“An investigation into the effects that the social media platforms Facebook and Pinterest have on the planning stage of weddings”

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Declaration

I declare that this Dissertation has not already been accepted in substance for any degree and is not concurrently submitted in candidature for any degree. It is the result of my own independent research except where otherwise stated.

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Abstract

This dissertation attempts to identify to what extent social media is impacting how people plan their weddings. Social media has become more and more popular over the years, therefore this study researches how the growth may be impacting the wedding planning process and by looking into how it is influencing peoples’ decisions on different wedding elements. To concentrate the study further, it focuses on the two social media platforms Facebook and Pinterest. These two platforms were chosen as Facebook is the most used social media site and Pinterest is well-known for wedding related inspiration.

In order to discover the extent that social media is impacting peoples’ decisions during the planning stage, a literature review was comprised of existing research surrounding the topic area which then aided the construction of the primary research. Subjects covered in this chapter include; social media and the psychological impacts it has on decision making, weddings and their association with social media, Facebook and Pinterest and event planning.

Data collection was done in the form of two questionnaires, one for married people and one for people who are currently planning their wedding. The first was circulated online through Facebook and the latter was distributed at a bridal show. The results from both questionnaires were then compared against the literature review in order to decipher any key findings.

It was found that social media’s influence on decisions during this process is more evident on the betrothed than it was on people already married, thus showing signs that the growth of social media is impacting the wedding planning process. It was also found that both Facebook and Pinterest are influencing decisions made during the process, but in their own different ways. For example, Facebook proved to be more useful at aiding people find vendors/suppliers, whereas Pinterest seems to be used for inspiration on smaller elements of the wedding.

Finally, the results showed that social media is a useful planning tool however, it is putting too much pressure on those getting married due to the rising need for perfection and uniqueness.

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Chapter 1 - Introduction
1.0 Introduction
The introduction explains the reasoning behind choosing said topic and provides initial research conducted by the researcher to gain background knowledge concerning the subject. This chapter also includes the aim of the study and the objectives that will be undertaken to achieve the aim.

1.1 Rationale
The rationale for this study is to increase research involving the impact that social media has on decisions made when planning a wedding. There is currently only a small amount of literature available regarding topics within the subject area, therefore the researcher saw a gap for this study to be conducted. Leeds-Hurwitz (2002: ix) also recognises the lack of interest taken by theorists around weddings in particular, by stating that weddings receive ‘surprisingly little attention from any researchers’. Therefore, the ultimate aim of this study is help build on existing research to increase knowledge on this area.

The use of social media is constantly growing (see section 1.2.1) and its impact on consumer decision making has been apparent for some time, as noticed by many theorists such as Mangold and Faulds (2009), Minazzi (2014) and Christou (2016), to name just a few. This is a topic of interest to the researcher, therefore it felt necessary to investigate further. To make the investigation specific to the researchers ‘area of study’, the researcher incorporated the wedding industry to explore how large of an impact different social media platforms have had on people when they are making fundamental plans for their wedding day.

This study will be useful to a variety of different groups interested in seeing how much of an impact wedding related aspects, on social media, influence peoples decisions to use what they have seen. The study would mainly adhere to wedding planners, wedding specific companies and businesses that provide wedding services e.g. photographers and cake makers.
1.2 Conceptual overview
This section discusses the two main topics of the study by providing a brief overview on important elements that have been expanded on further within the literature review.

1.2.1 Social media
Boyd and Ellison (cited in Adeyinka, 2014: 280) define social networking sites as ‘web-based services that allow individuals to construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system’. The concept of social media began in 1997 with a website called ‘Six Degrees’ which allowed users to create an online profile before being able to connect with other users (Hale, 2015 [Online]). It is from that the fascination for virtual connectedness rose to what it is today. The popularity of social media has grown massively over the years. This can be seen by looking at Figure 1.1, created by Statista (2018 [Online]), which shows the rise in daily social media usage between 2007 and 2015. In just eight years, daily usage has increased by 51 percent.

![Figure 1.1 - Share of respondents that use social media every day in the United Kingdom from 2007 to 2015 (Statista, 2018 [Online]).](image-url)

Mwaisaka (2017) identifies that a large contributing factor to the increase of social media use is due to the technological advancement. She recognises that rise of smart phones is a large contributor to the increase of social media use due to how easy it is to access the Internet almost anywhere. Statista (2018 [Online]) registered a 1,301.58 million increase in smartphone sales worldwide between 2007 and 2015. From this it is evident that the increase in smartphone sales has had a contributing factor to the data shown in Figure 1.1.
With such a large scope of the public interacting with social media in some way or another, there are ways in which it can start to impact people’s decision-making process. Hoyer, Manlnnis and Pieters (2013) spoke of ‘Need Recognition’, which they claim occurs when consumers feel as though they have an unfulfilled need which can be stimulated by internal and/or external stimuli. Social media is an example of external stimuli that may showcase a potential need to a consumer. Hoyer et al (2013) further explains that once a consumer shows interest, they will require more information. Social media displays a large amount of information through others’ opinions on products or services. Barker (2017 [Online]) reviewed a study that showed 45% of respondents said that reading reviews over social media influenced their buying behaviour. This demonstrates that opinions on social media are a contributing factor to the decision-making process.

1.2.2 Weddings

The idea of marriage has changed drastically over time, from the joining of a man and woman to what it is today where two people marry for love, whether that be the joining of a heterosexual or a same-sex couple (Raphael, 2015 [Online]). It also differs between cultures, for example polygamy is still common within the Muslim culture (The Week, 2012 [Online]). Therefore, it is difficult to pin point an exact definition of what marriage is as it varies from person to person.

It is noticed that ceremonies are becoming more extravagant than ever before. Nagy (2013 [Online]), believes this is due to what the media is displaying to make people desire such extravagancy. She refers to TV shows such as; Say Yes to the Dress and Celebrity Wedding Planner. She also mentions the social media platform Pinterest, touching on how this site displays a variety of ideas for people to browse through. After being exposed to how the media displays weddings, people become hooked on how to make their wedding bigger and better than anyone else’s. Castillo (2016 [Online]) believes that social media and the constant availability to browse for ideas is a large contributing factor to the rising cost of weddings. In 2004, the year in which Facebook began and kick started the social media fascination, the average spend on a wedding was £15,000 (Haurant, 2004 [Online]). Now, the average spend on a wedding in the UK has hit an all-time high of £27,161 (Hitched, 2017 [Online]). That is over a £10,000 increase in thirteen years. There is a lot of evidence that points towards social
media being a large contributor to this figure, some of which will be discussed in further within the literature review.

1.3 Data collection approach
This investigation has used a combination of primary and secondary research. The secondary research enabled the researcher to outline key themes and draw conclusions from previous studies on topics related to the investigation (Athanasiou, Debas and Darzi, 2010). This gave the researcher a clearer idea of the sort of questions to ask in the primary research. Primary research was conducted in the form of two questionnaires, the first was aimed towards married people and the second towards the betrothed. This was to allow the researcher to identify whether the increasing popularity of social media also increased its impact on peoples’ decisions. The two questionnaires would help identify this by seeing whether more exposure to social media whilst betrothed in the modern day has increased its impact on their decisions, compared to married people that may not have had as much exposure.

1.4 Aim and Objectives
Williams (2013) states that the aim is the overarching purpose of a study as it tells a reader what the research intends to achieve. She then describes objectives as ‘the sub-questions that need answering in order to achieve the aim’ (Williams, 2013: 67). Derrington (2014 [Online]) identifies that objectives are important as they help structure a research project, meaning that the project has a set path. By fulfilling the set structure, the researcher will have completed all necessary areas and achieve the aim of the study.

1.4.1 Aim
The aim of the study is to seek the extent to which the social media platforms Facebook and Pinterest are influencing the way in which people plan their weddings.

1.4.2 Objectives
1. Critically review literature on wedding planning, wedding trends and the rise of social media.
2. Conduct primary research in the form of two questionnaires with people who are already married and who are currently planning their wedding to see if social media is increasing the way people are being influenced during the planning stage.

3. Discuss the results of the questionnaires in relation to the wedding planning process and the trends identified in the literature review.

4. Conclude on how the social media platforms Facebook and Pinterest are influencing decisions made during the wedding planning process.

1.5 Research questions
Alvesson and Sandberg (2013) believes that formulating research questions is the most critical aspects of all research. They state that without such questions, a researcher cannot develop enough knowledge on a subject.

1. How has social media growth impacted consumer behaviour during planning?
2. How effective is social media as a planning tool?

1.6 Chapter overview
1.6.1 Chapter 2: Literature review
This chapter reviews existing literature related to the study to allow the researcher to decipher any key themes and issues. The main subjects explored within this chapter include; social media use, social medias impacts on the decision-making process, weddings trends and their links with social media and the usefulness of event planning models during wedding planning.

1.6.2 Chapter 3: Methodology
This chapter will explain what primary and secondary research methods were used in order to complete this study. It will further justify why each technique was used by explaining its suitability for this study, whilst also taking into consideration other ways in which data collection could have been done.
1.6.3 Chapter 4: Results and Discussion
This chapter will examine all the results collected from the primary research by dividing them up into relevant sections. This section will use the information gathered for Chapter 2 to decipher any connections between the literature and the results obtained for the study.

1.6.4 Chapter 5: Conclusion
This chapter will recap the findings of the investigation and see whether or not the aim and objectives have been met. The conclusion will also discuss the limitations of the study and suggest recommendations for future studies with similar topics.
Chapter 2 – Literature Review
2.0 Introduction

Machi and McEvoy (2016) define a literature review as a document comprising of information found on research already conducted to present a comprehensive understanding of the topic chosen to study. Therefore, this section will provide a critical review into existing literature that will support the research aim and objectives. It considers secondary research that is relevant to the topic of study that will help the researcher decipher any key themes and issues. It is appropriate to explore how theorists believe social media is impacting peoples’ decision-making processes and consider how the wedding sector is being affected by social media.

The literature review also explores different event planning models to discover which one best fits the wedding planning process, as this will aid the design appropriate questionnaires.

2.1 Social media

Taprial and Kanwar (2012: 8) describes social media as; “web based applications which allow for creation/exchange of user-generated content and enable interaction between the users.” Taking this statement into account, this means that not only the well-known platforms are classed as social media, but also other interactive platforms such as blogs, internet forums, online community sites, Q&A websites and so on.

According to Hale (2015 [Online]), the concept of social media began in 1997 with a website called Six Degrees. This website started the notion of creating a profile before then being allowed to befriend other users. Between 1997 and 2004 there were small adaptions that increased peoples interest the more popular the internet became. By 2004 Facebook was created, which became the inspiration to a whole range of social media sites to be set-up including Twitter and Instagram, to name but a few.

Blanchard (2011), believes that the main reasoning why social media has been embraced by the general public so quickly is due to the fact that it provides everyone with a connection to people in ways of which are valuable, meaningful and convenient on their own terms and in a unique way. Connecting this with the wedding industry, people can now chat to suppliers though social media sites, it also provides a research element as social media allows people to compare wedding elements and see reviews on suppliers from the comfort of their own home.

People perceive social media to be a young persons’ game, however according to a Mintel report, 81% of 35-44 year olds have a Facebook account which was only an 8% difference compared to the percentage of 16-24 year olds that have a Facebook account (Mintel, 2017).
This shows that social media is not only appealing to the younger generation. In the researcher’s case, this could mean that social media may be influencing a larger age range of betrothed couples when it comes to wedding planning. However, it is evident that social media use is more active with the younger generations.

Figure 2.1 – Proportion of internet users that have a social media profile, by age: 2007-14 (Ofcom, 2015 [Online])

Figure 2.1 demonstrates the growth of social media through the ages between 2007 and 2014. This chart shows increase in social media accounts across all ages throughout the seven years. It is noticeable from this that social media is most popular with 16-24 year olds, however it also demonstrates large increases within the older generation. Anacleto et al (2011: 376) recognised an increase in interest within the older generation stating three reasons for this; i) reconnecting with people from their past; ii) sharing experiences with others; iii) creating a bridge in generational gaps. However, further explains that their reluctance to engage with social media may be due to the complex design of the interfaces as the majority of seniors grew up without computers, therefore will find it harder to adapt to new technologies.

Furthermore, the general use of social media is showing no sign of declining. As mentioned previously, Figure 1.1 in Chapter 1 demonstrates the increasing growth in the daily use of social media. It shows a 51 percent increase in use over just eight years in the UK alone. However, it is not just the UK that is showing such large increases in social media use. Figure
2.2 illustrates the increasing growth in social media use worldwide between 2010 and 2017, whilst estimating continuous growth for 2018-2021.

Figure 2.2 - Number of social network users worldwide from 2010 to 2021 (in billions) (Statista, 2018 [Online])

However, since this report was made more recent statistics have shown that at the end of 2017 the number of users exceeded 3 billion (Hootsuite, 2017; cited on TNW, 2017 [Online]). This shows that the number of users are increasing more rapidly than initially predicted.

The growth of the media has ‘revolutionized events. Events now have a virtual existence in the media at least as powerful, sometimes more so, as in reality.' (Bowdin et al, 2006: 105). Xiang and Tussyadiah (2014) recognised that social media is becoming more popular within the events industry. They identify that companies are using social media as a promotional tool. An example of this is events such as festivals, concerts, club events and many more gatherings all use social media to their advantage to help increase the public’s awareness of their events. However, not only is social media being used to increase awareness of said events, but it is now being used to advertise and ‘show-off’ more personal events such as peoples wedding day. This will be discussed later in the Chapter.
2.2 Psychological impacts of social media on decision making

Evans (2008) identifies that social media is impacting the classic purchase funnel, as before social media Evans believed that there were three stages to purchasing: awareness, consideration and purchase as demonstrated in Figure 2.3.

![Figure 2.3 – Classic Purchase Funnel (Evans, 2008)](image)

However, social media has extended the classic purchase funnel by adding a post-purchase element. Social media is becoming the new word of mouth, and therefore being able to add experiences and share them with people across the world can impact consumers decisions. In Figure 2.4, Evans (2008) has extended the classic purchase funnel to accommodate the added aspect that social media has brought when it comes to decision making.

![Figure 2.4 – Purchase Validation Tool (Evans, 2008)](image)

Similarly, Mangold and Faulds (2009) recognise that social media is impacting the consumers behaviour on aspects such as awareness, opinions, information acquisition and purchase behaviour. There are ever growing opinions on Facebook about all sorts of aspects, but when it comes to making a decision, for example choosing a venue for a wedding, the consumers verdict could be altered by what other people have said about the venue online, thus effecting their purchase behaviour. Li and Sakamoto (2014:278) support this by stating...
how people on social media are contributing opinions and experiences. They use the example of health advise, where people ‘post health advice have learnt, their likings of the advice, and their beliefs about the truthfulness of the advice. This information generated by crowds can be useful for acquiring new knowledge and making informed decisions’.

Decisions on purchasing through social media will not always be determined by others’ opinions, it can also be pushed by a company’s online presence. Barker (2017 [Online]) recognises this by stating that staying up-to-date with their social media will convince people of their credibility. She further explains that if their feed of information is strong, this will attract more ‘followers’, and in turn, seeing a large number of followers shows that others are aware of the brand and satisfied with their business.

2.3 Weddings

A wedding is a ceremony in which two people join through marriage. Wedding ceremonies can differ depending on ethos, faith, countries and social-class (Wedding Center, 2018 [Online]). Currently, the average age for a man to get married in the UK stands at 33 and for a woman is 31 (Hitched, 2017 [Online]). In 2010 it was reported that the UK wedding industry brings in over £10billion each year (Hitched, 2011 [Online]). It is with high possibility that this figure has since risen, with reports showing that in 2017 the average spend on a wedding reached an all-time high of £27,161 (Hitched, 2017 [Online]).

Shone and Parry (2004) divide special events up into four categories, these are; leisure events, personal events, organisational events and cultural events. As seen in Figure 2.5, Shone and Parry have demonstrated what events can fit into each category. By referring to this diagram, a wedding would fit into the personal events section as they are personal to each individual. However, it can be argued that a wedding could also fit into the cultural events section as a wedding is a ceremony and as previously stated, a wedding can differ depending on aspects such as culture.
2.4 Social media and weddings

‘The progressive advent of print, film, televised and computer-generated media has greatly expanded the ability to structure, create and recreate the meaning of weddings as well as the manner in which these events take place.’ (Daniels and Loveless, 2007:45). This basically suggests that the media has impacted the way in which people plan their wedding and, to some extent, the meaning of weddings. In relation to computer-generated media, in 2015 it was reported that almost half of the world’s population had access to the internet compared to 2000 where only 6.8 percent of the population had access (internetlivestats, 2017 [Online]). This demonstrates how fast technology is expanding.

‘With the new power of social media, weddings are becoming shaped by Facebook statuses, Instagram snaps and Twitter updates right from the proposal to the wedding day.’ (Guidesforbrides, 2017 [Online]). Diemer (2013 [Online]), recognises that more and more people are taking advantage of social media websites to help them with virtually every aspect of their wedding. According to a study by Smith (2012 [Online]), two in five people show suppliers features they want at their wedding from posts they have seen on Pinterest. In another of Smith’s reports, she discovered that more than half of brides are sharing progress updates throughout their wedding day, while also sharing registry information and pictures of the planning process on the lead up to the big day. This leads to a report by Zolfagharifard (2015 [Online]) which revealed that more than 75% of people admitted to ‘making their lives seem more exciting through social media’.

Figure 2.5 – A suggested categorization of special events (Shone and Parry, 2004:4)
It is becoming more of a trend to make the public aware of people’s personal events online through social media platforms. Wedded Wonderland (2016 [Online]) identifies that this is becoming more evident in modern day weddings. They suggest that people have become reliant on sharing something as intimate as someone’s wedding day, over numerous accounts on social media. Social media has made it easier for people to do this which can be seen in the current social media trends. These include; Setting up a hashtag for a wedding to make it easier for people to find information and photos from the day. Creating a bespoke geofilter that only appears on a phone if guests are in the wedding location, which can then be shared on picture based social media sites such as Snapchat and Instagram. People also live stream their wedding online through social platforms such as Facebook for all their online friends to watch whilst the ceremony takes place (Wedded Wonderland, 2016 [Online]).

Preston (2014 [Online]) identifies that social media can be beneficial as a wedding planning tool. She lists three ways that social media can proves itself to be useful;

1. Vendor search – Platforms such as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter allow people to search for potential vendors. These platforms act as a virtual portfolio for companies to show off what they can do.

2. Group chats – This is a feature available on most social media platforms. They are a convenient form of communication between people, such as a bride and her bridesmaids. Group chats can help to speed up the planning process as it helps questions to be answered quicker.

3. Group pin boards – These are boards created on Pinterest that people can share with their friends and where friends can add ideas too.

Socialmediaweek (2014 [Online]) also recognises that social media has enhanced the wedding planning process. However, they believe that social media has added to the pressure of needing perfection. They feel this due to social media being so full of ideas that there’s almost too many options.

2.5 Pinterest

‘Pinterest is a virtual pin board that allows the user to sort, collect, and organize online items. Users are equipped with their own personal online ‘boards,’ to which they can ‘pin’ items and group according to themes or topics.’ (White, 2014:4).

Pinterest provides people with thousands of ideas, but it is becoming more and more evident that it is excelling in helping couples plan their wedding day. According to Pinterest (2017
over 40 million people use Pinterest each year for help and guidance when it comes to planning their wedding day. This is a prime example of social media impacting peoples’ decisions when it comes to design and theming of their weddings. However, some people are a bit sceptical of Pinterest as a wedding tool. Valasco (2013 [Online]) feels that Pinterest does not help couples, as it encourages them to spend more on the beautiful ideas that they get hit with. Nicole (2017 [Online]), agrees as she seems to think that Pinterest is overwhelming and takes away what’s most important when it comes to weddings.

2.6 Facebook
According to a report by Statista (2018 [Online]), currently Facebook is the most popular social media networking platform compared to any other with over 2 million users. The site also accommodated 50 million business pages in 2015 (Chaykowski, 2015 [Online]), which shows that other than connecting with friends over the platform, it is also filled with businesses advertising their products and services. Due to the majority of businesses now having an online presence, it is now easier than ever to contact them. Facebook (2015 [Online]) identified that people can communicate with businesses through a company’s Facebook page. Facebook added a tab to every business page which allows potential customers to see when they are likely to get a reply. This is created from the data Facebook have collected from how fast each company responds to customers private messages (Facebook, 2015 [Online]). When it comes to wedding planning, most couples want the process to be as stress free as possible, therefore being able to quickly send a message adds to the convenience of using social media as a planning tool. Online reviews can also aid the planning process as they tell people whether a company is trustworthy. Reports have shown that 84 percent of people trust online reviews as much as they do if that review were to come from a friend or family member (Bloem, 2017 [Online]). Most companies have some form of online presence through social media, therefore it is important that they maintain good reviews to aid future business.

Another way in which Facebook can influence decisions is their tailored advertising system, in which websites people visit can go through Facebook to target individuals to encourage a purchase if they did not do so earlier when browsing (Facebook, 2018 [Online]). During the wedding planning process, a lot of people browse for ideas and inspiration, Facebook can take advantage of this and display adverts with previously desired items for the individuals to reconsider to encourage a purchase.
2.7 Event planning models

In order to fully understand how social media platforms are impacting planning, each stage of the event planning process should be understood.

There are many models that theorists have created in order for event planners to construct the ideal event. In this section, the researcher discusses two different models created by two theorists and then come to a conclusion as to which one will be the most useful for the topic of this study.

2.7.1 Salem et al Event Planning Model

Figure 2.6 - Salem, Jones and Morgan event planning model (2004: 15)

Figure 2.6 was constructed by Salem et al (2004) which provides planners with the systematic identification and breakdown of four major stages that help with event development. These four stages are, decision, detailed planning, implementation and
evaluation. The detailed planning stage is the essence to managing any event, and therefore needs the most consideration.

A wedding requires definition; therefore, a theme can be created at this stage. ‘Once the theme is established, the elements of the event must be designed to fit in’ (McDonnell et al., 1999: 246). The model then goes onto the financial study stage which with the majority of events includes; anticipated income and expenditure, budgeting and cash flow. The majority of expenditure occurs pre-wedding, this being during the planning phase where all the necessary purchases are made in order to host the day. Haywood (2006) believes that whatever budget a couple set at this stage, they are likely to exceed it. Social media can play a part in this as it can influence purchases made during this stage.

Marketing is another important stage within this process. Social media and marketing has become a popular combination over the years. The different features social media provides, along with its ever-growing popularity has transformed marketing practises such as advertising and promotion (Hanna, Rohm and Crittenden, 2011). Online competitions are just one of the ways social media has aided companies to gain more awareness for themselves. A lot of companies online will hold competitions on social media sites such as Facebook. Saper (2017 [Online]) says that companies relied on competitions to build brand awareness for years. He recognises that traditionally competitions would have been held in the premises of the business. However, now with social media businesses can reach a wider audience therefore simplifying the process and more people are aware of the business. Although, Carter (2017 [Online]) believes that if businesses continue to advertise competitions as they have been over the past few years, that people will stop engaging with them. She talks of steps that companies should consider when using competitions as a marketing technique. She believes that if these steps are followed that competitions will become modern and future-focused.

Looking at the model as a whole, the researcher can see that it is highly complex and notices that such model would most likely be used for large scale/reoccuring events such as festivals.
2.7.2 Watt’s Event Planning Model

Figure 2.7 - Watt event planning model (1998:9)

Figure 2.7 is an event planning model which was created by Watt (1998). This model demonstrates a more relaxed way to planning, unlike the Salem et al. (2004) model.

The implementation planning stage involves goal setting and deciding on how these goals are best achieved. Watt (1998:25) talks of three types of plans that should be produced for an event:

- ‘Strategic Plan’ directing organisations/persons to their overall objectives.
- ‘Specific Plans’ which is based to achieve specific objectives for example budget estimates.
- ‘Administrative, Organisational and structural plans’ will state how these objectives will be achieved.

A simple example of how a wedding structure would look based off Watts model is set out in Table 1 below.

Table 1 – Watts (1998: 9) Event Planning Model adapted
The researcher feels that all stages are important, but particularly feels the planning stage plays a principal part in wedding organisation by focusing on goals and reducing insecurity for the betrothed couples.

When comparing the two models it is clear the Watts (1998) model is more suited to wedding planning than the Salem et al (2004) model which appears to be more suited to more large-scale events. The Salem et al model is based around events that are more than likely to happen again, so compares previous events and financial status and how to make more of a profit at the next one. The Watts model is more unique, allowing this to be flexible around each individual wedding, but still staying in control of financial budgets and making sure the aims and objectives are met for the individual. Therefore, this model has been chosen to aid the investigation.

2.8 Summary

After exploring the literature surrounding the topics relevant to this study, the researcher has recognised that social media has become such a large part of most people’s lives. It is evident from the research that social media is influencing decisions made during the wedding planning process in more ways than one. Advertisements are now tailored to individuals which is encouraging people to purchase items that they browsed for earlier, as it is making them reconsider those items. Reviews and opinions through social media are also influencing peoples decisions, as bad reviews made lead individuals to look elsewhere and good reviews made encourage them to look further into purchasing a product or service. Another way in which social media is influencing decisions made during this process is the ease of access to platforms that provide an array of potential ideas. Pinterest provides inspiration for a variety of ideas, including, table layouts and invitation designs just to name a few, thus encouraging the individuals to re-create similar ideas.

The remainder of this project intends to discover how much of an impact Facebook and Pinterest are impacting decisions made on different elements of the wedding, to see whether the increasing popularity of the platforms is also increasing how social media is used as a wedding planning tool.
Chapter 3 – Methodology
3.0 Introduction
Clough and Nutbrown (2012) states that a methodology is important as it identifies the significance of the research undertaken for the study. However, they recognise that most confuse methods with methodology. Therefore, they distinguish the two by stating that methods can be seen as the ‘ingredients’ needed to conduct the research, whereas methodology is the reasoning behind using a particular technique. Consequently, this chapter highlights the primary and secondary research methods used and the reasoning behind using each technique.
This chapter also discusses any ethical matters related to the topic and how the researcher would adjust the study, if it were to be done again.

3.1 Quantitative and qualitative research
Before the researcher could go and obtain primary research, it is important to understand the ways in which data can be collected. There are two main types of research that can be undertaken for this study these are; quantitative and qualitative research. Walliman (2013) defines quantitative data as data that can be counted and mathematically calculated, usually with statistical methods whereas, qualitative data is data that cannot be accurately measured, and focuses on information expressed in words.

Although many theorist, such as Thomas (2003) and Andrade (2013) believe that a combination of both quantitative and qualitative research helps increase the effectiveness of primary research conducted, the researcher believed that conducting only quantitative data would suit the nature of the study better. This being because the main aim is to see how much social media is impacting the wedding planning process, therefore, having more data collected in the form of questionnaires would increase the reliability and validity of the study.

3.2 Secondary research
Schutt (2011: 414) simply describes secondary research as ‘*the method of using pre-existing data in a different way or to answer a different research question than intended by those who collected the data.*’ It was the researcher’s aim to understand more surrounding the impact of social media on weddings. Therefore, it was vital to conduct secondary research to see what information already existed to allow the researcher to gain more of a background on the chosen topic.
Conducting secondary research has allowed the researcher to comprehend the topic in question and has aided the direction in which the primary research was developed. Stewart and Kamins (1993) identify the importance of conducting secondary research early to allow time for careful analysis. Further adding that leaving research until there is an immediate need for it can restrict the time needed for careful evaluation and therefore can compromise the opportunity to seek more appropriate sources.

The researcher aimed to use a variety of academic sources including; books, journals and websites to obtain a ray of different opinions.

3.3 Primary research
Collins (2010) recognises that once secondary research has been completed, it helps reveal the gaps in information already out there on the topic. This then allows the researcher to create questions to help fill said gaps. There are many ways in which the researcher could have conducted the research in order to get answers to fill those gaps, including interviews, observation, focus groups and more. These could have made the study more reliable and valid as they could have provided more in-depth answers. However, when choosing a method, the researcher must take into account what would provide the study with the best results as “choosing the right methodology for your research is crucial” Kaden (2006: 77). Therefore, the researcher believed that due to the nature of the study, conducting two questionnaires to see the comparison in social medias influence on married and betrothed couples would best fit the research as the more answers obtained, the more reliable the study.
It is important to ensure the primary research constructed is sticking to what the research intends to capture and that all research is consistent throughout to ensure reliable results (Bellamy, 2011).

Although conducting alternative methods, such as unstructured/semi-structured interviews, may have provided richer content on some questions by allowing more discussion, interviews can be bias as one person’s opinion may differ to another. Whilst conducting a more structured interview would be less bias, a questionnaire is just as valuable and reliable. The researcher did however overcome the dilemma of potentially not having access to more in-depth answers by including some open-ended questions in both questionnaires, as Greetham (2009) states that opened-ended questions provide more valuable opinions.
3.3.1 Design of questionnaires

The researcher designed two different questionnaires, one aimed towards married couples and one for betrothed couples, to see if the growth of social media is influencing decisions made when people plan their weddings. Both questionnaires needed to be constructed slightly differently due to the two categories of people required to complete the study.

The first of the two questionnaires was distributed on Facebook as the researcher’s study is all about social media, therefore it seemed only fit to utilise the platform and directly target married people this way. This allowed the researcher to reach a larger scope of participants with varying dates of marriage, allowing difference in opinion throughout the different age groups. The researcher used Facebook due to having an account and a well-established presence on the site, making it easier to distribute the questionnaire to an array of people quickly. It is also one of the social media platforms being reviewed in this study.

Burns and Burns (2008), recognise that developing an online questionnaire is far more complex than that of a traditional one, as they allow a range of different question formats. These include; single select, multi select, sliding scales and more. They state that online questionnaires can be more professional as they can skip blocks of questions that may not be necessary to the participant based on their answers in previous questions. The questionnaire was created using Qualtrics, which is an online survey website. This site provided multiple question formats, therefore increasing professionalism and improving the running of the questionnaire.

This questionnaire contained 20 questions, all simple enough for participants to complete in five minutes. Weisberg et al (1996) states that this is a decent amount of time for a questionnaire, as most researchers tend to add more questions than sometimes necessary making it longer than needed and therefore less likely for participants to complete it.

Advantages of using online questionnaires is how quickly they can be sent out and completed (eVALUEd, 2006 [Online]). Also, it’s relatively cheap, if not free to do and data is electronically formatted making analysis quicker and easier (eVALUEd, 2006 [Online]). However, the main disadvantage is that the researcher cannot ensure that each questionnaire is completed fully. Out of the 93 responses to the questionnaire, the researcher attained 63 fully completed questionnaires.
The sampling method used for this questionnaire was virtual snowball sampling due to the questionnaire being online. Virtual snowball sampling is the same as normal snowball sampling which Babbie (2007) explains is a form of non-random sampling. Snowball sampling is where the researcher collects data from a sample of people in which they can target and then asking that sample to provide information needed to locate others with the necessary demographics desired (Rubin & Babbie, 2009). This is similar with virtual snowballing, however the difference is that the researcher shared the questionnaire with friends online that fall under the necessary demographics, to which they then shared with friends and so on, creating a snowball effect.

The second questionnaire was aimed towards people currently planning their wedding. This was designed to be paper-based as the researcher targeted the betrothed at a bridal show. It was displayed as an A5 booklet which Bradburn et al (2004: 306) believes is the best way to print a paper-based questionnaire for four reasons;

1. Booklets prevent pages from being lost or misplaced;
2. They make it easier for the respondent to turn pages;
3. Allows for double page format for questions about multiple events or persons;
4. Looks professional and is easier to follow.

This questionnaire was compiled of 15 questions, which is five less than the other questionnaire, due to them perhaps not know as much on certain aspects of the planning stage as they may do once married.

Advantages of paper-based questionnaires are that they are easier to hand out when at an event, rather than trying to get people to stop and complete it on a computer. This way, participants are free to take it around with them and complete when they are free. However, the disadvantages are that they’re time consuming as they require the researcher to manually input data into an electronic format for analysis (Schuh, 2011). With paper-based questionnaires it is impossible to stop the participants from reading through all of the questions before answering them. This can potentially reveal certain aspects of information that the researcher does not want the participant to see until they have answered previous questions (Brace, 2008). They are also costly with large amounts of paper and ink needed for printing.
The sampling method used for this questionnaire was convenience sampling which is also a non-random sampling method (Sedgwick, 2013). ‘Convenience sampling means using the most conveniently available people as participants’ (Profetto-McGarth, Polit and Beck, 2010: 209). Attending a bridal show was a form of convenience as all the attendees were guaranteed to be the demographic that the researcher needed for this questionnaire.

For both questionnaires, quota sampling was used as they were both asking questions that divides participants into subgroups, for example; male or female and what age bracket they fall under (Henry, 1990). Henry (1990: 22) identifies that ‘quota sampling allows the researcher discretion in the selection of the individuals for the sample’. By using the two different questionnaires, the researcher was able to select data based on the subgroups to help find out whether social media is influencing decisions made for younger people more than the older generation.

3.4 Data Analysis
The researcher has converted all results from the paper questionnaire into an electronic format to allow for easier analysis and conversion into appropriate graphs. The survey system Qualtrics prepared the data from the online questionnaire into graphs already, allowing for quicker analysis. All open-ended questions have been analysed through thematic analysis which ‘is a method for identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data’ (Braun & Clarke, 2006: 6).

3.5 Ethics
The researcher required approval from the university ethics committee before any research could be undertaken. This was to ensure that none of the research was unethical and how potential issues would be dealt with if any were to arise. The approved ethics is shown in Appendix A.

All participants answered the questionnaires anonymously and their results were all confidential to the researcher. Participants for both questionnaires were made aware of what the information they provide would be going towards and that they had the option to withdraw from the questionnaire at any time.
3.6 Limitations

Although the researcher feels that the way this study was conducted was effective in achieving the aims and objectives, there are some aspects that could be improved if this study was to be done again. The majority of the participants who answered the questionnaires were female, having a more male view may have varied the results. Most participants were in the millennial age group, having more older participants may have helped the researcher better identify the change in how social media has impacted the wedding planning process. There is also limited academic literature surrounding weddings, thus making it difficult to focus in on certain aspects that could have been explored further if there was more available.

3.7 Summary

In this chapter the researcher has justified the reasoning behind how and why they went about constructing this study. It has covered why the researcher used only quantitative research, but has also explained ways in which they could have undertaken qualitative research and the reasoning why that would not have been as beneficial to the study. The researcher identified the advantages and disadvantages of using questionnaires for this study, however has suggested improvements if the study was to be repeated.
Chapter 4 – Results and Discussion
4.0 Overview
This chapter analyses the results gathered from the two questionnaires undertaken in order to discover to what extent social media has been impacting people’s decisions whilst planning their wedding. The extent of this impact is identified by comparing answers between both questionnaires. By comparing the answers from the people who got married before the growth in social media and those getting married now, the results reveal whether the growth of social media has impacted decisions made during the planning process. The data summaries from both questionnaires can be found in Appendix D and E. Throughout this the literature review is revisited to identify any common themes linking the findings from the primary and secondary research.

4.1 Questionnaire results
The following data shows the key findings from each questionnaire. The type of questions aimed to identify peoples’ opinions on how much social media is contributing towards and impacting their decisions whilst planning their weddings, specifically focusing on Facebook and Pinterest. The information gathered has been broken up into appropriate pie charts and bar graphs to make it easier to identify the difference in results between the two questionnaires. Overall there were 113 questionnaires obtained, 63 from married participants and 50 from betrothed participants. This exceeds the number stated in the ethics that would have been required in order to make the results for this study feasible.

4.1.1 General findings
The first question presented in both questionnaires asked participants their gender. From the results, 89% of married participants were female as were 92% of betrothed participants, showing a predominately female audience. It was predicted that this would be the outcome due to the nature of the topic. The majority of the paper questionnaires created for the betrothed were distributed at a bridal show, in which brides-to-be would come and try on potential wedding dresses. Due to the nature of the event and the tradition that prohibits men from seeing the dress before the day means that it had a contributing factor to the number of females that completed this questionnaire. In regard to the online questionnaire directed towards married people, Facebook was the researchers chosen platform used to circulate it. It soon became apparent that there were a larger female to male ratio of personal married connections meaning that responses would be predominately female.
The second question requested participants' ages, in order to see if social media is influencing the generation introduced to social media at a younger age more than the older generation who have been introduced to it at a later stage in their life. It was important for the researcher to obtain results from all age groups for this reason, however it was proven difficult to do so due to the nature of the sampling methods. Convenience sampling was used, however stratified sampling would have allowed the researcher to increase the data range.

Looking at Figures 4.1 and 4.2 the predominate age group that took both questionnaires were 25-35 year olds. As discovered by Hitched (2017 [Online]) this age bracket includes the average age to get married as of 2017, and therefore it could be anticipated that this would be one of the largest groups of participants to undertake the questionnaires.

HOW OFTEN ALL PARTICIPANTS USE SOCIAL MEDIA ON A DAY-TO-DAY BASIS

Figure 4.3 – How often participants use social media on a day-to-day basis
This question was asked to determine how much each age group expose themselves to social media. As shown in Figure 4.3, the age group that exposed themselves to social media the most were 25-34 year olds. Referring back to the results collected by Ofcom (2015 [Online]) in Chapter 2, this age group demonstrated the highest rise in the amount of people to own a social media account. As this age bracket includes the average age of marriage and is one of most active groups with social media, this could show that their decisions made during the wedding planning process are more likely to be influenced by social media than any of the other age brackets.

Looking further into Figure 4.3, it is noticeable that social media is being used frequently by older users. The researcher believes that if more people aged 35+ partook in this study, that it may show a larger proportion of the older generation interacting with social media than not interacting at all. Figure 4.3 already demonstrates that people aged 35+ are using social media ‘very frequently’ and ‘frequently’ more than they are ‘hardly’. This already starts to support that the older generation are showing more of an interest in social media than in previous years which further supports the research by Ofcom (2015 [Online]) in Chapter 2. Anacleto et al (2011) stated three reasons why they believed the older generation were showing more of an interest in social media which included reconnecting with people from their past. This leads the researcher to believe that social media for older people is used less as a tool for decision making and more for personal use such as reconnecting with old friends. Although the younger generation also use social media for this reason, it is becoming more evident that they also use social media to aid them with purchasing decisions which will be further identified in this chapter.

4.1.2 Facebook and Pinterest’s influence on wedding planning

The next question that was asked in each questionnaire was to find out how much of an influence both Facebook and Pinterest are having on different elements of a wedding during planning. By discovering how much of an influence these platforms had on people in previous years (i.e. those already married) and then comparing them to their influence on people now, it would allow the researcher to see if the growth of social media is in fact increasing its influence on peoples’ decisions. Referring back to Table 1 in Chapter 2, the researcher identified that once the ‘Implementation Requirements’ stage of Watt’s (1998) model can be adapted to a wedding and that this would be the stage in which the betrothed would consider what is required before they can start planning their day. Not all betrothed participants would have begun purchasing as of yet, therefore this question included elements
that most couples would need to take into consideration before planning to aid with structure and even help set budgets for each aspect.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect</th>
<th>Married Participants</th>
<th>Betrothed Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Location/venue</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cake design</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hairstyle</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centrepieces</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make-up</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food/drink</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smaller elements</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 4.4 – How much of an influence Facebook had on different aspects of a wedding for married participants.

Figure 4.5 – How much of an influence Facebook had on different aspects of a wedding for married participants.

Figure 4.4 shows the scale of influence Facebook has had on the weddings of participants who have already had their wedding, whilst Figure 4.5 shows the scale of influence it is currently having on betrothed participants. Looking firstly at the overall difference in scales, it is already noticeable that Facebook had less of an influence on those already married compared to those getting married now, showing the researcher that there is a slight increase in influence.

The first element presented to participants was location/venue. Out of the married participants only 5% stated that Facebook had a great deal of influence on their location/venue, compared to 20% of betrothed participants. This question also allowed participants to comment as to why they chose their answer, enabling further investigation into how Facebook has such an impact on this element. Some of the reoccurring comments from
both married and betrothed participants were to do with the fact that with Facebook they could see pictures of what the venue set-up could be and also allowed them to see previous customer’s reviews. This supports what Bloem’s (2017 [Online]) findings 84% of people trust online reviews, therefore further supporting the fact that reviews are becoming a large influencer in decision making. Even though Facebook did not have a great deal of influence on married participants when it came to choosing the location/venue for their wedding, Figure 4.4 shows a large increase in the amount of people that believe Facebook had somewhat of an influence. The same goes for the betrothed participants, with Figure 4.5 showing 23 participants stating that Facebook had somewhat of an influence compared to the 10 that said a great deal. One of the participants wrote that ‘even though we didn’t choose a venue based on what we saw on Facebook, it allowed us to see what sort of things we wanted from a venue’. This shows the researcher that although some people are not using social media directly to make a purchase, it is influencing the decision-making process and allowing people to create ideas of what they would like to see at their wedding.

The second element presented was the photographer. From looking at Figures 4.4 and 4.5 this was one of the highest factors to be influenced by Facebook in betrothed participants and the highest for married participants. Looking further into additional comments made, the main reasons Facebook has such a large influence on what photographer people chose was based on pictures taken at friends’ weddings that they have seen which they then decided to go with. One participant added that ‘a friend went with my photographer before me and wrote how great they were with the whole process on Facebook, which helped me decide to go with them as well as how gorgeous their photos looked online.’ Similar to the location/venue, both charts show an increase in the number of people stating that Facebook had somewhat of an influence on peoples’ choice of photographer. Yet again, additional comments told the researcher that Facebook helped as it allowed people to browse around different photographers, look at their reviews and see the quality of their photography. However, one participant stated that ‘Facebook allowed me to look up photographers in my area.’ This shows the researcher that social media is aiding the planning process by allowing users to see what is available to them in their area.

The next several elements include, cake design, dress, hairstyle, theme, centrepieces, flower arrangements and make-up. By looking at both Figure 4.4 and 4.5 only a small percent of
participants agreed that Facebook had a great deal of influence on these areas. One of the participants who did feel it had a great deal of influence said that ‘Facebook allowed me to contact different invitation designers for quotes on designs I liked’. As identified in the literature review, Facebook (2015 [Online]) identified that they allow for potential customers to contact businesses in a way that is convenient to the buyer. Moreover, there is quite a large increase in the number of participants from both questionnaires that feel that Facebook has had somewhat of an influence on these aspects. It is also clear that this platform is having more of an influence on these particular elements for the betrothed, showing that Facebook could be increasing the way they advertise these factors. Facebook (2018 [Online]) did confirm they used tailored advertisement which could be a contributing factor to this increase shown in the researchers results. However, looking at the additional comments made, some participants stated that generic videos of some of these elements shared on Facebook pages that they follow gave them inspiration for their weddings. Barker (2017 [Online]) recognised that a good ‘feed’ from businesses on social media attracts more followers. As mentioned, the betrothed is being influenced by Facebook more on these elements than the married participants were when they were planning, demonstrating that businesses could be improving their feed on social media in order to gain them more followers, thus increasing the influence they have on peoples’ decisions.

The next element presented was entertainment. This shows a surprisingly large difference between both charts in that betrothed participants find that Facebook is impacting their decision on the entertainment for their wedding compared to the majority of the married participants who state that Facebook had little to no influence on this aspect. Reasons for this are similar to comments made on previous elements such as; Facebook has helped participants browse for entertainment in the local area, look at videos to view previous performances and allowed them to ‘direct message’ the companies for further information.
The second platform to be discussed is Pinterest. Figures 4.6 and 4.7 identifies the results gathered from how much participants feel Pinterest influenced their decisions on the same elements. This was to allow the researcher to see if one platform was more effective towards the planning stage than the other. Like the results collected for Facebook, Pinterest also seems to be showing an increase in influence on betrothed people than it did on participants that are now married.

Looking into the first two elements presented, the results already tell the researcher that Pinterest is having less of an influence on helping people choose their location/venue and photographer than Facebook. These two elements are one of the highest among both married and betrothed to have had no influence on peoples’ decisions along with transport and food/drink. However, there are several elements which show a dramatic increase on Pinterest’s influence. Figures 4.6 and 4.7 show that many participants have had a great deal of influence from Pinterest on; cake design, dress, hairstyle, theme, centrepieces and flower arrangements among both married and betrothed participants. Combining additional comments made on these elements from both married and betrothed, it is clear that Pinterest
has been impacting decisions for some time. Several of the married participants stated that
they have used Pinterest for a variety of the aspects listed and used them to show suppliers
what they would like at their wedding. One participant said ‘I used Pinterest to look for ideas
which I then took to the suppliers that I chose so that they knew what we were looking for. I
knew roughly what I wanted but Pinterest helped me to explain this to the people who were
providing services’. This supports the study created by Smith (2012 [Online]) which
discovered two in five people show suppliers features they want at their wedding from posts
they have seen on Pinterest. Similar comments were made by betrothed participants, with one
participant saying, ‘We’re getting married in Italy and the florist we chose does not speak a
word of English so Pinterest helped me show her the designs I wanted.’ This tells the
researcher that Pinterest is a helpful planning tool to express ideas to anyone, even if there is
a language barrier.

Looking at both Figure 4.6 and 4.7 it is also evident that Pinterest had a large amount of
influence on the smaller elements such as invitations and favours among both lots of
participants, which was unlike the results gathered for Facebook on this aspect. Additional
comments told the researcher that participants have created ‘pin boards’ based on these
smaller elements, with one stating ‘I have created a board on Pinterest for every element of
my wedding from theming right down to the favours.’ White (2014 [Online]) identified in the
literature that Pinterest is a virtual pin board that people use to organise, collect and sort
different ideas and group them according to the different themes and topics.

After comparing the results gathered from both Facebook and Pinterest it is evident that they
are both growing in a way that will help with the planning process. It is possible that the
increase in influence is down to the rise in social media users. In the literature, Statista (2018
[Online]) showed an increasing amount of social media users year on year to which even
their predictions on the number of users in years to come exceeded four years earlier than
expected. Combining this with the rising amount of youths using social media as discovered
by Ofcom (2015 [Online]) and the results gathered by the researcher, it is starting to show
how much of an increasing influence social media is having on the younger generations more
than the older generations as they have not been as exposed to the technology as long, as

However, the researcher believes that from the results, Pinterest is helping with the more
visual aspects of the wedding, whereas Facebook is helping people find their
vendors/suppliers. Further justifying this, one participant stated that ‘*Pinterest only helped me with the inspiration, it didn’t actually help me find vendors or suppliers.*’

### 4.1.3 Influence of trends and friends

In the literature, Zolfagharifard (2015 [Online]) discovered that more than 75% of people admitted to making their lives appear more exciting on social media, proving that people could be taking advantage of such a big day to make themselves appear more ‘exciting’. If this is the case, it would support Daniels and Loveless (2007) when they say that media, such as social media, is impacting the original meaning of a wedding. People are now more than ever being influenced by what they see and if friends’ weddings on social media is influencing how others execute their day, then social media is changing the meaning of weddings as no longer is marriage the main objective, but the ‘show’ behind it all. The following results prove this to be true, as there is an increase in the amount of participants who are soon to marry that have admitted that their friends’ weddings have influence the standard they have set for theirs.

![INFLUENCE OF FRIENDS WEDDING ON MARRIED PARTICIPANTS](chart1.png)

**Figure 4.8** – How much married participants believe friend’s weddings on social media impacted the standard of their wedding.

![INFLUENCE OF FRIENDS WEDDINGS ON BETROTHED PARTICIPANTS](chart2.png)

**Figure 4.9** – How much betrothed participants believe friend’s weddings on social media impacted the standard set of their wedding.
Figures 4.8 and 4.9 display the results from when participants were asked if they believe whether seeing friends’ weddings publicised on social media influenced the standard they did/will be setting for their wedding.

Looking at Figure 4.8, the majority of all married participants believed that seeing friends’ weddings displayed on social media had no influence on the standard set for theirs. However, it is clear that many younger married participants believe they did influence their day to some extent. Moreover, Figure 4.9 shows that the majority of betrothed participants believe that friends’ weddings have impacted the standard they are setting for their day. It is obvious that many of the younger generation believe this, however if the researcher gained more results from the age bracket 36+ data could be different. By looking at the results already gathered from the age groups 36-45 and 46-55, it shows that some people this age also feel as though their friends’ weddings are impacting the standard set for their day.

Analysing the results gathered, this leads the researcher to believe that due to social media, people are making their wedding day look like no other, therefore making other people feel as though they need to have a more superior wedding.

This question asked participants whether they did/are following any of the current social media trends and if they used/will be using any on their day. In the literature, Wedded Wonderland (2016 [Online]) identified some of the current social media trends being used at weddings which included, live streaming weddings on social media for all online friends to
watch and setting up a bespoke hashtag that when search on social media all relevant information and pictures shared appear. Figure 4.10 shows the researcher that the majority of married participants did not use nor consider any social media trends. However, looking at the younger generation it is clear that they were more aware of the trends, with a small number using them. This is further identified in Figure 4.11 which shows that betrothed participants are more open to using the social media trends, with over half saying they will be using/have considered current trends. Even though social media trends are not being used as much as Wedded Wonderland (2016 [Online]) anticipated, it is evident that the betrothed participants were more aware of current trends than married participants were when planning their day. This again could be connected to the increase in popularity of social media identified by Ofcom (2015 [Online]), as the more people that use it, the more people are becoming aware of how they can utilise it to benefit them, thus creating the trends such as the ones Wedded Wonderland (2016 [Online]) recognised.

![Figure 4.12 – Social media competition entry – Married participants.](image1)

![Figure 4.13 – Social media competition entry – Betrothed participants.](image2)

As discovered in the literature, companies host competitions on social media that encourage people to ‘like and share’ that post on their personal accounts. Saper (2017 [Online]) identified this as a marketing tool for the company, as the people who share the competitions on their accounts is in turn spreading awareness of that company. Therefore, this question
was asked to determine whether this form of marketing is encouraging people to engage with companies through social media.

Figure 4.12 illustrates that the majority of married participants had not seen nor entered any social media competitions whilst planning their wedding. However, 35% said they had not entered competitions yet they had seen them advertised meaning that although they saw them, they did not wish to enter. Out of all married participants only 25% said they had entered competitions in the hope of winning something for their wedding. Whereas, Figure 4.13 shows that 38% of betrothed participants entered social media competitions which is a 13% increase compared to Figure 4.12. There is also a 15% decrease in the number of betrothed participants that said they had seen competitions and not entered. These graphs demonstrate that more people are entering competitions on social media now in the hope that they may win something towards their wedding than there were when the married participants planned their weddings. This shows that social media is indeed having an influence.

In the literature, Carter (2017 [Online]) proved to be sceptical whether competitions held on social media were still working. She believes if companies take the same approach towards competitions as they have been for the last few years, that people will stop entering them. She suggested several ways in which businesses on social media needed to improve the way the approach advertising their competitions to keep them interesting. The results collected by the researcher could suggest that companies are recognising that competitions were becoming uninteresting and therefore have improved the way they go about showcasing them online which could now be attracting more people to enter.

### 4.1.4 Budgeting and planning

As identified in Watts (1998) model, it is important to undertake evaluation following the event. Referring back to the researchers’ adaption of the model shown in Chapter 2 Table 1, it was at this stage the researcher identified that people would need to see if the original budget was kept to. Due to the topic of the study, the researcher aimed to discover how much of an impact social media had on the financial stage of the process. Therefore, these questions were asked to determine how many married participants exceeded their budget, and if so, whether they felt that was due to social media or not. Figure 4.14 displays the results from when participants were asked whether they exceeded their original budget set for their wedding.
The graph shows the researcher that the majority of married participants said they stuck to their original budget, therefore disproves what Haywood (2006) said, as she believed that most people are likely to exceed their original budget. The researcher then asked those who did not stick to their budget whether they feel as though social media played a part in this, due to possibly seeing more ideas through platforms such as Pinterest and therefore spending more to create those ideas. Figure 4.15 tells the researcher that a third of participants feel they exceeded their budget due to social media with the remainder saying that it was not due to social media. The results suggest that social media is influencing peoples purchases to some extent, as some people did feel as though they spent more because of ideas they came across on social media.
Preston (2014 [Online]) believes that social media is an effective wedding planning tool and identified ways in which it can aid the process including, helping people search for vendors and setting up group chats which add to the convenience of using social media. This question was asked to determine how many people believe that social media actually is an effective wedding planning tool.

Figure 4.16 – The extent to which married participants feel social media is a good planning tool.

Figure 4.17 – The extent to which betrothed participants feel social media is a good planning tool.

Figure 4.16 illustrates the opinions of married participants, which shows that the majority agreed with the statement. It is clear from the graph that 25-34 year olds agree with the statement the most, with 8 percent saying they totally agree and 41 saying they agree. However, 11 percent of 25-34 year olds said that they disagreed with this statement. It is also noticeable that the majority of the participants in the 55+ age bracket disagrees with the statement. This could be linked to the next question. Figure 4.17 shows betrothed participants opinions of social media as an effective planning tool. Yet again, it is clear that the majority agree with the statement thus supporting Preston (2014 [Online]). Comparing Figure 4.16 and 4.17 there is a rise in the amount of betrothed people that agree. Again, this could be due to the increasing acceptance and engagement with social media across all ages as identified by Ofcom (2015 [Online]).
Following on from the previous question, participants were then asked the extent that they agreed with the statement that social media puts too much pressure on those getting married.

Looking at Figures 4.18 and 4.19 it is clear that there are mixed views among all age brackets, however, the majority of participants from both groups believe that social media does put too much pressure on those getting married. This supports Socialmediaweek (2014 [Online]), as even though they believe social media has helped enhance wedding planning, they also believed that it has added to the pressure of needing perfection.

Referring back to Figures 4.16 and 4.17, it is clear that the majority believe that social media is a great planning tool, however, Figure 4.18 and 4.19 reveal that most believe it puts too much pressure on those getting married. This shows that although people see social media as a good planning tool, it is also adding pressure to the planning. Although, it is evident that a large number disagree with this statement. Looking at the difference in responses, surprisingly more betrothed participants disagree, suggesting that people are becoming less influenced by the pressures social media can provide during the planning stage.
4.2 Discussion

Referring back to the research questions set out in Chapter 1, the results gathered have enabled these to be answered.

1. How has social media growth impacted consumer behaviour during planning?

After analysing the results from both questionnaires and comparing the findings to the literature, it is clear that the growth of social media is increasing the level of influence it is having on peoples’ decisions during the wedding planning process. The researcher justifies this through the results which suggest that the betrothed are being influenced more than the married participants were when they were planning their day. However, the results do not show as much of an increase as initially anticipated. There are many factors that could have instigated this outcome, such as; a small number of older participants therefore restricting comparison of influence between older and younger generations or the sampling methods or even that social media just is not influencing peoples’ decisions as much as expected.

In the literature, Evans (2008) recognised that social media has opened up a whole new world to consumers purchasing behaviours. As identified in the literature and by participants, social media enables people to search for reviews and pictures of products/services before purchasing. From being able to see peoples’ thoughts and opinions before purchase has evidently impacted consumers behaviour, as a large number of bad reviews is likely going to decrease a potential customers chance of purchase.

However, it is not just being able to see reviews and photos on social media that has impacted consumers behaviours. The results show that social media is impacting the standard people are setting for their weddings, due to being able to see the standard of friends’ weddings which have been displayed online. This was evident more so in betrothed participants, which has suggested that the growth of social media has been impacting the standard people are setting for their day.

These factors are just a few that starts to show how social media is impacting consumers.

2. How effective is social media as a planning tool?

It is clear that Facebook and Pinterest are increasing in popularity when it comes to aiding decisions on different aspects. Facebook appears to be influencing decisions on bigger elements such as suppliers as it allows people to; search for vendors/suppliers, talk to them in a quick and convenient manor and look at reviews by previous customers to see if their right
for them. Pinterest however, seems to be better at giving inspiration on the small more intricate details, such as helping with invitation designs, flower arrangements and hairstyles for the day. The different trends these platforms have created are constantly growing and demonstrate how social media is weaving into such events. As identified in the results, more people are embracing the trends with more people now considering them and using them on their day.

Furthermore, the researcher has identified that social media is impacting the wedding planning process as it provides convenience. However, the more social media grows the more likely it is to put pressure on couples getting married, which most participants agreed with. This is due to the ever growing need to make lives appear more interesting online, therefore adding to the pressure of needing to appear more innovative than the last person which social media encourages with its endless supply of ideas.
Chapter 5 – Conclusion
5.0 Overview
This chapter concludes the study by revisiting the aim, objectives and research questions set at the beginning of the project to establish whether they have been achieved. A summary of the findings will be discussed, followed by any limitations the researcher came across. The chapter concludes with the researcher’s recommendations for future research.

5.1 Aim and Objectives
The aim of the study was:

To seek the extent to which the social media platforms Facebook and Pinterest are influencing the way in which people plan their weddings.

The objectives made to help achieve this aim were:

1. Critically review literature on wedding planning, wedding trends and the rise of social media.

The researcher conducted a literature review which comprised of the relevant theory and was presented in different sections based on their topic. From this, the researcher was then able to identify areas of literature that needed to be explored further therefore aiding the construction of the primary research. The literature covered areas such as; the rise in social media, current trends and how social media is already impacting decisions made within the wedding industry.

It was found that social media use is increasing in popularity among all age groups year on year, demonstrating that the growth of social media is showing no signs of stopping. It is clear that platforms such as Facebook and Pinterest, are using the rise in popularity to their advantage and adapting their sites to reach out to more people, this can be seen through advertising techniques and how the sites have change to aid planning. People such as Preston (2014 [Online]) have recognised that social media is being used more and more as a planning tool as it is providing convenience by enabling people to search for ideas to vendors/suppliers. It has also become clear that a large number of people are using social media on the day of their weddings by using things such as, bespoke snapchat filters and hashtags as recognised by Wedded Wondeland (2016 [Online]). The results supported this as
they also showed an increase in the amount of people considering/using social media trends on their day, proving that people are becoming more aware.

However, research has provided its difficulties as there is only a small amount of academic literature on weddings and the impacts of social media has on consumer decisions. Therefore, a lot of research into these areas have had to come from online sources.

2. Conduct primary research in the form of two questionnaires with people who are already married and who are currently planning their wedding to see if social media is increasing the way people are being influenced during the planning stage.

This objective was achieved through the primary research. The researcher conducted two questionnaires, one for married people and one for people getting married. The questionnaires were constructed by identifying gaps within the literature and by also using Watts (1998) Event Planning Model. Watts model proved to be one that could be utilised for onetime events, such as a wedding. The models structure is clear within the questionnaires, as it demonstrates the process from the date of the wedding right through to whether budgets were followed. As the study is predominantly focused on the planning phase, both questionnaires concentrated on the implementation stages the most to allow the researcher to see further into the different aspects that social media may be influencing.

If the questionnaires were to be conducted again, the researcher feels as though there are developments that could benefit the results gathered. The researcher feels that although open-ended questions were added to allow for some in-depth answers to factor in for not conducting interviews, there were some key areas that the researcher could have asked why they chose that answer. For example; a large number of participants believed that social media puts too much pressure on those getting married, here the researcher could have asked why they thought this. A small number of participants believed that social media cost them more from being able to see more ideas. However, the researcher feels that an additional question that could have been asked was whether participants thought that social media saved them money, with platforms such as Pinterest being full of DIY designs. Overall, there were questions that could have been asked to lead to a more in-depth discussion.
There was a lack of older participants. Although the research was feasible with 50 participants taking each questionnaire, the researcher feels that more participants would have helped discussion, especially older participants. If more older participants took part, it would have allowed the researcher to have a better comparison on how age is a contributing factor to how much social media is influencing the younger generation more. A more substantial way that could have ensured the researcher gained more opinions from older generations is to change the sampling method from convenience to stratified sampling which would ensure for a wider data range. Conducting stratified sampling would have also ensured more of a male point of view as results were predominately female. Having a more male opinion may have altered the findings.

3. Discuss the results of the questionnaires in relation to the wedding planning process and the trends identified in the literature review.

This objective was achieved in the Chapter 4, where the researcher reviewed the results obtained, whilst comparing them to what was said in the literature. The following was discovered:

- From the results it is evident that both Facebook and Pinterest are increasing their influence on peoples’ decisions during the wedding planning stage the more that social media grows. However, participants were not as influenced as much as initially anticipated.
- Respondents seem to be influenced by their friends’ weddings that are shared on social media, by saying that from seeing other weddings this sets a certain standard for theirs.
- Social media wedding trends appear to be increasing with the number of betrothed participants that have become more familiar with them and even using them on their day.
- The majority of respondents believed that social media was a good wedding planning tool, however further believed that it adds a lot of pressure to those getting married.
- Facebook and Pinterest show they influence decisions during planning, but in their own separate ways. Facebook proved to be more beneficial for searching for suppliers, whereas Pinterest demonstrates there is more on an impact on smaller elements by providing more inspiration.
4. Conclude on how the social media platforms Facebook and Pinterest are influencing decisions made during the wedding planning process

This objective has been achieved throughout the study. The literature review covered the existing theory on the general topic of both the rise in social media and the impacts that social media has on decisions. The primary research looked further into the two platforms Facebook and Pinterest and covered how wedding related aspects on these sites have become more influential to people who are planning their weddings in today’s society.

5.2 Research questions

The research questions were:

1. How has social media growth impacted consumer behaviour during planning?
2. How effective is social media as a planning tool?

As identified in Chapter 4, the results gathered from participants of the study aided these questions to be answered. There are multiple ways in which social media is impacting consumers behaviour during the planning of a wedding. The results identified that general reviews and what friends share are influencing decisions. The majority of participants also expressed that social media proves to be an effective planning tool, however further declare that it can put pressure on soon to be married couples. This shows the limitations that social media possess to people planning a wedding with the help of social media.

5.3 Recommendations

This study is important as there is a lack of academic literature focused on the topic of study. Therefore, the ultimate aim of this study was help build on existing research to increase knowledge in this area.

This study will be relevant to anyone within the wedding industry, whether that be direct companies such as wedding planners and venues or in indirect companies such as florists and photographers. This is due to the study revealing how effective the social media platforms Facebook and Pinterest are for companies such as theirs. The study is also relevant to people who wish to further look into this subject area in the future.
In order for this subject to be fully understood, further study needs to be conducted. As identified, this study has proven that the growth of social media has in turn increased the amount of influence people get from it during the planning stage. However, it was also noticed that this influence was not as high as anticipated, therefore further study into how people use social media may identify why the influence is not as high. This could be done by gaining a better understanding of consumer behaviour on social media. More research into the overall subject area also needs to be conducted to increase the academic literature available for studies such as this.

5.4 Conclusion

This chapter identified how the researcher completed the objectives in order to reach the aim of the study. It has summarised the main findings from the results obtained through the primary research and how they have helped achieve what the study set out to discover. The researcher has also identified some limitations to the study, but has made recommendations on how to go about improving them if the study were to be done again.
References


Appendix A: Ethics form

DEVELOPED ETHICS APPROVAL APPLICATION SUMMARY

Student Name: Paige Craddock  Student Number: 20082217
Module Name: Dissertation  Module Number:  
Programme Name: Events Management  Supervisor Name:  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To be completed by student and supervisor before submission to Ethics Approval Panel</th>
<th>Student Signature;</th>
<th>Supervisor Signature;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Application for ethics approval</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant information sheet</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant consent form</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pilot interview/s</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pilot questionnaire/s</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letter’s to participating organisation/s</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confirmation of interviewee participation</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

First Submission [ ]  Resubmission [ ]

Date: 19/12/17

For use by the devolved ethics approval panel:

Panel Members Name: [Signature:]

Module leader, Chair:

Supervisor:

CSM Ethics Committee Representative:

Date:  

Date of Reassessment:  

Outcome:

Project Approved [ ]  Scrapped [ ]  Reference number issued: 201635389

Chair’s Action [ ]  Application not Approved [ ]

Comments for projects not fully approved:

[C1+C2]: - State where 18yo is if permission not granted
missato distribute at wedding's figure.

The original to be retained by the supervisor and a copy given to the student and module leader.

In the case of a resubmission being required this original form should be submitted with the resubmission not a new, blank, one.
CARDIFF METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY
APPLICATION FOR ETHICS APPROVAL

When undertaking a research or enterprise project, Cardiff Met staff and students are obliged to complete this form in order that the ethics implications of that project may be considered.

If the project requires ethics approval from an external agency (e.g., NHS), you will not need to seek additional ethics approval from Cardiff Met. You should however complete Part One of this form and attach a copy of your ethics letter(s) of approval in order that your School has a record of the project.

The document Ethics application guidance notes will help you complete this form. It is available from the Cardiff Met website. The School or Unit in which you are based may also have produced some guidance documents, please consult your supervisor or School Ethics Coordinator.

Once you have completed the form, sign the declaration and forward to the appropriate person(s) in your School or Unit.

PLEASE NOTE:
Participant recruitment or data collection MUST NOT commence until ethics approval has been obtained.

PART ONE

| Name of applicant:          | Paige Heidi Cradduck
| Supervisor (if student project): | Karen Davies
| School / Unit:              | Cardiff Metropolitan School of Management
| Student number (if applicable): | St20082217
| Programme enrolled on (if applicable): | BA Events Management
| Project Title:              | An Investigation Into the effects that the social media platforms Facebook and Pinterest have on the planning stage of weddings.
| Expected start date of data collection: | 18/12/2017
| Approximate duration of data collection: | 10 weeks
| Funding Body (if applicable): | N/A
| Other researcher(s) working on the project: | N/A
| Will the study involve NHS patients or staff? | No
| Will the study involve human samples and/or human cell lines? | No
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Does your project fall entirely within one of the following categories:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paper based, involving only documents in the public domain</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laboratory based, not involving human participants or human samples</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practice based not involving human participants (e.g. curatorial, practice audit)</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compulsory projects in professional practice (e.g. Initial Teacher Education)</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A project for which external approval has been obtained (e.g., NHS)</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If you have answered YES to any of these questions, expand on your answer in the non-technical summary. No further information regarding your project is required.

If you have answered NO to all of these questions, you must complete Part 2 of this form

In no more than 150 words, give a non-technical summary of the project

The aim is to see whether the growth of social media has impacted on how people plan their weddings by see how the social media platforms Facebook and Pinterest are influencing different planning elements of weddings. To see if social media is becoming more and more influential in the planning stage, the researcher will conduct two different questionnaires, one to betrothed couples and one to married couples to see if there has been an increasing difference over the years. Finally, this project will also look into the different trends that social media is creating for weddings.

The author will conduct secondary research existing on social media and wedding trends. As said previously, the primary research that will be conducted will be two different questionnaires. These results will be gathered together to create an overall analysis on whether social media is impacting decisions made in the planning process or not.

DECLARATION:
I confirm that this project conforms with the Cardiff Met Research Governance Framework

I confirm that I will abide by the Cardiff Met requirements regarding confidentiality and anonymity when conducting this project.

STUDENTS: I confirm that I will not disclose any information about this project without the prior approval of my supervisor.

Signature of the applicant: [Signature]
Date: 11/11/17

FOR STUDENT PROJECTS ONLY

FOR STUDENT PROJECTS ONLY

Name of supervisor: Karen Davies
Date: 11/11/2017

Signature of supervisor: [Signature]
**Research Ethics Committee use only**

- **Decision reached:**
  - Project approved [ ]
  - Project approved in principle [ ]
  - Decision deferred [ ]
  - Project not approved [ ]
  - Project rejected [ ]

- **Project reference number:** 2016053589
- **Name:** [Name]
- **Signature:** [Signature]
- **Date:** [Date: to enter a date]

Details of any conditions upon which approval is dependant: [Details]

[Click here to enter text]

**PART TWO**

**A RESEARCH DESIGN**

1. **Will you be using an approved protocol in your project?** No
2. **If yes, please state the name and code of the approved protocol to be used:**
   - [Code]

- **Describe the research design to be used in your project:**
  - **Questionnaire 1 (Paper):**
    - This questionnaire is targeted at people currently in the planning stage of their wedding.
    - The researcher aims to gather the completion of 50+ questionnaires to ensure the validity of the study and to gain a large amount of data.
    - The researcher will hand out questionnaires at St Mellons Hotel & Spa Wedding Fayre on the 21/01/2018 and at Village Hotel Wedding Fayre on the 28/01/2018. The researcher will need to write an email to each organisation to attain permission to hand out questionnaires at each wedding fayre.
    - Participants will be given the questionnaire upon arrival and will return to researcher once leaving the venue, however will only take the participant five minutes to complete.
    - The questionnaire will be analysed statistically using the online questionnaire website Qualtrics. The researcher will add the answers online once the questionnaires have been filled out by hand at the Wedding Fayres.
  
  - **Questionnaire 2 (Online):**
    - This questionnaire is targeted to people who are already married.
    - The questionnaire will be produced on the online questionnaire site Qualtrics.
    - This questionnaire will be based online and will shared on the social media website
      - [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com]
    - The questionnaire will be put on specific Facebook pages e.g. the researchers personal Facebook and pages such as the researchers’ hometown notice board.
    - The researcher aims to have 50+ online questionnaires completed.

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1 An Approved Protocol is one which has been approved by Cardiff Met to be used under supervision of designated members of staff; a list of approved protocols can be found on the Cardiff Met website here.
This will be shared on the researchers personal Facebook account and on any other relevant Facebook pages that full under the target market.

The participant will be told the details of the study and its goals and that proceeding with the online questionnaire that they are consenting they are over 18 and agree to participating.

The online questionnaire will be posted by December 18th for twenty-eight days.

The questionnaire will take the participants five minutes to complete.

For both questionnaires:
Participants:

- All participants will be over the age of 18.
- Participants have the right to anonymity and therefore may withdraw their data at any point throughout the research process.
- The researcher will only collect participants age and gender.

Analysis:

- The quantitative data from the questionnaires will be made into graphs, tables and charts on Microsoft Excel.
- Qualtrics will help compile some of the data from the online questionnaire.

Consent:

- There will be a statement at the beginning of both questionnaires informing them of what the questionnaire will entail and that proceeding with either questionnaire they are consenting that they are happy to complete it and that they are over the age of 18.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A4 Will the project involve deceptive or covert research?</th>
<th>Yes/No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A5 If yes, give a rationale for the use of deceptive or covert research</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A6 Will the project have security sensitive implications?</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A7 If yes, please explain what they are and the measures that are proposed to address them</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

B PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE

B1. What previous experience of research involving human participants relevant to this project do you have?

The researcher has had previous experience in human participants within her degree. The researcher undertook charity event as part of her degree. As part of this she had to distribute a questionnaire on the proposed event idea to see the public’s view on it. The researcher then collected this data and relayed it back through a PowerPoint presentation in front of fellow peers to discuss the results of the feasibility of the event being a success.

B2. Student project only

What previous experience of research involving human participants relevant to this project does your supervisor have?

Click here to enter text.
C POTENTIAL RISKS
C1 What potential risks do you foresee?

Wedding Fayre Questionnaire:
There is the potential risk that the researcher may be denied access to the wedding fayres which could lead to the primary research on betrothed couples going uncompleted.

Face-to-face questionnaire may present risk to the researcher:
- Questions may cause offense to participants.
- Disorderly or aggressive behaviour.

Online Questionnaire:
- Online questionnaires may be a risk as there is no-one to talk to face-to-face if a participant is either confused or upset by a question – they may attempt to contact the researcher, however may come across rude as misinterpretation of conversation occurs a lot through online messaging.
- Questions may cause upset.

C2 How will you deal with the potential risks?

Wedding Fayre Questionnaire:
- The researcher will find events similar to wedding fayres that are attracting betrothed couples, such as bridal shows. Alternatively, the researcher can turn the questionnaire into another online questionnaire through Qualtrics and share on social media. This questionnaire can then be shared on Facebook groups that attract betrothed couples, these sites include ‘Wedding items for sale UK’ and ‘Wedding items for sale/hire in Newtown Powys’.
- The researcher will be in a safe environment with the agreement of the organisers, the wedding fayre, and be sensitive when approaching potential participants.
- A consent form and project description will be attached to the questionnaires for participants to read to ensure they are fully aware of their participation.
- The researcher will ensure all questions are suitable and appropriate to ask participants.
- Full consent from the organisers of the wedding fayres will be obtained to permit research at the events.
- The participant will be notified that they have the right to withdraw their data at any time.

Online Questionnaire:
- Due to the fact it is based online – researcher has the ability to back away from the situation
- Consent form at the beginning of the questionnaires to make participants fully aware of what they are agreeing too.
- The researcher will ensure all questions are appropriate.
- The participant has the right to withdraw.

All participants will be notified that the researcher will have sole access to the data collected. Data used in the written report will be anonymised and the participants will be coded to safeguard from identification.
Married couples & social media

An investigation into the effects that the social media platforms Facebook and Pinterest have on the planning stage of weddings.

Please note this survey is for married people only.

My name is Paige Cradduck and I am a student studying Events Management at Cardiff Metropolitan University. I am undertaking a survey to see how much social media is impacting the wedding planning process.

I am hoping that you would be prepared to participate in my study and to complete this questionnaire which will go towards my primary research in my final dissertation.

This survey should take you between 5-10 minutes. Your participation in this survey is entirely voluntary and is completely anonymous. You can also withdraw from the survey at anytime.

This project has received the approval of Cardiff School of Managements' Ethical Committee.

If you require any further information about this survey, please contact me on the email below.
Email: st20082217@outlook.cardiffmet.ac.uk

If you are 18 years of age or older, fully understand the above statements and you are happy to freely consent in participating in this study please tick the box below to proceed.

In advance we would like to personally thank you for your time and help in participating in this research.

Start of Block: Default Question Block

Q1 What gender are you?

- Male (1)

- Female (2)
Q2 How old are you?

- 18 - 24 (1)
- 25 - 34 (2)
- 35 - 44 (3)
- 45 - 54 (4)
- 55+ (5)

Q3 Do you use either of the social media sites Facebook or Pinterest?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

Skip To: End of Survey if Do you use either of the social media sites Facebook or Pinterest? = No
Q6 What year did you get engaged?

________________________________________________________________

Q6 What year did you get married?

________________________________________________________________

Q7 How often do you use social media on a day-to-day basis?

- Very frequently (1)
- Frequently (2)
- Hardly (3)
Q8 Did the social media platform Facebook influence you in anyway on the following aspects during the wedding planning process?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect</th>
<th>A great deal (1)</th>
<th>Somewhat (2)</th>
<th>No influence (3)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Location/venue (1)</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photographer (2)</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cake design (3)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dress (4)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hairstyle (5)</td>
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<td>Theme (6)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Centrepieces (7)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Flower arrangements (8)</td>
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<td>○</td>
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<tr>
<td>Make-up (9)</td>
<td>○</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transport (10)</td>
<td>○</td>
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<tr>
<td>Food/drink (11)</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
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<tr>
<td>Entertainment (12)</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smaller elements e.g. invitations, favours etc. (13)</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q9 If you selected a great deal or somewhat to any of the elements in the previous question, please state how Facebook helped you with element.
(e.g. Venue – I came across my wedding venue whilst on Facebook and saw it had good reviews and nice scenery.)
Q9 Did the social media platform **Pinterest** influence you in anyway on the following aspects during the wedding planning process?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect</th>
<th>A great deal (1)</th>
<th>Somewhat (2)</th>
<th>No influence (3)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Location/venue (1)</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photographer (2)</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cake design (3)</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dress (4)</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hairstyle (5)</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
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<tr>
<td>Theme (6)</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centrepieces (7)</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flower arrangements (8)</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make-up (9)</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport (10)</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food/drink (11)</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entertainment (12)</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smaller elements e.g. invitations, favours etc. (13)</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q10 If you selected a great deal or somewhat to any of the elements in the previous question, please state how **Pinterest** helped you with element.
(e.g. Invitations - I saw an invitation design on Pinterest and liked it, therefore I used a similar design for my wedding invitations.)
Q11 Are there any other aspects to your wedding that Facebook or Pinterest has had an impact on? If so, please state them below.
Q12 To what extent did your friends’ weddings on social media influence the standard you set for your wedding?

- A large influence (1)
- Somewhat of an influence (2)
- No influence at all (3)

Q13 To what extent did celebrity weddings on social media influence the standard you set for your wedding?

- A large influence (1)
- Somewhat of an influence (2)
- No influence at all (3)
Q14 To what extent do you agree with the following statement? *Social media is a great wedding planning tool.*

- Totally agree (1)
- Agree (2)
- Disagree (3)
- Totally disagree (4)

Q15 To what extent do you agree with the following statement? *Social media puts too much pressure on those getting married.*

- Totally agree (1)
- Agree (2)
- Disagree (3)
- Totally disagree (4)
Q16 Did you go over the original budget set for your wedding?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

*Skip To: End of Survey if Did you go over the original budget set for your wedding? = No*

Q17 Do you think this was due to seeing more ideas available to you through social media? (e.g. you liked the look of a flower arrangement you saw on Pinterest; however, it was over the budget set for that element but still decided to purchase.)

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

*End of Block: Default Question Block*
Participant Information

My name is Paige Cradduck and I am a student studying Events Management at Cardiff Metropolitan University.

I am undertaking a survey to seek how much social media is impacting the wedding planning process.

I am hoping that you would be prepared to participate in my study and to complete this questionnaire and return it to myself once you have finished at the Wedding Fayre.

If you return the survey it will be taken as voluntary informed consent.

If you require any further information about this survey, please contact me on the email below.

Email: st20082217@outlook.cardiffmet.ac.uk

Thank you very much for your time!
1) Do you use either of the social media sites Facebook or Pinterest?

Please circle your answer.

a. Yes
b. No

*If you answered no to this question, you do not need to continue the rest of this questionnaire.*

2) What gender are you?

a. Female
b. Male

3) How old are you?

a. 18 – 25
b. 26 – 35
c. 36 – 45
d. 46 – 55
e. 56+

4) What year did you get engaged?

_________________________

5) What year are you getting married?

_________________________

6) How often do you use social media on a day-to-day basis?

a. Very frequently
b. Frequently
c. Hardly
Has the social media platform Facebook influenced you in any way on the following aspects during the wedding planning process?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Venue</th>
<th>Flowers &amp; Arrangements</th>
<th>Centerpieces</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Hair</th>
<th>Dress</th>
<th>Cake designer</th>
<th>Photographer</th>
<th>Location/venue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Great deal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Somewhat</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No influence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If you select a great deal or somewhat on any of the following elements, please state how Facebook helped with that element:

Venue – I came across my wedding venue whilst on Facebook and saw it had good reviews and nice scenery.

If you select a great deal or somewhat on any of the following elements, please state how Facebook influenced you in any way on the following aspects:
Has the social media platform Pinterest influenced you in any way on the following aspects during the wedding planning process?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>A Great Deal</th>
<th>Somewhat</th>
<th>No Influence</th>
<th>Comments on how it has had an impact on this element</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Invitations, favours etc.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smaller elements &amp; G</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entertainment</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Food/drink</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transport</td>
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<tr>
<td>Make-up</td>
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<tr>
<td>Flower arrangements</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centerpieces</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theme</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historical</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dress</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cake design</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photographer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location/venue</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If you select a great deal or somewhat on any of the following elements, please state how Pinterest helped with that element.

- Invitations – I saw a design on Pinterest for invitations that fit my wedding theme and used the design for mine.

If you select a great deal or somewhat on any of the following elements, please state how Pinterest helped with that element.
9) Are there any other aspects to your wedding that Facebook or Pinterest will have an impact on? If so, please state them below.

___________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________

10) To what extent do your friends’ weddings on social media influence the standard you set for your wedding?
   a. A large influence
   b. Somewhat of an influence
   c. No influence at all

11) To what extent do celebrity weddings on social media influence the standard you set for your wedding?
   a. A large influence
   b. Somewhat of an influence
   c. No influence at all

12) To what extent do you agree with the following statement?
    
    **Social media is a great wedding planning tool.**
    
    a. Totally agree
    b. Agree
    c. Disagree
    d. Totally disagree

13) To what extent do you agree with the following statement?
    
    **Social media puts too much pressure on those getting married.**
    
    a. Totally agree
    b. Agree
    c. Disagree
    d. Totally disagree
14) Whilst planning your wedding, have you followed any social media trends? (Whether that be consciously or subconsciously).
   For example, considering setting up a personalised wedding day hashtag.
   a. Yes, I have considered/will be using some of the current social media trends
   b. Yes, I considered social media trends
   c. No, I have not considered/will not be using any of the current social media trends

15) Are you entering any social media competitions in the hope of winning something for your wedding?
   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. No, however I have seen competitions advertised

   Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.
If you would like to discuss this further please do not hesitate to contact me.

I would like to gather responses from people attending across the years I attended.

I am welcome to take a questionnaire. Please send the survey which completes it and hand it back to me after reading.

The participation would be entirely voluntary and they will not be identified in the research. The questionnaire will take 5 to 10 minutes for each person to complete. However, they are more than welcome to take extra questions which are more.

Facts

I have read and approved the project and collected the data which have been approved by Cardiff Metropolitan University and all data collection will be in accordance with the university's ethical code of

The fact that the response is the greatest number of people provided a large enough number of parents participating.

As part of my study I would like to analyse the results of a sample of your wedding beliefs during the course in Cardiff in January. I am writing to you because the people attending the courses I have

The fact that the response is the greatest number of people provided a large enough number of parents participating.

The fact that the response is the greatest number of people provided a large enough number of parents participating.

The fact that the response is the greatest number of people provided a large enough number of parents participating.

The fact that the response is the greatest number of people provided a large enough number of parents participating.
Appendix B: Blank Questionnaire – Married

Married couples & social media

An investigation into the effects that the social media platforms Facebook and Pinterest have on the planning stage of weddings.

Please note this survey is for married people only.

My name is Paige Craddock and I am a student studying Events Management at Cardiff Metropolitan University. I am undertaking a survey to see how much social media is impacting the wedding planning process.

I am hoping that you would be prepared to participate in my study and to complete this questionnaire which will go towards my primary research in my final dissertation.

This survey should take you between 5-10 minutes. Your participation in this survey is entirely voluntary and is completely anonymous. You can also withdraw from the survey at anytime.

This project has received the approval of Cardiff School of Managements' Ethical Committee.

If you require any further information about this survey, please contact me on the email below.
Email: st20082217@outlook.cardiffmet.ac.uk

If you are 18 years of age or older, fully understand the above statements and you are happy to freely consent in participating in this study please tick the box below to proceed.

In advance we would like to personally thank you for your time and help in participating in this research.

Start of Block: Default Question Block

Q1 What gender are you?

- Male (1)
- Female (2)
Q2 How old are you?

- 18 - 24 (1)
- 25 - 34 (2)
- 35 - 44 (3)
- 45 - 54 (4)
- 55+ (5)

Q3 Do you use either of the social media sites Facebook or Pinterest?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

*Skip To: End of Survey if Do you use either of the social media sites Facebook or Pinterest? = No*
Q6 What year did you get engaged?
__________________________________________________

Q6 What year did you get married?
__________________________________________________

Q7 How often do you use social media on a day-to-day basis?

○ Very frequently (1)

○ Frequently (2)

○ Hardly (3)
Q8 Did the social media platform Facebook influence you in anyway on the following aspects during the wedding planning process?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>A great deal (1)</th>
<th>Somewhat (2)</th>
<th>No influence (3)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Location/venue (1)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photographer (2)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cake design (3)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dress (4)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Hairstyle (5)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theme (6)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centrepieces (7)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flower arrangements (8)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make-up (9)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport (10)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food/drink (11)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entertainment (12)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smaller elements e.g. invitations, favours etc. (13)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q9 If you selected a great deal or somewhat to any of the elements in the previous question, please state how Facebook helped you with element.
(e.g. Venue – I came across my wedding venue whilst on Facebook and saw it had good reviews and nice scenery.)
Q9 Did the social media platform **Pinterest** influence you in anyway on the following aspects during the wedding planning process?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect</th>
<th>A great deal (1)</th>
<th>Somewhat (2)</th>
<th>No influence (3)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Location/venue (1)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photographer (2)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cake design (3)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dress (4)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hairstyle (5)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Theme (6)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Centrepieces (7)</td>
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<td>Flower arrangements (8)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Make-up (9)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transport (10)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Food/drink (11)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entertainment (12)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smaller elements e.g. invitations, favours etc. (13)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q10 If you selected a great deal or somewhat to any of the elements in the previous question, please state how **Pinterest** helped you with element.
(e.g. Invitations - I saw an invitation design on Pinterest and liked it, therefore I used a similar design for my wedding invitations.)
Q11 Are there any other aspects to your wedding that Facebook or Pinterest has had an impact on? If so, please state them below.

________________________________________________________________

Page Break
Q12 To what extent did your friends’ weddings on social media influence the standard you set for your wedding?

- A large influence (1)
- Somewhat of an influence (2)
- No influence at all (3)

Q13 To what extent did celebrity weddings on social media influence the standard you set for your wedding?

- A large influence (1)
- Somewhat of an influence (2)
- No influence at all (3)
Q14 To what extent do you agree with the following statement? *Social media is a great wedding planning tool.*

- Totally agree (1)
- Agree (2)
- Disagree (3)
- Totally disagree (4)

Q15 To what extent do you agree with the following statement? *Social media puts too much pressure on those getting married.*

- Totally agree (1)
- Agree (2)
- Disagree (3)
- Totally disagree (4)
Q16 Did you go over the original budget set for your wedding?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

Skip To: End of Survey if Did you go over the original budget set for your wedding? = No

Q17 Do you think this was due to seeing more ideas available to you through social media? (e.g. you liked the look of a flower arrangement you saw on Pinterest; however, it was over the budget set for that element but still decided to purchase.)

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

End of Block: Default Question Block
Appendix C: Blank Questionnaire – Betrothed

Participant Information
My name is Paige Craddock and I am a student studying Events Management at Cardiff Metropolitan University.
I am undertaking a survey to seek how much social media is impacting the wedding planning process.
I am hoping that you would be prepared to participate in my study and to complete this questionnaire and return it to myself once you have finished at the Wedding Fayre.

If you return the survey it will be taken as voluntary informed consent.

If you require any further information about this survey, please contact me on the email below.
Email: st20082217@outlook.cardiffmet.ac.uk

Thank you very much for your time!
1) Do you use either of the social media sites Facebook or Pinterest?
Please circle your answer.
   a. Yes
   b. No
If you answered no to this question, you do not need to continue the rest of this questionnaire.

2) What gender are you?
   a. Female
   b. Male

3) How old are you?
   a. 18 – 25
   b. 26 – 35
   c. 36 – 45
   d. 46 – 55
   e. 56+

4) What year did you get engaged?
   __________________________

5) What year are you getting married?
   __________________________

6) How often do you use social media on a day-to-day basis?
   a. Very frequently
   b. Frequently
   c. Hardly
Has the social media platform Facebook influenced you in any way on the following aspects during the wedding planning process?

If you select a 'great deal' or 'somewhat' on any of the following elements, please state how Facebook helped with that element.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Invitations, favours etc.</th>
<th>Smaller elements e.g. flowers</th>
<th>Entertainment</th>
<th>Food/drink</th>
<th>Transport</th>
<th>Make-up</th>
<th>Flower arrangements</th>
<th>Centre pieces</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Hair style</th>
<th>Dress</th>
<th>Cake design</th>
<th>Photographer</th>
<th>Location/Venue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A great deal</td>
<td>Somewhat</td>
<td>No Influence</td>
<td>Comments on how it had an impact on this element</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

e.g. Venue – I came across my wedding venue whilst on Facebook and saw it had good reviews and nice scenery.

Facebook helped with that element.

If you select a 'great deal' or 'somewhat' on any of the following elements, please state how during the wedding planning process Facebook influenced you in any way on the following aspects.
Has the social media platform Pinterest influenced you in any way on the following aspects during the wedding planning process?

If you select a great deal or somewhat on any of the following elements, please state how Pinterest helped with that element.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>No Influence</th>
<th>Somewhat</th>
<th>Great deal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Invitations, favours etc.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smaller elements &amp; details</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entertainment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Food/drink</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transport</td>
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<tr>
<td>Make-up</td>
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<tr>
<td>Flower arrangements</td>
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<tr>
<td>Centrepieces</td>
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<td>Theme</td>
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<tr>
<td>Historical</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dress</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cake design</td>
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<tr>
<td>Photographer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location/venue</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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If you select a great deal or somewhat on any of the following elements, please state how Pinterest helped with that element.

---

(8) Has the social media platform Pinterest influenced you in any way on the following aspects during the wedding planning process?
9) Are there any other aspects to your wedding that Facebook or Pinterest will have an impact on? If so, please state them below.

___________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________

10) To what extent do your friends’ weddings on social media influence the standard you set for your wedding?
   a. A large influence
   b. Somewhat of an influence
   c. No influence at all

11) To what extent do celebrity weddings on social media influence the standard you set for your wedding?
   a. A large influence
   b. Somewhat of an influence
   c. No influence at all

12) To what extent do you agree with the following statement?

   Social media is a great wedding planning tool.
   a. Totally agree
   b. Agree
   c. Disagree
   d. Totally disagree

13) To what extent do you agree with the following statement?

   Social media puts too much pressure on those getting married.
   a. Totally agree
   b. Agree
   c. Disagree
   d. Totally disagree
14) Whilst planning your wedding, have you followed any social media trends? (Whether that be consciously or subconsciously). 
For example, considering setting up a personalised wedding day hashtag.
   a. Yes, I have considered/will be using some of the current social media trends
   b. Yes, I considered social media trends
   c. No, I have not considered/will not be using any of the current social media trends

15) Are you entering any social media competitions in the hope of winning something for your wedding?
   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. No, however I have seen competitions advertised

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.
Appendix D: Results Data Sheet – Married

Q1 – What gender are you?
Male – 7
Female – 56

Q2 – How old are you?
18-24 – 1
25-34 – 38
35-44 – 11
45-54 – 6
55+ - 7

Q3 – Do you use either of the social media sites Facebook or Pinterest?
Yes – 63
No – 0

Q4 – What year did you get engaged?
2013
2017
2016
2006
2015
2016
2004
2008
2010
2016
2003
2012
2010
Q5 – What year did you get married?
2015
2017
2016
2008
2016
2017
2006
2012
2011
2017
2005
2014
2012
2014
2002
2010
2015
1969
1994
2014
Q6 – How often do you use social media on a day-to-day basis?

Very frequently - 40
Frequently - 21
Hardly – 2

Q7 – Did the social media platform Facebook influence you in anyway on the following aspects during the wedding planning process?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field</th>
<th>A great deal</th>
<th>Somewhat</th>
<th>No influence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Location/Venue</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photographer</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cake design</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dress</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hairstyle</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>52</td>
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<tr>
<td>Theme</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centrepieces</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flower arrangements</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
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<tr>
<td>Make-up</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food/drink</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entertainment</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smaller elements e.g. invites, favours etc.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Q8 – If you selected a great deal or somewhat in the previous question, please state your reasoning.

All- I looked at reviews before booking.

Someone I used to go to school with I saw their wedding pictures and loved them so chose that photographer

I checked the photographer out via facebook

Hair styles and decorations were seen on Facebook and Pinterest

Our photographer and my make up artist used Facebook to interact with their clients and set up a mini community

Researching venues and photographers

I saw the venue On wedding pics from a friend.

for my daughters wedding

I used Facebook a little bit to check credibility and reviews of suppliers, but got the original inspiration from other platforms like Instagram

I could see photographers wedding photos easily on their own or customers pages

I found my photographer, cake maker, make up artist and band through Facebook and recommendations of Facebook friends

Photographer photos online and reviews from other clients.

I saw a few friends tagged in pictures that Katherine Ashdown photography had taken and I started to follow her business Facebook page

Seeing business pages with different ideas

Saw the venue on FB, it looked pretty! Found my cake designer and dress style on here too.

I researched on Facebook for the most ideal local photographer and hair stylist

Looked at lots of wedding ideas pages to get ideas for bridesmaid dresses

Photographer - browsed different photographers on facebook was very useful

I used my photographers Facebook group to research some suppliers. Once I had found people I liked, either in that group or from word of mouth / google I would look at the business page on Facebook usually to see more photos of their work. Same with Instagram.

even though we didn't choose a venue based on what we saw on Facebook, it allowed us to see what sort of thing we wanted from a venue.
Q9 - Did the social media platform Pinterest influence you in anyway on the following aspects during the wedding planning process?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>55</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Location/venue</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photographer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cake design</td>
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<td>10</td>
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<td>Transport</td>
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<tr>
<td>Food/drink</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Entertainment</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smaller elements e.g. invitations, favours etc.</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Q10 – If you selected a great deal or somewhat in the previous question, please state your reasoning.

Saw table setting on Pinterest and used that as a basis for a colour theme for the whole wedding. I searched for the other elements and pinned what I liked.

All - our wedding was very DIY so we looked on Pinterest for ideas on how other couples had made their own centre pieces and invitations, etc and for inspiration for design ideas.

Used pictures on Pinterest to get ideas on using lavender for my centre pieces.

Used it to research design ideas and recipes for the cake and other elements.

My whole wedding was based on Pinterest.

I used Pinterest to look for ideas which I then took to the suppliers that I chose so that they knew what we were looking for. I knew roughly what I wanted but Pinterest helped me to explain this to the people who were providing services.

To have a look for hair styles and also ideas for flowers so I could show my florist.

Found my hairstyle online.

Used Pinterest for inspiration, didn’t find any actual suppliers or vendors this way.

For all categories, looked at for inspiration and then decided whether to eliminate ideas or changed to make personal to us.

I used the ideas I saw either exactly the same or very similar.

Most of my inspiration was taken from images found on the Pinterest. These were printed and used to show suppliers.

I used Pinterest for inspiration on all the theme and design aspects of my wedding.

Hairstyles - I saw a number of styles I liked on Pinterest and was able to collate them together to show my hair stylist what I wanted. Also a good place to see a variety of dress styles and how they looked on different shapes and sizes of women.

I saw many smaller things on Pinterest

Invitation design I liked on Pinterest and ended up locating the small business owner who used Pinterest to advertise her designs.

I browsed for everything for my wedding on Pinterest - I had boards for my engagement ring, my wedding ring, my dress, my bridesmaids’ dresses, wedding decor, entertainment - it was a useful way to gather ideas I liked and helped me to narrow down exactly what I wanted.

Created a board of pins for the ideas and images that I liked to help form my ideas.

Pinterest only helped me with the inspiration, it didn’t actually help me find my vendors or suppliers.
Q11 – Are there any other aspects to your wedding that Facebook and Pinterest has had an impact on?

- No
- I wasn’t a member of Facebook or Pinterest when we got married
- None
- None
- I didn’t use social media or Pinterest at the time I got engaged and married otherwise they would have influenced me!
- Photo sharing
- Facebook recording the day i.e. friends images shared on fb.
- Bridesmaid dresses,
- Forming ideas and themes for the look of various aspects, more the ideas/visuals than finding the actual suppliers
- It was great for chasing up RSVPs or getting info out to guests en masse quickly
- No
- My photographer set up a private group for all her brides she had previously photographed or upcoming ones to chat about ideas and their weddings, share photos, run competitions and provide advice on documents that she shared. It was incredibly supportive.
- Pinterest was used to give ideas on how do. Had shared boards with bridesmaids
- I used Pinterest to find ideas of gifts for my bridesmaids and groomsmen. And also saw a unique idea to have your pageboy as ring security of which we used at our wedding.
- Suppliers for food on facebook, local companies
- No fb back then
- I used Facebook to buy good quality second hand goods
- No, but I also used Instagram to check out the work of suppliers I was interested in using to make sure they were right for me. Similar to how I looked up business pages in Facebook
- See answer before!

Q12 – To what extent did your friends’ weddings on social media influence the standard set for your wedding?

- A large influence - 2
- Somewhat of an influence - 21
- No influence at all – 40
Q13 – To what extent did celebrity weddings on social media influence the standard you set for your wedding?

A large influence – 0
Somewhat of an influence – 5
No influence at all – 58

Q14 – To what extent do you agree with the following statement?

‘Social media is a great wedding planning tool.’

Totally agree – 7
Agree – 42
Disagree – 12
Totally disagree – 2

Q15 – To what extent do you agree with the following statement?

‘Social media puts too much pressure on those getting married.’

Totally agree – 12
Agree – 32
Disagree – 19
Totally disagree – 0

Q16 – At the time of planning your wedding, did you follow any social media trends?

Yes, I used social media trends – 4
Yes, I considered social media trends – 11
No, I did not use or consider social media trends – 48

Q17 – Did you even enter any social media competitions in the hope of winning something for your wedding?

Yes – 16
No – 25
No, however I saw them advertised – 22
Q18 – Did you go over the original budget set for your wedding?
Yes – 25
No – 38

Q19 – Do you feel this was due to seeing more ideas available to you through social media?
Yes – 7
No – 18
Appendix E: Results Data Sheet – Betrothed

Q1 – Do you use either of the social media sites Facebook or Pinterest?
Yes – 50
No – 0

Q2 – What gender are you?
Male – 4
Female – 46

Q3 – How old are you?
18-25 – 13
26-35 – 26
36-45 – 5
46-55 – 5
56+ - 1

Q4 – What year did you get engaged?
2010
2014
2017
2016
2015
2003
2009
2010
2017
2013
2012
2017
2014
2012
2008
2007
2011
2015
2009

Q5 – What year are you getting married?
2018 - 13
2019 – 20
2020 - 10
Unknown - 7

Q6 – How often do you use social media on a day-to-day basis?
Very frequently - 32
Frequently - 15
Hardly – 3
Q7 – Has the social media platform Facebook influenced you in anyway on the following aspects during the wedding planning process?

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Additional comments –

- A friend went with my photographer before me and wrote how great they were with the whole process on Facebook, which helped me decide to go with them.
- Facebook allowed me to look up photographer in my area.
- Facebook allowed me to contact different invitation designers for quotes on designs I liked.
- I used Facebook to look for options.
- Seen styles of Friends pictures on Facebook.
- Seen shops advertising sales on Facebook.
- Watching live videos on entertainment on Facebook.
- Make up tutorials found on Facebook.
- Checked Facebook for reviews and comments.
- Looked for transport on Facebook. Also saw friends designs which has influenced my theme.
- Facebook allowed me to look at photographers previous photos.
- Found a makeup artist on Facebook that is local to me.
Q8 - Has the social media platform Pinterest influenced you in anyway on the following aspects during the wedding planning process?

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</table>

Additional comments –

- We’re getting married in Italy and the florist we chose does not speak a word of English so Pinterest helped me show her the designs I wanted.
- I have created a board on Pinterest for every element of my wedding from the theming right down to the favours.
- Pinterest has a large amount of pictures that I have gone through to help with ideas.
- Pinterest had a lot on influence on the designs of our invitations.
- Pinterest showed us ideas for décor which we’re using on our day.
- Our table set up is a design we found on Pinterest.
- Pinterest is really good for inspiration.
- Our final decisions were made by looking at pictures on Pinterest.
- Pinterest gave out centrepiece ideas that were a little unique compared to other designs we had seen elsewhere.
• Pinterest has helped me start designing our wedding with the unlimited amount of designs available to look at.
• We got colour inspiration from Pinterest.
• I took hairstyles ideas from Pinterest and will be showing them to my hairdresser.

Q9 – Are there any other aspects to your wedding that Facebook or Pinterest will have an impact on?
• I started group chats on Facebook to help with planning.
• No.
• No.
• My bridesmaids have used social media to show me designs they like.
• Decorations.
• No.
• I got dress designs for the mother of the bride and suit ideas for the groom. Also flower girl dresses seen on Pinterest.
• Ideas.
• Costings.
• No.
• I will be using Facebook to share photos and contact people about the wedding.
• Facebook helped me see who I needed to remember to invite.
• I’m getting married in Cyprus so Facebook helped me find a wedding planner out there.
• Group chats.

Q10 – To what extent do your friends’ weddings on social media influence the standard set for your wedding?
A large influence - 5
Somewhat of an influence - 27
No influence at all – 17
Q11 – To what extent do celebrity weddings on social media influence the standard you set for your wedding?

A large influence – 0
Somewhat of an influence – 10
No influence at all – 40

Q12 – To what extent do you agree with the following statement?

‘Social media is a great wedding planning tool.’

Totally agree – 10
Agree – 38
Disagree – 2
Totally disagree – 0

Q13 – To what extent do you agree with the following statement?

‘Social media puts too much pressure on those getting married.’

Totally agree – 5
Agree – 23
Disagree – 19
Totally disagree – 3

Q14 – Whilst planning your wedding, have you follow any social media trends?

Yes, I have considered/will be using social media trends – 6
Yes, I have considered social media trends – 20
No, I have not considered/will not be using social media trends – 24

Q15 – Are you entering any social media competitions in the hope of winning something for your wedding?

Yes – 19
No – 21
No, however I have seen them advertised – 10
Appendix F: Turnitin Receipt