

A Study on the Conceptualization of Folk Religion Temple Donation

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Abstract

This research sought to understand, from the not-for-profit (NPO) marketing perspective, the conceptualization of donation to folk religion organizations in the Chinese context. Using the Brand Concept Map (BCM) method, this research was able to explicate the complex associations in the perception of donation in a graphical network structure. Associations such as gaining merit, pray for peace and repaying society; and the patterns of interconnection between the belief, custom, personal and social elements influenced by cultural-religious factors were identified. This research found that the network of associations in donors' memory, consisted by various elements, constituted the relevant values for donors. This research contributed in the understanding of donation on the associations, network and cultural-religious levels. Methodology was being advanced in this study, where the network structure of donors' associations was considered. Additionally, the framework of relevant associations, elements and values were identified, which might be leveraged in fundraising strategy.

Keyword: Fundraising, Donation, Marketing, NPO, Brand Concept Map (BCM)

1. Introduction

The competition among non-profit organizations (NPOs) for resources has made the establishing of sustainable relationship with donors, the reaching out to prospects with workable segmentation and appeal imperative (Ouchi, 2004 & Hung, 2004). Donors, on the other hand, are also becoming more sophisticated and selective (Lee, 2003), where mass information on fundraising has complicated the comparison and choice between competing organizations. Besides the above, donation to NPOs such as a religious one may in itself conceptually complex. This is due to the fact that the process of donation would be affected by factors such as culture, religion and personal experiences. This can be observed rather clearly in the case of donation to the Chinese folk religion temples, as in relation to other religious organizations, since people's relationship to these religious organizations may be based on diverse reasons, related to several temples at the same time, or even if the person is a non-believer or non-members. This observation seems to be different from the general western religious tradition and practice.

The objective of this research therefore is to understand how donors perceive the act of donation to these folk religion organizations, which is a common reality in the Chinese tradition all around the world. Past studies have approached the issue by treating factors such as motivation and communication channels etc. in a discrete manner. However, from the cognitive perspective, donors' perception is often structured in a network of associations and is related to one's experience instead. Additionally, brand equity is related to this network of strong, favorable and unique brand association (Keller, 1993), which constitutes the brand's (organizational) image that implies its uniqueness and values (Aaker, 1996). Ideally speaking, organizations should be able to measure the network of associations, so that brand equity can be leveraged basing on the value and product or service implied.

Past studies mostly have focused on the established religious organizations such as the Buddhist and Christians based NPOs, whereas this study focuses on the folk religion temple of for three reasons. First, as the number of NPOs is increasing, these are the major groups of NPO with much less formal organizational resources that will receive great impact from the growing competitions. Second, although the Chinese folk religion temple is a common phenomenon among the Chinese people all over the world, however, due to the nature of without fixed membership, such as the Christian and Buddhist organizations, the donation received is often relatively unstable. Third, due to the nature of religious NPOs that involves relative more intangible values and beliefs; this makes

the fundraising and marketing tasks a more challenging one.

This complexity of donors' associations renders the Brand Concept Map (BCM) of John. D.R., Barbara, L., Kim, K. H. & Monga, A. B. (2006) to be a suitable method, where these associations including attributes, personality traits and emotions can be presented in a network structure. The BCM method probe directly by building graphs and makes explicit the nature of the links between concept pairs (Ruiz-Primo & Shavelson, 1996). The method is thus able to describe the interconnectedness of the involved associations or concepts. This will therefore provide us an alternative besides considering these associations individually. Further the method can also provide graphical representation, flexibility in using data from previous study, and an easy procedure in the aggregation; which seems to be attractive to the managerial usage.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Fundraising and Evolution

The term "fundraising" according to Hall (2002) tends to imply solicitation with no strategic involvement of the donor, whereas some authors would prefer the term "development" to emphasize the development of a donor-organization partnership in achieving mutually desired outcome. This latter concept implies a systematic building up of different classes of loyal donors, moving away from the one time transaction understanding to the multiple sustainable transactions relationship. Nichols (2003) has suggested that four sweeping paradigm shift in fundraising: from methodology driven to donor driven; from the homogeneous audience to niche audience; from prospects of pre World War II to those after; and from mass communication to one-to-one communication. These shifts support the idea that identification and understanding of the prospect donors is becoming more crucial and fundraising is heading towards a relational, repeating and lasting direction.

Brown (2003) has highlighted the importance of the understanding of donor motivation and philanthropic styles that lead to the prescriptions for market segmentation, where considerably loyalty may be created since communication will become more meaningful and personal. Due to competitions in charity fundraising, organizations have adopted brand awareness and niche strategies to achieve competitive advantage. Brands not only differentiate organization, products and service, it also represents a promise of value, which will further incite beliefs, evoke emotions and prompt behaviors (Kotler & Gertner, 2002). With a successful awareness strategy, a brand may become synonymous with a cause (Abdy & Barclay, 2001). A trusted brand may prompt donations without further information being required.

Sargeant & Hudson (2008) have pointed out that, in the context of fundraising, there are two perspectives that are relevant to the values that may be implied by a brand. The first concerns the dimensions of the quality of service provided by the organization raising fund and the components that will delight, satisfy or dissatisfy. This perspective indicates that in order to build donor retention, NPOs or charities should be able to isolate factors of the service that genuinely add value for donors and invest in these areas. The second perspective points out that donors like customers would acquire and use products to achieve favorable ends. The confidence in the brand and a clear understanding of what it stands for in the eyes of the donors is a key factor of success to fundraising.

2.2 Cultural and Religious Aspects of Donation

Ouchi (2004) in studying the cultural impact on donation, in the Japanese and U.S settings, points out that philanthropy often is rooted in aspects of their culture such as the emphasis on the importance of relationships, the reciprocity of gift-giving and relating. Human relationships are built and nurtured through repaying the obligations that one assumes to the other by respect, loyalty, and obedience. Therefore, Japanese are willing to help people with whom they have a clear relationship to meet reciprocal social responsibilities. Collectivism is another cultural value that is prevalent in Japanese society. In the Western society the virtues of self-reliance and individualism are glorified and emphasized, thus promoting individual achievement over group success. Americans often contribute to organizations in which they are personally involved, which reflect the self-interest in improving social status (Wright, 2001). Ouchi (2004) has also observed that religious beliefs play more important role in promoting giving behavior among American donors as compare to the Japanese donors. Fundraising messages therefore should include the donor's associational connection with a NPO by which the cultural aspect, such as the "exchange etiquette" and "collectivism" is achieved (Ouchi, 2004).

2.3 The Use of Concept Map

Most cognitive theories share the assumption that concept interrelatedness is an essential property of knowledge. Two major sets of techniques are frequently used in understanding the knowledge structures. Some probe people's perception of inter-related concepts indirectly through eliciting their word associations, their judgments of similarity and their categorizations of concepts. Other such as concept maps probe more directly by building graphs and make explicit the nature of the links between concept pairs (Ruiz-Primo & Shavelson, 1996). Concept map assumes that knowledge within a content domain is organized around central concepts. These structures in memory influence a wide range of information processing activities, including valuations, judgments and inferences (Markus & Zajonc 1985).

Brand associations are those perceptions, preferences, and choices in memory linked to a brand (Henderson,

Iacobucci & Calder, 1998). Keller (1993) has defined brand associations as the information nodes linked to a brand node in memory, which contain the meaning of the brand for consumers. Sometimes, consumers might associate a brand with a particular attribute or feature, usage situation, product spokesperson, or logo. A network representation of brand associations therefore can help provide a clearer understanding of the perceptions consumers have, where marketing practitioners can establish and reinforce upon (Broniarczyk & Alba 1994).

Brand Concept Map (BCM) method is used to identify brand associations and how associations are connected to the brand and to one another. While most existing work on concept maps does not offer procedures for aggregating individual maps into consensus maps, the BCM method has incorporated structure into the elicitation, mapping and the aggregation stages, providing a technique that is easier to administer and analyze. The advantage of BCM is that the interviewees need minimal training, and respondents can complete the procedure in a relatively shorter time, thus suitable for larger samples and data collection setting. The method is rather flexible, where data from prior research can often be used in the elicitation stage, enabling researchers to proceed without further time and expense. The method also comes along with more standardized aggregation procedures, which will enable firms to collect brand maps for different market segments or geographic areas (John et al., 2006).

3. Research Method

This research used the BCM on the study of donation to folk religion temples. The research could be divided into two major parts. In the first part, the research focused on how temple donation was conceptualized in general, that was without mentioning specific temple. For the second part, two specific temples were chosen, with different size or population of believers and locations. The division of study into two parts was to facilitate the comparison and cross verification of the concept of donation to temple in general and in specific; and also between the concepts of specific temples. This was with the aim that common features of concept in donation might be identified. The first part of the study was carried out at a Taoist spiritual center. Data were collected from people who came to the center for both spiritual and secular activities. A map that used the general concept "temple" would be developed by using the data collected. It was estimated that each year there would be 1,000,000 visitors visited the center. For the second part, a temple of the God of Wealth (Fu-De Temple) and a local temple (Yung-Fu Temple) of the King of Three Mountains, which was a protector God of mountain, were chosen. The former was a temple with estimated size 600,000 visitors per year, whereas the latter was with an estimated 50,000 visitors annually. The two mentioned temples were not merely places of worship but were involved in philanthropic activities such as helping low income school children and old people living alone. Two conceptual maps of specific temples were developed from the data attained. The above samples were used to elicit the complex concept of salient associations in the act of donation of visitors and believers, including attributes, personality traits and emotions. The following procedures would be followed for both parts of the research in developing the BCM:

Elicitation Stage. The study first selected a set of salient brand associations for the temples by conducting survey, focusing the attention on responses to open-ended question about "what come to your mind when you think of donation to a temple?" The study developed frequency count, selected those that at least 10% of the respondents mentioned. A total of 150 participants (50 participants each) were from the spiritual center and the two temples. These participants were conveniently selected among the visitors, due to the constraint of time of visit and the willingness to take part.

Mapping Stage. The research conducted one-on-one interviews, where respondents were told that they were participating in a study of religious organizations. Participants then were asked to think about the following question: "What comes to mind when you think about making donation to the temple (or the specific temple)?" To help them with this task, respondents were shown different associations for the particular temple printed on cards, and were told that they could use any of the cards or could add their own. The following step involved explaining the nature and purpose of the BCM, by showing the participants a BCM previously done. In the third step, participants developed their map for the particular temple. Participants were given a blank whiteboard, with the "temple" or temple's name in the center. They were instructed to use the cards they had selected and drew lines (single, double, or triple) connecting the cards on the whiteboard. Lastly, participants were also asked to indicate their feelings about donating to the temple using a number between 1 ("extremely negative") and 5 ("extremely positive"), which was then marked on the map. Participants completed several questions about prior experience and familiarity with the particular temple as well as basic demographics. For each of the temples (general and specific) 100 participants were asked to take part in the research.

Aggregation Stage. The research then coded information from each respondent's map: the presence of the associations; the type of line (single, double, or triple); the level at which each association was placed on the map; and which brand associations were linked above and below each association on the map. The research then aggregated the data as shown in Table 1. Literatures generally viewed interconnectivity as indicative of how "central" an element was within an overall belief system, thus chosen as "core" associations (John et al., 2006). There were three measures that would indicate the core associations that should be placed on the consensus map and linked directly to the brand: "frequency of first-order mentions"; "ratio of first-order mentions" and the

“type of interconnections” that was the frequency an association placed super-ordinate or subordinate across maps. Associations with more super-ordinate than subordinate connections were strong candidates for directly connection to the brand.

Developing Consensus Map. Next, the research identified the core associations that would be placed on the map. Associations that were at least 50% of the maps mentioned as core associations were included. This was consistent with the study of John et al. (2006). Associations with borderline frequencies (45%-49%) if the number of interconnections was equal to or higher than that of other core associations, which was consistent with the idea that high interconnectivity signals the centrality of associations or beliefs, would also be included.

In the following step, the research identified which core associations should be linked directly to the temple, using the three measures: the frequency of first-order mentioned, ratios of first-order mentions to total mentions (at least 50%), with more super-ordinate and as first-order associations. Next, the remaining core brand associations were placed on the map. Following the procedure of John et al. (2006), this research calculated the inflection point of the frequency of different association links to decide which association link would be included in the consensus map. In this study core associations links found on at least four maps were included.

Next, the research added important links between core and non-core associations (dotted lines), if there were any. The non-core associations were association that were not qualified as core association but with frequent link above target to specific core association. Lastly, the research placed lines single, double, or triple (represented with different boldness) on the map to signify the intensity of the connection between associations. The research computed the mean number of lines respondents used and rounded up or down to the nearest integer to determine how many lines to use on the consensus map.

Reliability and Validity Analyses. Following the procedures of John et al. (2006), the research first assessed the split-half reliability to determine the consistency of the obtained consensus maps across multiple administrations. The research also examined the nomological validity by comparing consensus maps between donors and non-donors to determine whether the maps reflect expected expert-novice differences. This was basing on the understanding that factors such as frequency of mentioned, strength of connection and interconnectivity were related to belief, attitude and thus behavior. The research then assessed the convergent validity, by comparing consensus map that the respondents produced in the BCM condition with the rating-scales data obtained in the survey condition. For this purpose, another 150 participants had randomly picked to undergo the battery of attribute-rating-scales. With these, the results would add to the confidence that the BCM measures what it purports to measure.

4. Results

From the survey of the elicitation stage, after removing those overlapped, repeated, low frequency, and finalizing the exact wording, the research was able to identify 18 remaining associations (see Table 1). The associations elicited as the participants thought of donation to a temple, whether in general or in specific, were the following: praying for peace (Peace); be of merit before god (Merit); as a charitable action (Charity); for the maintenance or the building of temple (Maintain/Build); as an act of repaying the benefits received from the society (Repay Society); making pledges or the repayment to god after a pledge made (Pledge); as part of the tradition when one was praying by using the incense or oil lamp in the temple (Incense/Oil); praying for personal needs (Needs); when one identified with the religion (Identification); temple’s festival (Festival); to give donation was part of one’s fate (Fate); the spirituality (Spiritual); as a way of worship (Worship); the god of the temple (God); for the development of the organization’s works (Development); a habit (Habit); the dine party organized (Dining); was a way for expiation (Expiation). All these associations were then used in the mapping procedure.

For the aggregation stage, the research then coded information from the individual respondent’s map for: the presence of the 18 brand associations; the type of line (single, double, or triple); the level at which each association was placed on the map; and which brand associations were linked above and below each association on the map. The research also considered the brand associations added by the participants during the mapping procedure to determine whether any occurred frequently enough to be added to the original set. However, all the addition associations reached the required frequency thus were excluded from analysis. (refer to appendix: Table 1)

The research used a five-step process mentioned in developing the consensus brand maps for “Temple” in general and “Fu-de” and “Yung-Fu” Temples’ donors in specific. There were 13 associations elicited for “Temple”, 4 of them were core associations. They were “Merit”, “Charity”, “Fate”, and “Peace”. Associations such as “Repay Society”, “Spiritual” and “Worship” were included as non-core association due to their interconnections (refer to appendix: Figure 1). For consensus map for the “Fu-De” temple, 4 core associations were identified. They were “Peace”, “Merit”, “Charity” and “Maintenance/Building”. Other associations such as “God”, “Incense/Oil”, “Pledge/Repay” and “Repay Society” were also included as non-core associations (refer to appendix: Figure 2). There were seven core brand associations found for Yung-Fu Temple donors, they were “Identification”, “Merit”, “Needs”, “Incense/Oil”, “Pledge”, “Peace” and “Festival”. The association of “Maintain/Build” was also included due to its interconnection (refer to appendix: Figure 3).

The associations “Peace”, “Merit”, “Charity”, “Maintain”, “Pledge”, “Needs”, “Incense”, “Fate” and “Festival” were found directly connected to the concept of the temple/brand, which represent their close connections with the concept of temple in the conceptualization of donation to temple. In particular the associations “Peace” and “Merit” were present in the three consensus maps, which was an indication of the centrality of these associations. Following that were the associations such as “Charity”, “Maintain”, “Pledge”, “Incense” and “Repay Society”, which seemed to be important associations due to the frequency, first order connections, interconnectivity and strength of interconnectivity. Besides these, associations such as “Identification”, “Spiritual”, “Worship” and “God” also worth paying close attentions to due to their interconnections with the other associations.

Comparing of the three donors’ consensus maps, the research found that there were only 14 associations included in the actual mapping of the three consensus maps. Among them 7 were appeared as core associations. Some of these associations identified were more specific in relation either to the brand, tradition or temple itself. They were associations such as “Identification”, “Festival”, “Spirituality”, “Worship” and “God”. These associations might come from the people’s specific experience with the temple/ brand, culture, tradition or religion. There were also associations that were more common and personal, such as “Peace”, “Charity”, “Needs” and “Repay Social”. These associations, as compared to the first group, were more common to donor in general and not necessarily related to the specific temple or brand. They were also related either to various personal and societal.

As a check on the aggregation procedures, the research compared individual brand maps with consensus brand maps for donors in two ways. First, following the procedure of John et al. (2006), which was also inline with the procedure of ZMET (see Zaltman & Coulter 1995), the research determined the number of individual maps, selected randomly, that was needed to capture at least 70% of all core brand association links found in the consensus maps for donors and non-donors. The logic was that a small number of individual maps should be able to reproduce the association links in the consensus map if the aggregation procedure was successful. In this research, it took 3 donors maps of Temple (6% of maps); 3 donors maps (5% of maps) for Fu-De; 4 donors maps (7% of maps) for Yung Fu, to reproduce at least 70% of the core brand association links found in the donors’ consensus map. Second, the research also compared individual maps with the consensus maps to determine how well the consensus maps captured the core associations found in individual maps. That was, if an individual’s map included 18 brand associations, how many of these were core brand associations found on the consensus map. For donors, the research found that 63.6% to 72.7% of the associations shown on the individual maps were pictured as core associations on the consensus map.

4.1 Reliability and Validity Analyses

The research assessed the split-half reliability to determine how consistent the obtained consensus brand maps would be across multiple administrations of the technique. The research also examined the nomological validity by comparing consensus brand maps from known groups (expert versus novice) to determine whether the maps reflect expected expert-novice differences. Additionally, the research also assess the convergent validity, by compared consensus map that the respondents produced in the BCM condition with the rating-scales data obtained in the survey condition. With these, the results would add to the confidence that the BCM measures what it purports to measure.

4.2 Split-half Reliability

Using the quantitative measures of split-half reliability, the research coded each split-half map for the presence or absence of (1) each of the associations as a core association, and (2) each of the associations as a first-order association, and (3) each of the possible links among the associations. The research coded presence of a brand association or association link as 1, and 0 otherwise. The correlations across split-half maps were computed and were shown in Table 2. In general, the split-half reliability levels were considered acceptable. (refer to appendix: Table 2)

4.3 Nomological Validity

Familiarity was seen as a dimension of expertise and experts would generally have more complex and integrated knowledge structures. The research thus compared the maps for two familiarity groups, the familiar and less familiar (here donors were presumed to be more familiar to donation to temple). The comparison showed that the maps for the familiar group had more first order associations, with stronger connections to the temple, with more and stronger interconnections between associations. In Table 3 were an analysis of means and the significant of differences. The expected expert-novice differences were acceptable, and seemed to provide evidence of nomological validity. (refer to appendix: Table 3)

4.4 Convergent Validity

To assess convergent validity, the research compared brand maps that the respondents in the BCM condition and produced with the rating-scales data obtained in the survey condition. The resulting correlation of frequency of mentioned indicated that the brand associations that donors deemed to be most important in building their individual brand maps tended to be similar as those that the survey participants rated highly. Further, the research also considered the weighted frequencies of the associations, by considering the level of placement and

numbers of lines factors, and correlated with the corresponding mean scale rating. The results showed that the hierarchical placement and the selection of connecting lines of brand associations on brand maps converged well with ratings of the same brand associations from survey data. (refer to appendix: Table 4)

5. Discussions

Following the BCM method, the research is able to identify significant individual associations and at the level these associations stand in relation to the temples. The method of analysis used has allowed also the analysis on the level of the relationship among these various associations, facilitating the analysis at the network level. By comparing the three consensus map, between the general concepts of temple with specific brands, the research is also able to identify a framework in understanding the significant associations and the possible values involved in the conceptualization of donation to temple. Although the associations involved vary across the three consensus map, the elements involved seemed to share some commonality. Further, from the above results, implications that may be cultural and religious bounded are also identified. The discussion of this research therefore is organized on three levels.

5.1 Individual Associations Level

From the elicitation stage, one could see that there are 18 associations elicited from the participants. Following the observation made, it is proposed that the associations can be broadly divided into two major categories, the specific and the general categories. The specific associations seem to be closely related to ones' relation or affiliation to particular temple or tradition. The more general associations, as proposed, are those not necessarily having any relation to specific temple or traditions, rather more closely to personal or social needs. Those associations under the specific category seem to have an orientation towards the belief aspect of a person such as in the concepts of "God", "Spirituality" and "Worship". In the same category, there are also those associations that can be easily connected to a particular tradition or culture, such as the concept of "Merit", "Pledge" and "Fate". On the other hand, there are those associations having a clear tendency toward aspect of needs, such as "Peace" and "Needs". However, among these associations, it is further observed that, some of these associations are personal oriented and some are more social oriented. Following this line of thought, this research would therefore propose that, the associations elicited can be further divided according their relation to four elements, belief, custom, personal and social.

As pointed earlier, a temple or brand not only will differentiate the organization, products and service, it also represents a promise of value, which would further incite beliefs, evoke emotions and prompt behaviors, such as donation (Kotler & Gertner, 2002). Sargeant and Hudson (2008) have further pointed out that, values in the context of fundraising, organizations should be able to isolate factors of the service that genuinely add value for donors and invest in these areas. They propose five values in relation to fundraising. They are the functional, epistemic, emotional, societal and conditional values. Functional value is related to the perceived performance or utility of the donation to the sponsoring organization in terms of achieving personal's goals. Sargeant, A., Ford, J. & West, D.C. (2006) referred this to as the 'demonstrable utility'. Epistemic value refers to the benefits derived through a donation's ability to arouse curiosity, provide novelty or satisfy a desire for knowledge (Sargeant & Woodliffe, 2005). Emotional value accounts for the benefits obtained from a donation's ability to arouse feelings and/or affective states, which is parallel to the concept of emotional benefits reported by Sargeant et al. (2006). Societal value is the benefits derived from the difference made to those who matters and the society in general (Sargeant et al., 2006). Lastly, the conditional value corresponds to the benefits derived through a specific donation and reflects the fit between the donor and the specific purpose of a donation.

Shwartz (1994) has proposed that value, from the universal human value perspective, may be seen as the "desirable trans-situational goals, varying in importance, that serve as guiding principles in the life of a person or other social entity." This definition of values as goals implies that values (1) serve the interests of some social entity, (2) can motivate action, by giving it direction and emotional intensity, (3) function as standards for judging and justifying action, and (4) are acquired both through socialization to dominant group values and through the unique learning experiences of individuals (Shwartz, 1994). In terms of functional relationships, there is overwhelming evidence that quality (either service or product) is a significant determinant of value (Sargeant and Hudson, 2008). Therefore, this paper is proposing that a framework of donation to temple may be organized as below: (refer to appendix: Table 5)

The differentiation of the specific and general associations may be important to the donor segmentation and marketing communication. The specific associations are more closely related to those who have certain familiarity with the particular brand, tradition and culture, such as the members of the organization and believers. For the general associations, which is more personal and societal oriented, they may be more relevance to donors who with less familiarity to a particular temple, such as the first time donation, non-believers etc.

5.2 Network Level

Comparing the consensus maps, one will notice that the specific temple maps are generally more complex, both in terms of number of associations and interconnections, as compare to the map of temple in general. The interconnections between associations are also different. This seems to point to the fact that specific brand would

facilitate the conceptualization in a more concrete and experiential way, thus in a more complex network. However, despite the way the various associations connected is different between the three consensus maps, one may identify a similar pattern on the elemental level.

The personal and custom elements are two major elements observed in the study, which is often being connected in all the consensus maps. The personal elements such as the "Peace" and "Needs" are often connected to the custom element such as "Merit", "Pledge" and "Festival". Between the Personal and societal element, the association "Peace" is often connected to associations such as "Repay", "Charity" and "Maintain". Similarly, between the personal and belief elements, one may see that the association "Peace" is connected to the associations "Worship", "God" and "Identification". The element of custom also, such as the associations of "Merit" and "Pledge" are often connected to the associations such as "Charity", "Maintain", "God" and "Identification" of the societal and belief elements.

On a more complex level, the elements between personal-custom-societal and the combination between personal-custom-belief are present across the three consensus maps. The interconnection between "Peace", "Merit" and "Repay"; "Peace", "Incense" and "Charity"; and "Peace", "Festival" and "Maintain" are identified across the three maps. This seems to indicate donation may be related to personal needs, which may in turn be attained by following the customary prescription in the expression of donating to the society. The other combination between "Peace", "Merit" and "Worship"; "Peace", "Pledge" and "God"; and "Peace", "Merit"/"Pledge" and "Identification" are also present in the three consensus maps. This may indicate that the conceptualization of donation may be connected to personal needs, which may be attained through following the prescription of certain tradition or culture that is basing on the belief of the donors. All these interconnections of elements may be useful combination for marketing use. This will allow the NPO organizations to understand how their donor perceive the act of donation to them, and can be important references for the drafting of strategic fundraising and marketing plan.

As pointed out, if the number of interconnection may be seen as the degree of centrality an element is within an overall belief and attitude system, then a frequently mentioned association with many interconnections is seen as a "core" association. (John et al., 2006) From the consensus map, it is noticed that "Peace" and "Merit" are one of these core associations, with high interconnections. Marketers therefore can use such an association as a connecting point in relating to other attributes as well as in communicating to donors in different segments. Additionally, the associations, besides "Peace" and "Merit", "Charity", "Repay society", "Pledge", and "Maintenance" can be seen as useful elements in donor segmentation due to their centrality and interconnectivity in the conceptualization of donation. These elements thus may be useful in donor differentiation, since, they either directly or indirectly through various connections link to brand. The idea proposed here is consistent to the idea of the "association rule" in the association analysis of data mining.

Last but not least, as Ward (2004) have proposed, creativity in generating novel and useful ideas is very much related to the conceptual combinations that applying basic mental operations to the existing knowledge structures. The combination of two previously separated concepts, or in this case the association, may be merged into new units. Therefore, the results of this study can provide possible candidates for this kind of combinations, which would lead to creativity in communication and marketing appeals. Further, Ward also have suggested that, besides conceptual combination, analogical reasoning that apply or project the existing structured knowledge from familiar domain to a novel or less familiar one may be another possible element for creativity. The interconnections of associations shown in the BCM maps seem to provide also possible paths or directions for this application.

5.3 Cultural and Religious Level

Cultural and religious aspects are seen as having influence on the giving behavior. Sargeant (2005) and Jeavons & Basinger (2000) have pointed out that, from the Christian perspective, successful religious organizations and fundraising programs are operating under the assumption of abundance rather than scarcity, where abundance of resources are available under God's grace. These organizations are positive in their communication, avoid crisis appeal, and eschew guilt or pity as motivation. Rather, they ask donors to participate in their reaching out or become partners in extending god's abundance. As observed in this research, the cultural and religious aspects are present in the conceptualization of donation. However, it seems that not all the findings are consistent with the opinions above. The association of "Identification" seems to be more inline with the assumption of abundance. Associations such as "Peace", "Needs" and "Merit" seem to be more personal oriented. The idea of donation as an "expression of faith" is also not clear in this case in relation to the practical aspect.

On the other hand, as Ouchi (2004) is proposing that fundraising messages should include the donor's associational connection with the particular organization, in which the cultural aspect such as the etiquette of giving and receiving will be achieved. The associations such as "Identification", "Pledge" and "Merit" are in line with the observation of Ouchi. Identification as an attribute of donation to temple describes well the point made by Ouchi, where associational connection is seen as an important factor in the decision making of or act of donation. Further, "Merit" and "Pledge" also indicate the cultural aspect of etiquette, the understanding of

reciprocity or giving and receiving. However, these mentioned associations seem function not only in the cultural domain, but extend even into the religious domain.

The aspect of collectivism and relational mentioned seems to reflect well in the associations of “Festival” and “Identification”, as well as in “Dining” and “Habit” that are not being included in this research. A relational tie is implied in these associations. The donors can associate their act of donation to the relation with the temple, whether it is in the form of activity (fair or party), or in their identification (to belief or organization), or as part of their lives (custom or habit). These associations imply not only the value and relational aspects but also the activity aspect as well.

Last but not least, previous studies though suggested that the religious and cultural factors may play an important roles in forming the giving behavior, they have treated the factors disjointedly. However, this research would propose that, the cultural and religious factors not only influence the associational concepts individually but also as a network. The centrality of the associations that represent the custom element in their interconnection with other associations of other elements may be an indication of this understanding. The giving behavior and the perception of donation to a particular brand, as a network, are seen influencing by the cultural and religious bound personal experience.

5.4 Contributions and Limitations

The research thus has contributed, first, in understanding the fundraising activity in the religious organization from the marketing perspective. The research has tried to add into the knowledge from the donor’s perspective, in the effort of having a more comprehensive understanding to the act of donation to folk religion temple. Second, this research has also identified associations, elements and values that would be useful in the communication and maintaining the relationship with the donors. These factors identified could be useful also in the detection and development of prospect donors. Of equally importance, not only these relevant factors should be protected from dilution and erosion, these findings may be helpful in Identifying factors that are incongruent with the conceptualization of donation and inconsistent to the perception of the organization. Third, by introducing the BCM method, this research has tried to move a step forward in methodology. This research treats the donors’ conceptualization as a network of interconnected associations. This not only provided more comprehensive information in understanding the complex conceptual perceptions, but also has suggested possible combinations of attributes in donor segmentation and communication. Using the BCM method, the research is able to develop a visual and structural representation of those associations and provides an easy-to-manage tool for the management use. Last but not least, this research has also identified a workable framework that connect the associations with the elements involved and values perceived which can be a helpful in developing strategic fundraising plans.

However, there are several issues remained. As a careful study of fundraising of the folk religion religious organization, this is by no way an exhaustive one. Although this study has based it findings on in-depth studies on the common features of both donation in a general and specific context, taken temples in Taiwan (where temple/persons ratio is highest in Asia) as its sample, the ability to generalize of these findings may still need further empirical testing. The relevant associations and elements involved in the conceptualization of donation to temple, their weight to the brand and donation may need further empirical testing. Further, as pointed out by John et al. (2006), procedure that can assess the nature of relationship can be included also into future research. Whether the relationship between the associations or between brand and association is causal, correlational or of other kind will be useful information for the management to make more precise decision. Future research could enrich the study by including temples with different tradition, size and location as moderating variables in understanding the relationship of the above factors to specific brand and the act of donation. Up to this point the study is more of descriptive in nature. The reasonably good nomological and convergent validity may be an indication of the possibility for using the map in donor’s prediction. As proposed, the cultural and religious factors may have effect on the giving behavior and perception of a brand structurally. Further comparison of similar and dissimilar brands may also be helpful in understanding these influences.

6. Conclusions

NPO and their donors with different cultural and religious background may demonstrate specific understanding and conceptual perceptions in the act of donation. Therefore, as the competition for funds increases, understanding of donors’ perceptions and laying out effective communication strategies are crucial for NPO to remain viable. This research has found that associations such as “Peace”, “Merit”, “Charity” and “Identification” are often being related to the act of donation to temple, whether in general or in specific. Although the way these associations are related to particular brand and how they are interconnected are relatively different across the consensus maps, on a more abstract level, certain structure is identified. These associations are seen as closely related to and thus may be grouped under the four elements of beliefs, custom, personal and societal. These are significant elements in the conceptualization of donation to temple and associations may also be indications of the different values that donors would perceive in the act of donation. Various patterns of network of these elements are also identified in this research, where the cultural and religious factors are seen playing an

influential role. From the marketing perspective, such as in the process of donor development, marketing communication, and donor preservation, these associations on the individual and network levels are valuable for developing effective strategic fundraising plans. The use of BCM method not only provided for the identification of critical associations but also graphical representation of their interconnections that could be useful features for the fundraising management to build, leverage and focus upon.

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Table 1. BCM Measure for Donors

Table of the BCM									
	Temple			Fu-De			Yung-Fu		
Association	<i>Freq.</i>	<i>Inter.</i>	<i>1st order</i>	<i>Freq.</i>	<i>Inter.</i>	<i>1st order</i>	<i>Freq.</i>	<i>Inter.</i>	<i>1st order</i>
Merit	32	14	32	26	19	24	36	21	27
Charity	26	18	21	28	15	19	21	13	14
Dining	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	14	4	10
Expiation	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	3	2	3
Fate	26	13	24	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
God	N/A	N/A	N/A	19	22	17	N/A	N/A	N/A
Habit	4	5	4	12	3	8	17	9	15
Identification	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	40	22	36
Needs	6	4	6	9	6	9	28	17	25
Incense/Oil	20	5	16	20	15	18	37	23	32
Pledge	8	3	7	24	12	22	36	21	29
Peace	28	16	27	35	12	32	50	31	41
Repay Society	11	14	7	14	13	14	N/A	N/A	N/A
Spirituality	17	15	16	19	11	12	N/A	N/A	N/A
Festival	N/A	N/A	N/A	9	3	7	39	20	36
Maintain/Build	14	7	12	28	12	23	23	17	18
Worship	14	14	14	23	9	20	N/A	N/A	N/A
Development	15	7	13	11	5	9	N/A	N/A	N/A

Table 2. Split-half Reliability

	Temple	Fu-De	Yung-Fu
Core Associations	0.657 (p<0.05)	0.559 (p<0.05)	0.683 (p<0.05)
First-order	0.816 (p<0.01)	0.826 (p<0.01)	0.707 (p<0.05)
Total links	0.321 (p<0.01)	0.229 (p<0.05)	0.487 (p<0.01)

Table 3. Comparison of different Familiarity Groups

	Temple	Fu-De	Yung-Fu
Number of association	3.69 (3.02)**	5.20 (4.91)**	6.67 (5.70)*
Number of lines	10.41 (7.38)**	13.95 (10.42)**	18.71 (11.75)**
Number of links	4.48 (3.52)**	5.69 (5.13)*	8.60 (6.30)**

Number in parenthesis was average of less familiar groups, * p<0.05 and ** p<0.01

Table 4. Convergent Validity

	Temple	Fu-De	Yung-Fu
Frequency	0.567 (p<0.05)	0.850 (p<0.01)	0.59 (p<0.05)
First-order	0.621 (p<0.05)	0.747 (p<0.01)	0.666 (p<0.05)
Lines	0.577 (p<0.05)	0.755 (p<0.01)	0.59 (p<0.05)

Table 5. Framework of Donation to Temple

Category	Elements	Associations	Determinants
Specific	Belief	God, Identification, Worship, Spirituality	Emotional value
	Custom	Merit, Pledge, Incense/Oil, Fate, Festival	Conditional value
General	Personal	Needs, Peace	Functional value
	Social	Charity, Repay Society, Maintain/Build	Societal value

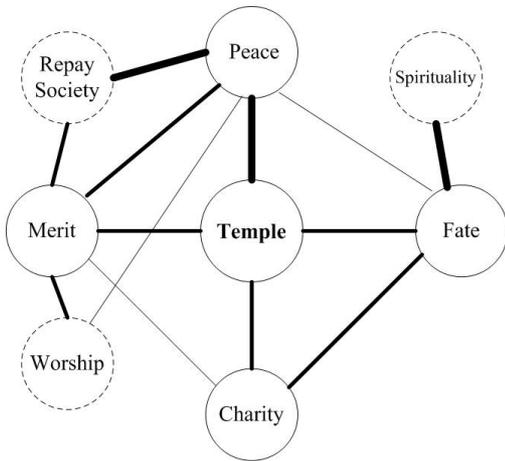


Figure 1. Consensus BCM for Temple

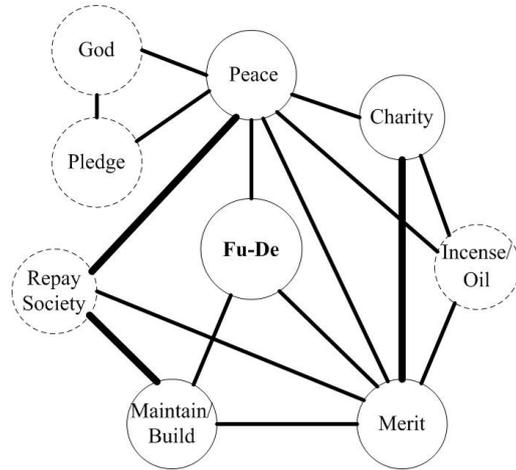


Figure 2. Consensus BCM for Fu-De

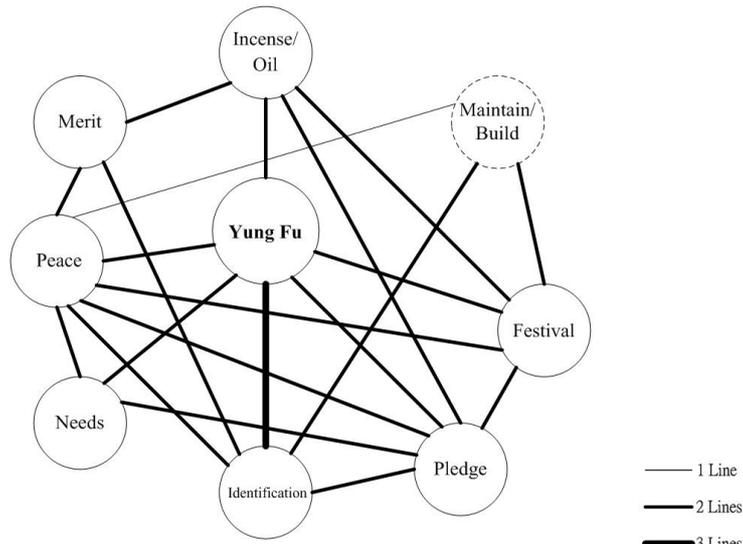


Figure 3. Consensus BCM for Yung-Fu