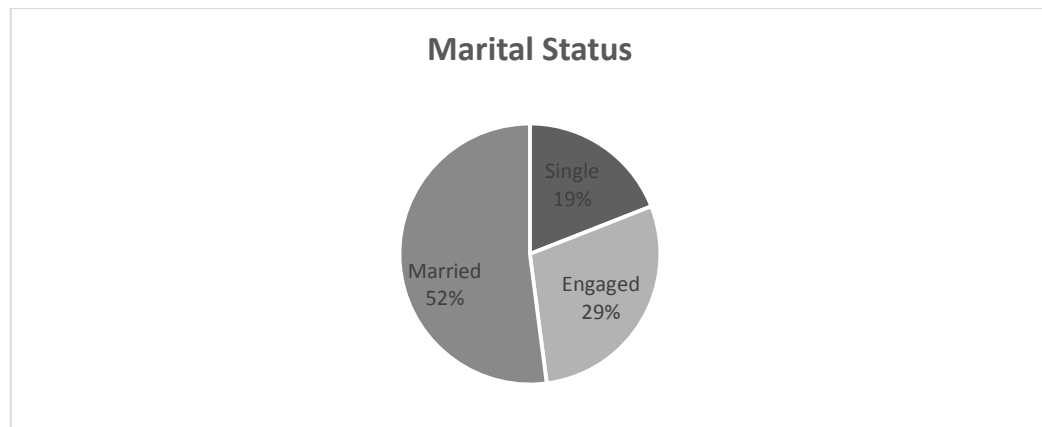


Figure 4.1 Personal Data classified by Marital Status

Table 4.2 Personal Data classified by Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Female	173	54.92
Male	142	45.08
Total	315	100

Findings revealed that the majority of respondents were female (54.92%) followed by male (45.08%).

Table 4.3 Personal Data classified by Age Group

Age Group	Frequency	Percentage
25 and below	36	11.43
26 – 35	202	64.13
36 – 45	54	17.14
46 and above	23	7.30
Total	315	100

Findings revealed that the majority of respondents were aged between 26 and 35 (64.13%), with the largest breakdown being the 26 to 25 age group of married men and women (29.20%), followed by engaged men and women in the same age group (22.86%).

Table 4.4 Personal Data classified by Monthly Personal Income

Monthly Personal Income	Frequency	Percentage
Less than 30,000	108	34.29
30,000-60,000	117	37.14
60,001-90,000	37	11.75
90,001-120,000	23	7.30
120,001 and above	30	9.52
Total	315	100

Findings revealed that the majority of respondents earned between 30,000 and 60,000 Thai Baht per month (37.14%), followed by earnings of less than 30,000 baht per month (34.29%).

Table 4.5 Personal Data classified by Monthly Household Income

Monthly Household Income	Frequency	Percentage
Less than 60,000	51	16.19
60,001-90,000	49	15.56
90,001-120,000	66	20.95
120,001-150,000	26	8.25
150,000 and above	123	39.05
Total	315	100

In contrast to the monthly personal income of respondents, the results of monthly household income was much higher than the personal income. The majority of respondents had a monthly household income of 150,000 baht and over (39.05%).

Table 4.6 Personal Data classified by Well Off Status

Well Off Status	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	133	42.22
No	182	57.78
Total	135	100

The majority of respondents came back saying that they were not from a well off family (57.78%)

Table 4.7 Personal Data classified by Nationality

Nationality	Frequency	Percentage
Thai	263	83.49
Non-Thai	52	16.51
Total	315	100

The majority of respondents of the questionnaire were Thai (83.49%).

Table 4.8 Personal Data classified by Religion

Religion	Frequency	Percentage
Buddhist	263	83.49
Christian	27	8.57
Islam	2	0.63
Other	23	7.30
Total	315	100

The most common religion of respondents was Buddhist (83.49%), followed by Christian (8.57%). Buddhism is the majority religion in Thailand. Respondents who answered Other (7.30%) were mainly Atheists, and did not believe in any religion.

Table 4.9 Personal Data classified by Education

Education	Frequency	Percentage
High School	0	0
Vocational	14	4.44
Bachelor's Degree	160	50.79
Master's Degree and Above	141	44.76
Total	315	100

The majority of respondents hold a Bachelor's Degree (50.79%), followed by a Master's Degree or above (44.76%). No respondents in the questionnaire had ended their studies at High School level.

Table 4.10 Personal Data classified by Occupation

Occupation	Frequency	Percentage
Student	14	4.44
Business Owner	56	17.78
Employee	154	48.89
State Employee	22	6.98
Housewife	44	13.97
Unemployed	8	2.54
Other	17	5.40
Total	315	100

The majority of respondents are employees in private companies (48.89%) which corresponds to the location where the questionnaires were handed out, around four central business districts of Bangkok. The second most popular occupation was business owners (17.78%).

Table 4.11 Personal Data classified by the area of their upbringing

Upbringing	Frequency	Percentage
Rural	61	19.37
Suburban	95	30.16
Urban	159	50.48
Total	315	100

Over half of the respondents grew up in an urban setting (50.48%) followed by suburban towns (30.16%).

Table 4.12 Marriage Age

Marriage Age	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard Deviation
	31	17	48	30.23	3.705

A total of 305 respondents provided an answer to this question, with the remaining 10 respondents clarifying their answer as never having been married, or never planning on getting married. Of the 305 respondents, the youngest marriage age

was aged 17 and the oldest marriage age was 48 (see Appendix 6). The range of marriage age was 31 years, with a mean of 30.23 years. The standard deviation was 3.705, clarifying that the distribution is fairly narrow to the mean, and 68.26% of the responses to this question lies between ages 26.53 and 33.94.

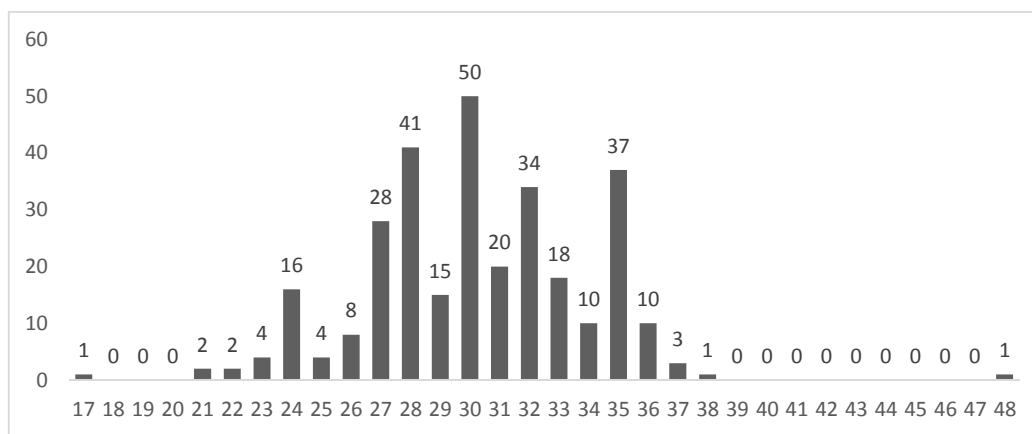


Figure 4.2 Marriage Age

Table 4.13 Marriage Age by Status

Marriage Age	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard Deviation
Married	19	17	36	29.73	3.68
Engaged	25	23	48	30.47	3.98
Single	11	27	38	31.44	2.92

Additional analysis was also conducted to separate the data into three groups according to marital status. Married respondents had the youngest marriage age at 17, whilst engaged respondents had the oldest age a respondent was going to get married at 48. The largest range of 25 was for engaged respondents, whilst the narrowest range was for single respondents, with a gap of 11 years. The mean age for each group of respondents were fairly similar, with the youngest mean marriage age at 29.73 for respondents who are already married, and single respondents had estimated the oldest mean marriage age at 31.44. The modal marriage age for married respondents was 28 years old (n=27). The modal age for when engaged respondents were planning on getting married was 30 and 35 years (n=14). The modal age for when single respondents

wanted to get married was 30 years (n=10). The smallest standard deviation was for single respondents at 2.92 followed by married respondents and engaged respondents at 3.68 and 3.98 respectively.

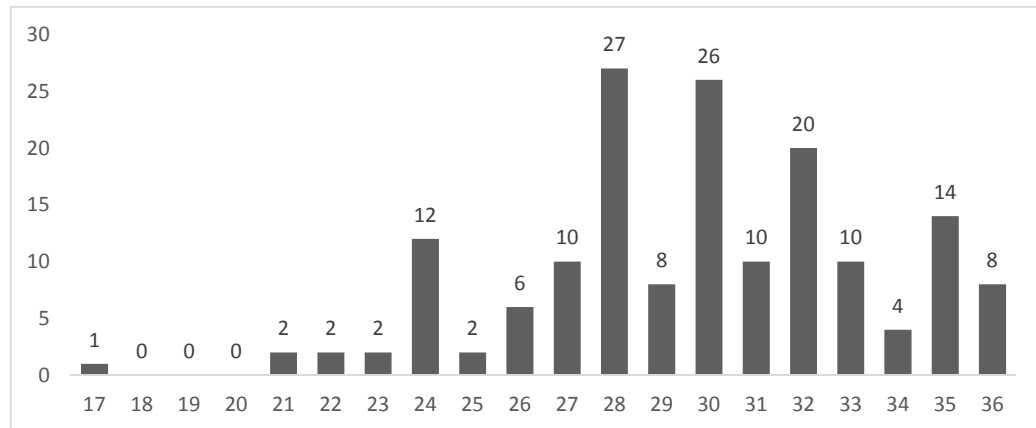


Figure 4.3 Married respondents marriage age

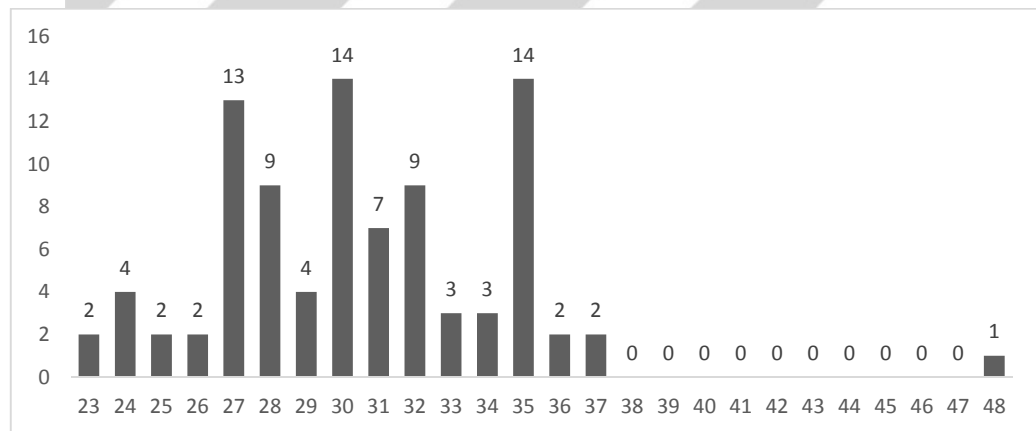


Figure 4.4 Engaged respondents expected marriage age

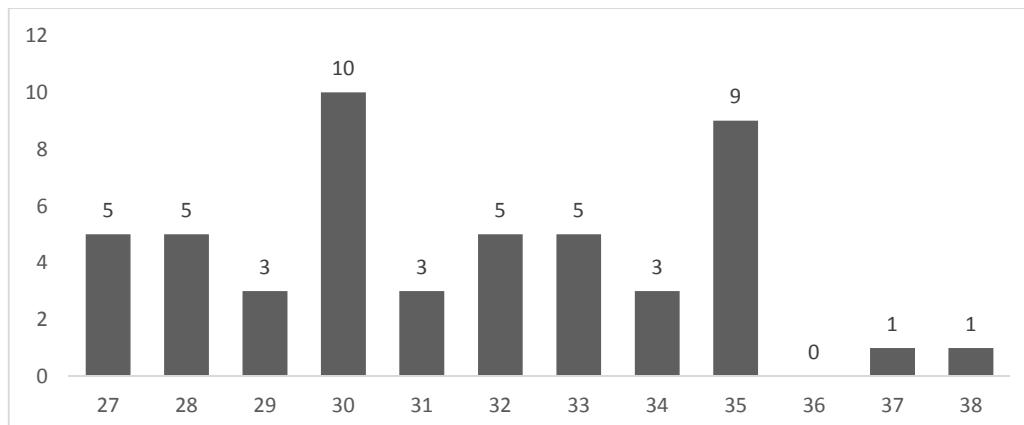


Figure 4.5 Single respondents desired marriage age

Table 4.14 Wedding Budget

Wedding Budget	Frequency	Percentage
Less than ₱250,000	0	0
₱250,000 – 500,000	167	53.02
₱500,001 – 750,000	69	21.90
₱750,001 – 1,000,000	56	17.78
Over ₱1,000,000	23	7.30
Total	315	100

Over half of the respondents had a wedding budget of between ₱250,000 – 500,000 (53.02%) followed by ₱500,001 – 750,000 (21.90%). This response includes how much single respondents are wanting to spend when they decide to get married, how much engaged respondents are planning their wedding to cost, and how much married respondents paid for their wedding. Of all the respondents, no respondent had stated that their wedding budget was less than ₱250,000.

Table 4.15 Marriage Month

Marriage Month	Frequency	Percentage
November – January	155	49.21
February – April	56	17.78
May – July	54	17.14
August – October	50	15.87
Total	315	100

The majority of respondents got married, are planning on getting married, or want to get married between the months of November to January (49.21%), which are the peak months due to the cool climate in Thailand (Hue, 2013).

Table 4.16 Important Factors when selecting an Event Management Company

Important Factor	Frequency	Percentage
Company Reputation	31	9.85
Services Offered	219	69.52
Price	65	20.63
Total	315	100

The most important factor when selecting an Event Management Company, according to respondents were the services offered by the company (69.52%), followed by price (20.63%).

4.2 Inferential Analysis

Two types of inferential analyses were used in order to analyse the data. Firstly, Pearson's correlation coefficient was used. All 6 correlation based hypotheses made are considered to be alternate hypotheses, as the hypotheses are propositions regarding what the author expects the outcome to be. The significance level to be used for the analysis will be $p < .05$, signifying that the author is willing to accept that there is a 5% chance that the findings and outcomes are due to chance. Secondly, a One Way ANOVA Analysis was also conducted to see whether to accept or reject the 7th hypothesis.

4.2.1 Pearson's Correlation Coefficient

Correlation Analysis was conducted in order to test the hypotheses of the research, to test how closely related two variables are. Using SPSS, six different analyses were conducted to test the relationship between each independent variable with the dependent variable. Two analysis were carried out to test the correlation. Firstly, the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient, also known as the Pearson correlation. The Pearson correlation, which provides a response between -1 and 1 shows how strong the relationship between two variables are, in this case, the relationship between each independent variable with the dependent variable.

Purchase Decisions

H1₀: A person's purchase decision factors have no significant relationship towards the intention to hire an Event Management Company.

H1_a: A person's purchase decision factors have a positive relationship towards the intention to hire an Event Management Company

Table 4.17 Purchase Decisions and Intention to Hire

		PURCHASE DECISIONS
	Pearson Correlation	.346**
INTENTION TO HIRE	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	315

The significance level ($p < 0.001$) signifies that H1₀ is rejected and H1_a is accepted, as purchase decisions as an independent variable did have a significant effect on the dependent variable and was not due to chance. The Pearson correlation indicates that there is a weak positive correlation ($r=0.346$) between purchase decisions and intention to hire an Event Management Company.

Sociocultural Factors

H2₀: Sociocultural factors have no significant relationship towards the intention to hire an Event Management Company

H2_a: Sociocultural factors have a positive relationship towards the intention to hire an Event Management Company

Table 4.18 Sociocultural Factors and Intention to Hire

SOCIOCULTURAL FACTORS		
	Pearson Correlation	.286**
INTENTION TO HIRE	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	315

The significance level ($p < 0.001$) signifies that H_{20} is rejected and H_{2a} is accepted, as sociocultural factors as an independent variable did have a significant effect on the dependent variable and was not due to chance. The Pearson correlation indicates that there is a weak positive correlation ($r=0.286$) between sociocultural factors and the intention to hire an Event Management Company..

Word of Mouth

H_{30} : Word of mouth has no significant relationship towards the intention to hire an Event Management Company

H_{3a} : Word of mouth has a positive relationship towards the intention to hire an Event Management Company

Table 4.19 Word of Mouth and Intention to Hire

WORD OF MOUTH		
	Pearson Correlation	.229**
INTENTION TO HIRE	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	315

The significance level ($p < 0.001$) signifies that H_{30} is rejected and H_{3a} is accepted, suggesting that word of mouth as an independent variable did have a significant effect on the dependent variable and was not due to chance. The Pearson correlation indicates that there is a weak positive correlation ($r=0.229$) between word of mouth and the intention to hire an Event Management Company.

Belongingness and Love

H_{40} : Belongingness and love needs have no significant relationship towards the intention to hire an Event Management Company

H_{4a} : Belongingness and love needs will have a positive relationship towards the intention to hire an Event Management Company

Table 4.20 Belongingness and Love and Intention to Hire

		BELONGINGNESS AND LOVE
	Pearson Correlation	.348**
INTENTION TO HIRE	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	315

The significance level ($p < 0.001$) signifies that H_{40} is rejected and H_{4a} is accepted, suggesting that belongingness and love needs as an independent variable did have a significant effect on the dependent variable and was not due to chance. The Pearson correlation indicates that there is a weak positive correlation ($r=0.348$) between belongingness and love needs and the intention to hire an Event Management Company.

Esteem

H_{50} : Esteem needs have no significant relationship towards the intention to hire an Event Management Company

H_{5a} : Esteem needs have a positive relationship towards the intention to hire an Event Management Company

Table 4.21 Esteem and Intention to Hire

		ESTEEM
	Pearson Correlation	.195**
INTENTION TO HIRE	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001
	N	315

The significance level ($p = 0.001$) signifies that H_{50} is rejected and H_{5a} is accepted, suggesting that esteem needs as an independent variable did have a significant effect on the dependent variable and was not due to chance. The Pearson correlation indicates that there is a weak positive correlation ($r=0.195$) between esteem needs and the intention to hire an Event Management Company.

Conspicuous Consumption

H_{60} : Conspicuous consumption has no significant relationship towards the intention to hire an Event Management Company

H6a: Conspicuous consumption has a positive relationship towards the intention to hire an Event Management Company

Table 4.22 Conspicuous Consumption and Intention to Hire

CONSPICIOUS CONSUMPTION		
INTENTION TO HIRE	Pearson Correlation	.265**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	315

The significance level ($p < 0.001$) signifies that H6₀ is rejected and H6_a is accepted, suggesting that conspicuous consumption as an independent variable did have a significant effect on the dependent variable and was not due to chance. The Pearson correlation indicates that there is a weak positive correlation ($r=0.265$) between conspicuous consumption and the intention to hire an Event Management Company.

Table 4.23 Summary of Hypothesis Testing Results based on Pearson's correlation

Variables	Pearson's Correlation with Intention to Hire	Significance	Ranking
Belongingness & Love	.349	0.000	1
Purchase Decisions	.346	0.000	2
Sociocultural	.286	0.000	3
Conspicuous Consumption	.265	0.000	4
Word of Mouth	.229	0.000	5
Esteem	.195	0.001	6

The three most influential factors for the intention to hire an Event Management Company are Belongingness & Love, Purchase Decisions and Sociocultural Factors.

4.2.2 One Way ANOVA Analysis

H7₀: There is no significant difference in intention to hire an Event Management Company among single, engaged and married persons.

H7_a: There is a significant difference in intention to hire an Event Management Company among single, engaged and married persons.

Table 4.24 One Way ANOVA Descriptives

Descriptives			
INTENTION TO HIRE			
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
SINGLE	60	3.1375	1.25670
ENGAGED	91	3.8269	.62549
MARRIED	164	3.6006	.78018
Total	315	3.5778	.88327

Based on the mean scores, engaged couples have a higher intention to hire Event Management Company (n=3.827) than other groups.

Table 4.25 One Way ANOVA Testing

ANOVA					
INTENTION TO HIRE					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	17.365	2	8.682	11.902	.000
Within Groups	227.605	312	.730		
Total	244.969	314			

The significance level ($p < 0.001$) signifies that H_0 is rejected and H_1 is accepted, suggesting that there is a significant difference in intention to hire an Event Management Company among single, engaged and married persons.

A post hoc test was further conducted to determine where the differences occurred among three groups.

Table 4.26 Post Hoc Testing

INTENTION TO HIRE			
Scheffe			
MARITAL STATUS	N	Subset for alpha = 0.05	
		1	2
SINGLE	60	3.1375	
MARRIED	164		3.6006
ENGAGED	91		3.8269
Sig.		1.000	.212

Based on Post Hoc Test by Scheffe, it was found that single group has lower intention to hire an Event Management Company (mean = 3.1375) differently than the other two groups of engaged and married people with mean of 3.8269 and 3.6006 respectively. Therefore, it can be concluded that people who are single have the lowest intention to hire an Event Management Company differently than other marital status groups.

4.3 Hypotheses Testing Results Summary

Table 4.27 Hypotheses Testing Results Summary

Hypothesis	Sig.	Result
H1 Purchase Decisions → Intention to hire	0.000	Accept H1 _a
H2 Sociocultural factors → Intention to hire	0.000	Accept H2 _a
H3 Word Of Mouth → Intention to hire	0.000	Accept H3 _a
H4 Belongingness & Love needs → Intention to hire	0.000	Accept H4 _a
H5 Esteem needs → Intention to hire	0.001	Accept H5 _a
H6 Conspicuous Consumption → Intention to hire	0.000	Accept H6 _a
H7 Marital status → Intention to hire	0.000	Accept H7 _a

4.4 Qualitative Analysis

In addition to the questionnaires distributed, the author also conducted in depth interviews with 4 respondents. All four respondents had already previously completed the questionnaires. The interviews were conducted on 9th January 2017 at Starbucks Coffee, The Paseo Park, Kanchanaphisek Road in Thawee Wattana District of

Bangkok. Two interviewees were married, one engaged and one single. The first married interviewee was a 33 year old Thai woman, and the second interviewee was a 32 year old Thai woman. The engaged interviewee was a 32 year old Thai woman. The single interviewee was a 28 year old Thai woman.

4.4.1 Married Interviewees

The two married interviewees both had hired an Event Management Company in order to assist them in planning their wedding. The reason they had chosen to do so was due to their personal lack of knowledge regarding rituals and proceedings for the traditional ceremonies, one being a Catholic ceremony and the other a Chinese ceremony. One respondent also acknowledged that having help in dealing with parents and in laws was extremely useful and made the planning process much less stressful. Additionally, both interviewees agreed that hiring an Event Management Company enabled them to save money in terms of special barbers and discounts from industry specialists. Although the wedding budget for the two interviewees differed significantly, they were both extremely content with the savings they had acquired and the professionalism and service they were provided throughout the planning processes of their weddings. Finally, if they were able to get married again, the two interviewees both agreed that without a doubt, they would once again hire an Event Management Company in order to assist them in planning their weddings.

4.4.2 Engaged Interviewee

The engaged interviewee, who is still in the process of deciding whether to hire an Event Management Company to assist in planning the wedding or not is weighing the options between time savings and budget. She mentioned that if she were to hire a company, it would be extremely practical as the company is extremely knowledgeable regarding the customs and rituals required for the ceremony and reception. Furthermore, by hiring help, it would also save a lot of time which she could continue focusing on her work however budget is still a major concern, as she is still unaware of how much hiring help can save her in comparison to how much she would be having to pay extra for the services in return.

4.4.3 Single Interviewee

The single interviewee, who is able to describe her dream wedding in meticulous detail, was, during the interview adamant that she would be hiring an Event Management Company in order to assist her in planning the wedding due to the professionalism and knowledge she would be able to receive in return. Furthermore, the interviewee also mentioned that by not hiring an Event Management Company to assist in planning the wedding, she believes that there is more percentage of failure in organisation due to personal stress wanting everything to turn out right, and stress from immediate family and relatives.



CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Respondent Profile Summary

The majority of respondents are married (52.06%) and female (54.92%). Married female made up 30.16% of total respondents. Most respondents are aged between 26 and 35 (64.13%). The modal group of respondents in terms of age group was married people aged from 26 to 35 (29.21%). Most respondents had a personal monthly income of between 30,000 and 60,000 baht (37.14%) and a combined household monthly income of 150,000 baht and above (39.05%) and considered themselves to not be from a well off family (57.78%). 83.49% of respondents were Thai and Buddhist, with half (50.48%) of respondents having grown up in the urban area. Almost all respondents (95.56%) have a university degree and the majority of respondents are employed by private companies (48.89%). The marriage age was the only question which did not obtain responses from all responders, with 305 responses in total, as the other 10 responders were not married or had no plans on getting married at all. The youngest age to get married amongst the responders was 17 and the oldest was 48.

5.2 Attitude and Behaviour in using an Event Management Company

All of the respondents surveyed had spent or were willing to spend over 250,000 baht in organising their wedding. The majority of respondents (53.02%), however, had spent or were willing to spend up to 500,000 baht only. A small percentage of respondents (7.30%) had spent or were willing to spend over one million baht. Most respondents (49.21%) got married, or wanted to get married during the peak wedding season between November and January.

When questioned about which factors were most important when selecting an Event Management Company, the majority of respondents (69.52%) responded that the services offered by the company was the most important factor to help them select and hire an Event Management Company. The price of services offered came in second (20.63%) and the company's reputation was the least important factor (9.85%) when selecting an Event Management Company according to this group of respondents.

5.3 Research Objective Summary

The objectives of this study were to explore factors influencing the decision to hire an Event Management Company and whether there were any differences in selection criteria between single, engaged and married couples. A total of 315 responses from Bangkok were obtained in a structured questionnaire and analysed using data analysis software. Furthermore, four additional in depth interviews were also conducted.

In order to evaluate a person's intention to hire an Event Management Company, the researcher tested the following hypotheses:

- H1: A person's purchase decision factors will have a positive relationship towards the intention to hire an Event Management Company
- H2: Sociocultural factors have a positive relationship towards the intention to hire an Event Management Company
- H3: Word of mouth has a positive relationship towards the intention to hire an Event Management Company
- H4: Belongingness and love needs will have a positive relationship towards the intention to hire an Event Management Company
- H5: Esteem needs have a positive relationship towards the intention to hire an Event Management Company
- H6: Conspicuous consumption has a positive relationship towards the intention to hire an Event Management Company
- H7: There is a difference in intention to hire an Event Management Company among single, engaged and married persons

The findings of the research, in support of the hypothesis, concluded that the factors analysed do not have a significant influence on the interviewed population in Bangkok. Furthermore, weak correlations were found amongst the responses.

5.4 Discussions

Although numerous authors, including Perreau (n.d.), confirm that personal factors such as their lifestyle and personality; which were parts of purchase decision factors in this study; affect purchase decisions, when it comes to events such as weddings, these factors do not play an extremely large part to the decision making

process. Sociocultural factors, however, play a much larger part in a person's decision to hire an Event Management Company, as strong influences between parents and children exist (Mahalihali, 2006) and affect how people make decisions. Furthermore, Wood & Hayes (2012) also agree that consumer decisions are highly based on social contexts, similarly to Lawan and Zanna (2013) who conducted a study based on how personal factors influence buying behaviour, which can also be highlighted from the results of this research, where sociocultural factors play a large role in the decision making process of hiring an Event Management Company. Social factors are also reviewed as part of the decision making process by Noman (2012) based on the decision making factors of attending festivals, which found that friends play a part in assisting in the decision making process as well.

Additionally, Veblen's Theory of the Leisure Class (1899), which talks about the importance of conspicuous consumption, was an interesting part of the research due to the fact that the interviewed population were not fazed by branded items or luxury goods as was expected due to the way conspicuous consumption is viewed in Thai society. A study on conspicuous consumption society in China, which has its similarities with Thailand with regards to the growing consumer spending power, showed that materialism was on the rise amongst urban consumers (Podoshen et al., 2010). This study, however, saw the opposite of Podoshen et al.'s study, whereby conspicuous consumption was not an important factor in the decision making process of hiring an Event Management Company. Indian societies, known for their excessive weddings, is a vast display of conspicuous consumption, where the bigger and more elaborate the wedding, the better one looks in society (Gill, 2015), which matches many hi-societal weddings in Thailand as previously mentioned in Chapter 2, but is contradictory to the findings of this research.

5.5 Recommendations

5.5.1 Practitioners

Based on the outcomes of the study, event management companies who also specialize or are planning on adding an extra department focusing on weddings should focus the way in which they market their services based on belongingness and love needs and sociocultural factors, which are two factors which have a high level of

relationship with the intentions to hire an Event Management Company, based on the Pearson's correlation results. Moreover, based on the in depth interviews, sociocultural factors and issues surrounding family is also an important factor when deciding to hire an Event Management Company. As one respondent acknowledged, having third party assistance in dealing with in laws was extremely useful and made the wedding planning process much less stressful. Furthermore, purchase decisions should also remain part of the focus of companies, as not only did it score highly in Pearson's correlation, but it is also an important factor for the company as a whole, due to the prospectives of having repeat customers for other important events in the future.

5.5.2 Further Studies

Numerous limitations have affected the outcomes of the research, including the small number of interviewees for the questionnaire, at 315 responses across Bangkok, which is not a large representation of the population of Bangkok. Moreover, the research was conducted across 4 business districts in Bangkok only, which could affect the outcome of the research. If further studies were to be conducted, a larger sample should be obtained in order to acquire a more realistic representation of the population. Furthermore, conducting the research in Bangkok alone is also another limitation as it does not reflect the population in Thailand, neither does it affect the population of other people across the world. A focus on other events should also be considered when conducting the questionnaires, in order to provide a better representation of responses, which could be more appealing to the population.

Additionally, the focus of the research was on a very specific topic, and was narrowed down to using weddings as an example in order for respondents to focus their responses to an event which they are more likely to become a part of in their lives. However, from the research, it has been found that not everyone goes through the process of planning a wedding. Attending an event related to the questionnaire theme should also be considered, to obtain more relevant responses. More in depth literature review could also be conducted, in order to obtain better reliability scores which would in turn provide better results across the board.

Also, more hypotheses can also be added for future research to obtain more in depth research about the industry. Increased sample population should also be

considered in order to obtain a more diverse response pool which would be a better representation of the population. Finally, the research can also be adapted to other sub industries within the Events Industry, or can also be transposed to other industries as well.



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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Google Search Keyword results

Search Keyword (Translation)	Results
Thailand Beach Wedding	9,790,000
Planning a Wedding in Thailand	3,100,000
Thailand Wedding Planning	2,620,000
Thailand Destination Wedding	2,310,000
Thai Wedding Packages	1,890,000
Wedding In Thailand Package	1,530,000
รับจัดงานแต่งงาน (Wedding Organizer)	1,520,000
Thailand Wedding Planner	1,080,000
รับจัดงานแต่งงาน (Wedding Organizer)	1,020,000
Thai Wedding Venues	830,000
รับจัดงานแต่งงานครบวงจร (Full Service Wedding Organizer)	755,000
รายชื่อ บริษัท ออก กาน เซอร์ (List of Organizer Companies)	676,000
Wedding Venues Thailand	657,000
บริษัทจัดอีเวนต์ ชื่อนำ (Leading Event Organizers)	315,000
ออกแกในช้จัดงานแต่งงาน (Wedding Organizers)	258,000
บริษัท organizer ในประเทศไทย (Organizer Company in Thailand)	213,000
บริษัท event organizer (Event Organizer Company)	127,000

Appendix 2: Market Summary for United States

Category	Item	Est Weddings	Avg Spend	Total Sales
Market Totals				
	Market Summary	2,172,503	\$26,645	\$57,886,342,435
Attire & Accessories				
	Dress Accessories	1,933,528	\$226	\$436,977,253
	Tuxedo/suit/other Accessories	1,868,353	\$101	\$188,703,611
	Tuxedo/suit/other Rent/purchase	1,890,078	\$203	\$383,685,755
	Wedding Dress/es	2,063,878	\$1,226	\$2,530,314,244
Beauty & Spa				
	Hair Service	1,868,353	\$66	\$123,311,270
	Makeup Service	1,520,752	\$53	\$80,599,861
	Manicure & Pedicure	1,716,277	\$44	\$75,516,204
Entertainment				
	DJ	1,694,552	\$728	\$1,233,634,104
	Live Band	695,201	\$1,706	\$1,186,012,838
	Musician/s, Soloist, or Ensemble	977,626	\$611	\$597,329,700
Flowers & Decorations				
	Boutonnieres, Corsages	1,911,803	\$144	\$275,299,580
	Bridal Bouquet	2,063,878	\$148	\$305,453,922
	Bridesmaid Bouquets	1,911,803	\$179	\$342,212,673
	Event Decorations	1,824,903	\$446	\$813,906,524
	Event Flower Arrangements	1,803,177	\$438	\$789,791,741
	Event Table Centerpieces	1,846,628	\$325	\$600,153,954
	Flower Girl Flowers	1,499,027	\$85	\$127,417,301
	Flower Petals	1,477,302	\$95	\$140,343,694
Gifts & Favors				
	Gift/s for Attendants	1,716,277	\$104	\$178,492,846
	Gift/s for Parents	1,520,752	\$120	\$182,490,252
	Tips (for all services)	1,911,803	\$385	\$736,044,016
	Wedding Favors	1,824,903	\$235	\$428,852,092

Category	Item	Est Weddings	Avg Spend	Total Sales
Invitations				
	Ceremony Programs	1,607,652	\$121	\$194,525,919
	Engagement Announcements	1,042,801	\$105	\$109,494,151
	Guest Book	1,868,353	\$59	\$110,232,802
	Invitations & Reply Cards	2,063,878	\$228	\$470,564,150
	Postage	2,063,878	\$106	\$218,771,052
	Reception Menus	1,151,427	\$124	\$142,776,897
	Save the Date Cards	1,542,477	\$112	\$172,757,439
	Table Name and Escort/place Cards	1,455,577	\$83	\$120,812,892
	Thank You Cards	1,955,253	\$89	\$174,017,490
Jewelry				
	Engagement Ring	1,911,803	\$3,386	\$6,473,363,739
	Wedding Bands	1,998,703	\$1,254	\$2,506,373,261
Photography & Video				
	Digital or Photo cd/dvd	1,368,677	\$305	\$417,446,451
	Engagement Session	1,281,777	\$396	\$507,583,601
	Prints and/or Enlargements	1,303,502	\$237	\$308,929,927
	Wedding album/s or photo book/s	1,064,526	\$428	\$455,617,329
	Wedding Photographer	1,998,703	\$1,644	\$3,285,867,337
	Wedding Videographer	1,107,977	\$1,068	\$1,183,318,934
Planner/Consultant				
	A La Carte Services	152,075	\$957	\$145,535,976
	Day of Coordinator	369,326	\$825	\$304,693,546
	For Getting Started	108,625	\$883	\$95,916,007
	Full Service	391,051	\$2,886	\$1,128,571,858
	Month of Direction	130,350	\$1,085	\$141,429,945
Venue, Catering & Rentals				
	Ceremony Officiator	1,868,353	\$208	\$388,617,337
	Event Accessories	1,868,353	\$325	\$607,214,589
	Event Bar Service	1,542,477	\$2,378	\$3,668,010,615
	Event Food Service	1,781,452	\$4,771	\$8,499,309,687
	Event Location	1,846,628	\$3,628	\$6,699,564,751
	Event Rentals	1,629,377	\$1,719	\$2,800,899,493
	Hotel Room for After Reception	1,694,552	\$309	\$523,616,673
	Limo Rental	1,021,076	\$480	\$490,116,677
	Other Transportation	825,551	\$515	\$425,158,837
	Rehearsal Dinner	1,738,002	\$577	\$1,002,827,385
	Wedding Cake/dessert	1,998,703	\$422	\$843,452,565

Appendix 3: Sample Size Calculation

Confidence Level: 90%
 Z Score: 1.645
 Standard Deviation: 0.5
 Margin of Error: 0.05

$$\text{Necessary Sample Size} = \frac{(Z \text{ Score}^2)(\text{Standard Deviation})(1 - \text{Standard Deviation})}{\text{Margin of Error}^2}$$

$$N = \frac{Z^2 pq}{e^2}$$

$$N = \frac{(1.645^2)(0.5)(0.5)}{0.05^2}$$

$$N = \frac{(2.706025)(0.5)(0.5)}{0.05^2}$$

$$N = \frac{0.676506}{0.05^2}$$

$$N = \frac{0.676506}{0.0025}$$

$$N = 270.6025$$



Appendix 4: Questionnaire

You have been invited to participate in a Master's Thesis questionnaire on the decision to hire an Event Management Company. 300 people will be asked to complete the questionnaire about the choices you make when deciding whether to hire an Event Management Company in order to organise a wedding. Completion of this survey will take approximately 20 minutes.

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. There are no foreseeable risks associated with this project. However, if you feel uncomfortable answering any questions, you can withdraw from the survey at any point. It is very important for us to learn your opinions.

Your survey responses will be strictly confidential and data from this research will be reported only in the aggregate. Your information will be coded and will remain confidential. If you have questions at any time about the survey or the procedures, you may contact Sukanya Yantabutr by email at the email address specified below.

Thank you very much for your time and support.

Section 1

Please select the answer which best corresponds to you

1	Gender	Male
		Female
2	Age	25 and below
		26-35
		36-45
		46 and above
3	Personal Income	Less than 30,000
		30,000-60,000
		60,001-90,000
		90,001-120,000
		120,001 and above
4	Household Income	Less than 60,000
		60,001-90,000
		90,001-120,000
		120,001-150,000
		150,000 and above

Section 1

Please select the answer which best corresponds to you (cont.)

5	Nationality	Thai
		American
		Canadian
		Dutch
		English
		French
		German
		Irish
		Japanese
		Other (Please specify)
6	Religion	Buddhist
		Christian
		Islam
		Hindu
		Jewish
		Sikh
7	Education Level	High School
		Vocational
		Bachelor's Degree
		Master's Degree
		Doctorate Degree
8	Marital Status	Single
		Engaged
		Married

Section 1

Please select the answer which best corresponds to you (cont.)

9	Occupation	Student
		Business Owner
		Employee
		State Enterprise Employee
		Housewife
		Unemployed
		Other (Please specify)
10	What area were you raised in	Rural
		Small town
		Suburban
		Urban
11	Marriage Age Or age you plan on getting married, age you want to get married by	

Section 2

Please select your answer based on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being strongly disagree and 5 being strongly agree

		Strongly Disagree		Neither agree nor disagree		Strongly Agree
		1	2	3	4	5
Purchase Decision Factors						
1	Purchase Decisions					
1a	I am an outgoing person					
1b	I enjoy partying					
1c	I am family orientated					
1d	I am a creative person					
1e	I am an organised person					
2	Purchasing Power					
2a	I come from a good background					
2b	I buy what I want					
2c	I have a high disposable income					
2d	I can buy anything that I want					
Sociocultural Factors						
3	Cultural Upbringing					
3a	I come from an eastern upbringing					
3b	I still live with my family					
3c	Family gatherings are important in my social calendar					

Section 2

Please select your answer based on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being strongly disagree and 5 being strongly agree (cont.)

		Strongly Disagree		Neither agree nor disagree		Strongly Agree
		1	2	3	4	5
4	Influencers					
4a	My parents help me make big decisions in life					
4b	I do what I want with my life					
4c	I often have to consult with others regarding big decisions					
4d	I cannot go a day without my phone					
4e	I consult social media when making decisions					
Word of Mouth						
5	Purchase Decision					
5a	I am willing to buy a new brand based on a review I received					
5b	I will buy something if I am told it is worth it					
5c	I will buy something if a celebrity uses it					

Section 2

Please select your answer based on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being strongly disagree and 5 being strongly agree (cont.)

		Strongly Disagree		Neither agree nor disagree		Strongly Agree
		1	2	3	4	5
5d	I will read reviews such as Trip Advisor when booking a hotel					
5e	What I buy is often based on someone else's good review					
6	Recommendations					
6a	I trust people's recommendations					
6b	If a friend tells me something is good, I take their word for it					
6c	I buy the same things as my friends					
6d	I follow online recommendations when purchasing new items					
Psychological Perspective						
7	Belongingness & Love					
7a	I have a great need for people to like me					
7b	I feel accepted by others					
7c	I have close bonds with family and friends					
7d	I have a sense of belonging					
7e	When I am with other people, I feel included					

Section 2

Please select your answer based on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being strongly disagree and 5 being strongly agree (cont.)

		Strongly Disagree		Neither agree nor disagree		Strongly Agree
		1	2	3	4	5
8	Esteem					
8a	On the whole, I am satisfied with myself					
8b	I feel like I have a number of good qualities					
8c	I feel that I am a person of worth					
8d	I am able to do things as well as most other people					
8e	I take a positive attitude towards myself					
9	Conspicuous Consumption					
9a	Eating out is a habit for me					
9b	I like people to see me wearing or carrying luxury goods					
9c	Owning luxury goods is the symbol of rich					
9d	Luxury goods are very important to me					
9e	Luxury goods are a symbol of superiority and prestige					

Section 2

Please select your answer based on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being strongly disagree and 5 being strongly agree (cont.)

		Strongly Disagree		Neither agree nor disagree		Strongly Agree
		1	2	3	4	5
10	Intention to Hire					
10a	I generally hire extra help when I need it					
10b	I trust others to help me get things done					

Section 3

1	What is your wedding budget?	Less than ₱250,000
		₱250,001 – 500,000
		₱500,001 – 750,000
		₱750,001 – 1,000,000
		Over ₱1,000,000
2	Which month do you want to/are you/did you get married?	January
		February
		March
		April
		May
		June
		July

Section 3 (cont.)

		August
		September
		October
		November
		December
3	What is the most important factor when selecting an Event Management Company?	Company reputation
		Services offered
		Price

Appendix 5: Focus Group

Married

- Why did you hire an Event Management Company to help plan your wedding
- What made you decide not to organise your wedding yourself
- If you could get married again, would you hire an Event Management Company to help plan your wedding?

Engaged

- Have you enlisted the help to organise your wedding from an Event Management Company?
- Will you be looking at hiring an Event Management Company before your wedding date?
- Why did you choose to hire a Event Management Company to help plan your wedding?
- What made you decide not to organise your wedding yourself?

Single

- When you do decide to get married, will you hire an Event Management Company to help plan your wedding?
- Would you consider planning your wedding yourself and hiring an Event Management Company to help organise your wedding day?
- What would make you consider planning your wedding yourself?

Appendix 6: Frequency Chart

Frequencies of respondents and their age when they got married (for married respondents), age they are planning on getting married (for engaged respondents), or age they would like to get married (for single respondents).

Age	Frequency	Age	Frequency
17	1	33	18
18	0	34	10
19	0	35	37
20	0	36	10
21	2	37	3
22	2	38	1
23	4	39	0
24	16	40	0
25	4	41	0
26	8	42	0
27	28	43	0
28	41	44	0
29	15	45	0
30	50	46	0
31	20	47	0
32	34	48	1

BIOGRAPHY

NAME	Miss Sukanya Yantabutr
DATE OF BIRTH	14 th January 1989
NATIONALITY	Thai/French
EDUCATION	
2017	Master of Business Administration (International Business) Stamford International University Bangkok, Thailand
2010	Bachelor of Business Administration (Event Management) Macquarie University Sydney, Australia
EMPLOYMENT	
2010 – 2014	Executive Assistant Dean & DeLuca (Thailand) Co., Ltd. Bangkok, Thailand
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CURRENT EMPLOYMENT	Project Director Giddy Kipper Creative Productions Co., Ltd. Office Manager Sabaijaidee (1985) Co., Ltd. Office Manager Cauchois & Associates Co., Ltd.