The effect of perceived authenticity of food towards experience and place attachment at the State Fair

Zahidah Ab Latif

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The effect of perceived authenticity of food towards experience and place attachment at the State Fair

by

Zahidah Ab Latif

A dissertation submitted to the graduate faculty
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Major: Hospitality Management

Program of Study Committee:
SoJung Lee, Major Professor
Daniel W. Russell
Eunha Jeong
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The student author, whose presentation of the scholarship herein was approved by the program of study committee, is solely responsible for the content of this dissertation. The Graduate College will ensure this dissertation is globally accessible and will not permit alterations after a degree is conferred.

Iowa State University

Ames, Iowa

2018

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my family:

Mohd Ulul Khalili

Mohd Ali Khalili

Their love, patience, and support throughout my graduate work have helped me immeasurably.
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ABSTRACT

The state fair is a significant event that represents a place, attracting numerous tourists (Nelson, 2009). State fairs offer a wide range of food and beverages that combine various ingredients and flavors. The authenticity and uniqueness of the food at the state fair are important elements that have the potential to motivate people to travel to a destination (Robinson & Clifford, 2012). While a number of studies have attempted to focus on different type of festivals (Roozbeh, Ng, & Boo, 2013), less attention has paid to the state fair and its visitors’ experiences and attachment. Furthermore, research has rarely investigated how food, particularly authentic food at the state fair is important in influencing visitors’ experiences that leads them to have emotionally bond to the destination. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to examine if the perceived authentic food will influence visitors’ experiences and place attachment in the state fair setting.

An online survey was used; 533 responses were analyzed using Mplus structural equation modeling. Results indicated that the initial model proposed in the study was partially supported where perceived authentic food significantly predicted experience and place attachment. In addition, a mediating effect was found in the model as hypothesized; perceived authentic food at the state fair had a significant indirect effect on attachment to the place. However, there was no significant interaction effect of perceived authentic food on the relationships between experience and place attachment.

This study expands the literature on festival research particularly at the state fair by focusing on attendees’ perception of food, experience and place attachment. Overall, this study verified that perceived authentic food has significant impacts on experience and place attachment. In addition, the study is among the first to investigate the
importance of authentic food at the state fair by applying the cue utilization theory. As a theoretical foundation, the cue utilization theory successfully identified the role of food in bridging food and attendees’ experiences and attachment to a destination. The identified theory enables the study to verify that perceived authentic food is an indicator in determining attendees’ experience and their emotional sense of a place. This study will help the state fair organizers to recognize the important role of perceived authentic food in influencing visitors’ experience at fairs and attachment to the place. State fair organizers should advance their marketing strategies to the next stage, making greater efforts to introduce authentic food at the state fair to invite potential visitors and magnetize currents attendees to the state fair.
CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

Food plays a great role in social life and in tourism (Tikkanen, 2007). Food is not only a functional component of a trip, but also highly experiential, sensual, symbolic and ritualistic (Mitchell & Hall, 2003). In some instances, food is regarded as an essential part of the travel experience, as it provides tourists with memorable and agreeable pastimes (Sanchez-Canizares & Lopez-Guzman, 2012). In other words, tourists also seek something different from their everyday life when traveling, and this may include the taste of authentic food.

In the tourism context, authenticity refers to tourists’ personal evaluation of the extent to which their expectations for a destination hold true during a visit (Jain, 2014). Throughout the first part of the new millennium, authenticity has been a prominent topic in tourism’s foremost journals (Buchmann, Moore, & Fisher, 2010). Researches have conceptualized the meaning of authenticity using different associations and denotations, such as genuineness, timelessness, tradition, and originality, as well as cultural, personal, or positive evaluations (Aaker & Drolet, 1996; Ballantyne, Warren, & Nobbs, 2006; Stern, 1996).
Authentic food, like fashion and design, is an expression of art, and through culinary products and dining experiences, consumer identities are enhanced and expressed (Gyimothy & Mykletun, 2009). Authentic food refers to a genuine form of food or product that is unique, homegrown, natural, and homemade and has distinctive extrinsic product attributes (Groves, 2001). Authentic food is becoming one of the main attractions for any destination. According to Kalenjuk, Tešanović, and Gagić (2015), only authentic dishes can satisfy the curiosity of travelers; their research may be evidence that authentic food has a significant impact on tourism. Apparently, the authenticity and uniqueness of food has the potential to motivate people to travel (Groves, 2001; Robinson & Clifford, 2012).

A festival is recognized as an important driving force in tourism. A festival is defined as “a celebration of a theme or special event for a limited period of time, held annually or less frequently” (Smith, 1990, p.187). Festivals allow visitors to experience new flavors in a pleasant environment and engage with producers, manufacturers, or local people (Mason & Paggiaro, 2012). The state fair, in particular, is one of the most popular festivals in the United States (Lipsey, 2014, June 5). State fairs, which began in the nineteenth century, are an annual occasion for states to celebrate the tradition and festivity of the harvest, which came from the discipline and labor of farming life (Gaskell, 2000; Nelson, 2009). The state fair can be a significant event that represents a state, attracting numerous tourists (Nelson, 2009).

State fairs offer a wide range of food and beverages that combine various ingredients and flavors. Food in particular is one of the main motives for people to visit a state fair. The Iowa State Fair organizer, for example, revealed that about 70 percent of
respondents reported that food was the top attraction at a state fair. The fair runs the
country's largest state fair foods department with approximately 200 food stands and “70
deflectable items on a stick” (Iowa State Fair, 2016). This implies that food can be a
critical factor in attracting potential attendees to a fair where refreshment stands are
placed around every corner (Leslie, 2007). The authenticity and uniqueness of the food
are important elements that have the potential to motivate people to travel to a destination
to attend a state fair. (Groves, 2001; Robinson & Clifford, 2012).

Food is a critical element in forming positive experiences (Okumus, Altinay, &
Roper, 2007) and developing emotional attachment (Bezirgan, 2014), thereby
strengthening the relationship between experience and place attachment. Indeed, a state
fair evokes positive emotions and memorable experiences, which can lead to attachment
to a particular state through various engagement opportunities such as entertainment and
other activities (Shwaluk, 2009). Experience has become an indispensable element in
tavel, tourism, and destination branding (Pine & Gilmore, 1999). Place attachment
emphasizes a strong connection between an individual and a particular setting (Hidalgo &
Hernandez, 2001). The concept of place attachment has received special attention from
social science researchers over the last four decades (Lewicka, 2011).

The perceived authenticity of food can be a cue that represents the event quality
and experience (George, 2001; Munoz & Wood, 2009; Olson & Jacoby, 1972). Cue
utilization theory, introduced by Easterbrook (1959), describes product attributes that
could be an important basis for the consumers’ assessment and impressions of the quality
of the product (Cox, 1962; Jacoby, Olson, & Haddock, 1971). Regarding the food
business, the interest in ethnic restaurants shown by an increasing number of Americans
may be evidence of a search for authentic food experiences (Finkelstein, 1989; Shelton, 1990). Customers outside the referent ethnic group do not have the knowledge to determine whether cuisine is authentic or modified to a local cuisine style (Lu & Fine, 1995). This is where cues may be critically utilized because customers are often uncertain about the quality and benefits of products that they aim to purchase (Akdeniz et al., 2014: Erdem & Swait, 1998). This implies that cue utilization theory could provide a perspective toward understanding the role of food that is perceived to be authentic as it relates to experience and attachment to a place.

**Background of the Study**

The term fair is rooted in the Latin word “feria” which means holy day (International Association of Fairs and Expositions, IAFE, 2017). Feria refers to a religious event where large numbers of people assembled for religious worship, usually around temples in a great city (IAFE, 2017). In 1765, the first North American fair, which continues to operate today, took place in Windsor, Nova Scotia. In 1811, Elkanah Watson, a New England patriot and farmer, known as the "father of U.S. agricultural fairs," created an association called the Berkshire Agricultural Society and organized its first event (IAFE, 2017). The show included animal exhibitions and a competition for the best oxen, cattle, swine and sheep. Watson worked diligently for many years helping communities organize their own agricultural societies and their respective fairs. With Watson’s assistance, most counties in New England organized their own agricultural shows or fairs, and the movement spread. In nineteenth century, almost every state and
region in the U.S. organized one or more agricultural fairs or exhibitions, annually (IAFE, 2017).

There are approximately 73 state fairs in the United States (Everfest, 2017). State fairs mainly aim at promoting agriculture, including livestock and farm products, as well as displaying new products, processes, and ideas (Gaskell, 2000). Modern state fairs, however, have added various food and entertainment options, such as carnival rides, games, and concerts to attract more people. With a variety of food offerings, state fairs have become a significant means of promoting rural areas and boosting their economies (Illinois State Fair Foundation, 2015). Additionally, live concerts, exhibitions, competitions, and rides appeal to international visitors. Bassett reported that at the Texas State Fair, American cultural experiences like food, rides, and petting zoos, were favorites among international visitors (Bassett, 2016 October).

Over the years, state fairs have adapted and changed to meet the demands of attendees. As the president and CEO of the Oklahoma State Fair noted, there are people who come to the fair every year to recapture childhood memories (Raymond, NewsOK.com, 2016 September); they feel attached to the place and state where they grew up. The relationship between people and places is an important topic in place-related research (He, 2013). When people travel, their experiences have the potential to shape their motivations, perceptions, place attachment, and future behaviors (Prebensen & Foss, 2011). Visitors that become emotionally attached to a state fair may come again in the future. Some attendees visit state fairs every year (Keenan, 2016, August 10). Furthermore, visitors who came to the fair also visited surrounding areas, especially places of interest in a particular state (Iowa State Fair, 2016).
The state fair is an auspicious channel to invigorate the local economy (Rohrer, September 2013). For instance, the Minnesota State Fair brought in $41,351,000 in 2011, from its carnival, grandstand, parking, campgrounds, live entertainment, competitions and sales. Revenue also came from non-fair events such as sponsorships, licenses, and utilities (Report to the Minnesota State Legislature, 2012).

State fair vendors across the nation back in the 18th century initially started selling traditional American foods such as chocolate chip cookies, cream puffs, funnel cakes, cotton candy, candy apples, corn dogs, and hamburgers. With new ingredients and technologies, food vendors have added new items such as elephant ears, beef and chicken on a stick, deep-fried candy bars, and Kool-Aid pickles (Rosenfeld, Suddath, & Carbone, 2015). State fair organizers have recently begun to invite local food producers and restaurants to offer diversity in food that can play a driving force in attracting more people (Pratt, 2014).

**Problem Statement**

While a state fair can be an important tourism event for the respective state, only a few studies have paid attention to state fairs in the context of tourism, and most event studies have focused on festivals, excluding state fairs (Brocato, 2007; Falassi, 1987; Mason & Paggiaro, 2012; Organ, Koenig-Lewis, Palmer, & Probert, 2015; Pine & Gilmore, 1999; Roozbeh, Ng, & Boo, 2013). Therefore, there is a need to further study tourism as it relates to state fairs.

Though state fairs have maintained a stable number of attendees each year (Readers.com, 2016 August 5), fair organizers have rarely examined consumer research
to understand their attendees. In addition, little research has paid attention to attendees in a state fair setting. This indicates the need for more extensive studies to understand consumer behavior at state fairs.

Furthermore, though food is an essential item at a state fair, few studies have paid attention to the important role of food in visitors’ overall evaluations regarding experiences and satisfaction. Moreover, research on authenticity has been limited to food tourism and festivals in general (Jiang, Ramkisson, Mavondo, & Feng, 2016; Novello & Fernandez, 2016). The few studies done in state fair settings have focused on information technology and history; there has been little emphasis on food-related topics (Goode et al., 2004; Litchfield, Martin, & Schultz, 2015; Marquart et al., 2006). There is a limited understanding of food, particularly, authentic food at a state fair and more extensive research is needed to examine whether food at state fairs is perceived as authentic. It would be useful to know what components of food deliver authentic values, and whether perceived authenticity of food is important to consumers who visit a particular state.

Cue utilization theory has been broadly employed within business research in order to understand patronage intentions, product presentation, and product evaluations (Akdeniz et al., 2014; Gooner & Nadler, 2012; Rao & Monroe, 1988; Richardson et al., 1994; Szibillo & Jacoby, 1974; Wang, Cui, Huang, & Dai, 2016). Food is a product; therefore, cue utilization theory might be a sound theory to describe the role of food in the state fair context. Wang and Matilla (2015) recently employed this theory in a food service context. However, little known research has applied this theory to food tourism (Kunz & Seshadri, 2015). This study attempts to adapt the cue utilization theory to better
understand the role of consumers’ perceptions of authentic food as it relates to experience and place attachment among attendees at the state fair.

Extensive studies have examined tourists’ experiences in various settings such as festivals, (Brocato, 2007; Pine & Gilmore, 1999; Manthiou, Lee, Tang, & Chiang, 2014; Roozbeh, Ng, & Boo, 2013), hotels and lodgings (Ali, Hussain, & Ragavan, 2014; Apivantanaporn & Walsh, 2013; Oh, Fiore, & Jeoung, 2007), restaurant (Tsai, 2016), theme park (Jain, 2014), island destinations (Hussain, Lema, & Agrusa, 2012; Rivera, Semrad, & Croes, 2015), and rural areas (Bessiere & Tibere, 2013; Sidali, Kastenholz, & Bianchi, 2015). However, little research has investigated fair goers’ experiences in the state fair. Thus, further study is needed to contribute to future literature regarding attendees’ experiences at the state fair.

Place attachment could be an important element in understanding the role of state fairs in connecting attendees to a particular state. Numerous studies on place attachment have focused on different contexts such as rural areas (Loureiro, 2014), wineries (Cardinale, Nguyen, & Melewar, 2016; Gross & Brown, 2008), and heritage (Vong, 2015). However, little investigation has explored attendees’ place attachment to the state where the fair takes place. Thus, there is a need to explore how state fairs may contribute to building fair goers’ attachment to a given state.

Much research has reported the strong relationship between experience and place attachment in various settings such as wineries, restaurants, heritage building, and the natural environment (Cardinale, Nguyen, & Melewar, 2016; Gross & Brown, 2008; Tsai, 2016; Vaske & Kobrin, 2001). Although the link between experience and attachment has been examined in previous studies (Bitner, Booms, & Mohr, 1994; Vaske & Kobrin,
there is little research to explore how the experiences of state fair attendees might cause them to develop a deeper attachment to the state. Hence, there is a need to understand fair goers’ bonding to the state based on their experiences at the state fair.

Based on previous studies, it is assumed that authentic food has a significant relationship with both experience and place attachment as a moderator and/or mediator. Extant literature has investigated the moderating role of food on consumers’ engagement with the food service sector (Kang & Jeong, 2008; Chen, 2007); however, little empirical research has examined the impact of food on building place attachment through the interaction effect of experiences using a holistic model (Bezirgan, 2014). Thus, there is a need to explore the role of perceived authenticity of food on experience and place attachment among state fair attendees.

**Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study was to examine the role of authentic food in forming experiences and place attachment in a state fair setting. Cue utilization theory was used to investigate whether food can be a cue to influence a person’s experience and attachment to the state where the state fair was held. Based on the above theoretical rationale, this study had the following specific objectives: 1) to examine the impact of authentic food on experience at the state fair, 2) to explore the effect of authentic food on place attachment, 3) to investigate the relationship between attendees’ experiences and place attachment, 4) to determine whether experience mediates the relationships between perceived authenticity of food and place attachment, and 5) to determine if perceived authenticity of food moderates the link between experience and place attachment.
Significance of the Study

The state fair significantly contributes to increase profit of the local communities. However, there has been limited research to understand the state fair business. Considering the popularity of this annual event and the importance of state fairs to local communities, this research contributes to filling a gap in the literature. The knowledge gained from this study provides an opportunity to focus on the state fair industry in future studies. This study may provide important insights related to consumer research on state fairs. Exploring state fair attendees behavior help food vendors and organizers to develop appropriate strategies to provide food that meet attendees’ demands.

Food is increasingly considered a factor that contributes to high state fair attendance and contributes to the local economy from daily sales (Rohrer, September 2013). While most festivals offer food, this study increases understanding about whether food at the state fair in particular was perceived to be authentic by attendees, thereby expanding the literature on the importance of authentic food and attachment to place. In particular, the application of the cue utilization theory provides a unique approach to understanding the role of food in state fair settings and contribute to better describing how authentic food can play a role in influencing attendees’ experiences at state fairs.

The ability to understand attendees overall experience is paramount to the sustainability of the state fair business. In fact, experience has played a prominent role in understanding tourist behavior (Cohen, 1988; Crang, 1996). Examining the experiences of a sample of state fair attendees offers a better understanding of consumer feelings and insights from the perspectives of education, entertainment, escapism, and esthetic
experiences. This study further helps state fairs to better services, leading to greater business growth, and enhancing local and state economies.

People often have an emotional bond to places they feel reflect their identities (Kyle, Mowen, & Tarrant, 2004). Attendees who engage in personal relationships through social interactions, networking with other attendees while enjoying the state fair’s offerings, could develop an attachment to the place where the state fair is held. This is one of the first studies to apply the concept of place attachment to the state fair context by including these four components; place dependence, place identity, place affect, and social bonding. By investigating attendees’ place attachment, this study highlights the importance of attachment in the state fair business.

As food and experiences have generally been researched by academic scholars (Apivantananporn & Walsh, 2013; Bessiere & Tibere, 2013; Tsai, 2016), this current study expands the literature by integrating food, experience, and place attachment concepts in one study. As it is the first in hospitality and tourism study to discuss these links, the results explain the influence of perceived authentic food on overall experience and place attachment. Incorporating three constructs of perceived authentic food, experience, and place attachment, a holistic model was developed to provide greater insights into the role of authentic food in influencing attendees experience and their attachment to the place.

**Definition of Terms**

**Cue utilization theory** is a set of principles on attributes of a product that could be an important basis for consumers’ assessment and impressions of the quality of the product (Cox, 1962; Jacoby, Olson, & Haddock, 1971).
Food tourism is a form of tourism in which a holiday or an event is focused on preparing and/or eating particular foods (Castree, Kitchin, & Rogers, 2013). It becomes a way to pursue enjoyment of unique and memorable food and beverage experiences, regardless of the distance of the destination.

Festival is described as “a means by which culture can be celebrated, preserved, and represented in a public forum before an audience” (Abramson & Haskell, 2006). It is a common expression of human activity, contributing to both social and cultural lives.

State fair is an annual state event to celebrate a state’s agriculture and traditions through exhibitions of livestock and farm products, usually held in late summer or early fall (Gaskell, 2000).

Authentic food refers to a genuine form of a product based on a particular setting, place, region, or country. Food can be perceived as authentic when it is unique, homegrown, natural, and homemade and has distinctive extrinsic product attributes (Groves, 2001).

Experience is “a subjective mental state felt by visitors during a service encounter” (Otto & Ritchie, 1996, pg. 166). Moscardo (2009) proposed that a tourist experience can be defined as a “continuous process made up of a set of events or activities occurring at a destination that often involves contact with tourism-related organizations and their personnel, and is driven by expectations of some sort of benefit” (p. 101).

Place attachment is described as an affective relationship of an individual to a particular setting (Hidalgo & Hernandez, 2001) or a strong connection between a tourist and a destination (Smith, Siderelis, & Moore, 2010). It also refers to “the extent to which
an individual value and identifies with a particular environmental setting” (Moore & Graefe, 1994, p. 17).
CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter provides an extensive review of the literature as it relates to the research problem, beginning with an overview of festivals in the United States. Background on state fairs is provided, and food tourism is discussed in terms of consumers’ perception of authentic food. In particular, definitions and previous studies on food tourism and authenticity are considered. To better explain this study, this chapter describes the concept of an “experience economy,” as well as the dimensions of the model. Finally, the topic of place attachment is introduced, and related previous research is presented.

Festivals and Fairs

The festival industry has been rapidly growing since the early 20th century (Yeoman, Robertson, Ali-Knight, Drummond, & McMahon-Beattie, 2003). The word festival comes from the Latin words “festum,” which means public happiness, jolly, or playful, “feria” that means absence from work to honor something (Falassi, 1987). Specifically, a festival can be described as “a means by which culture can be celebrated, preserved, and represented in a public forum before an audience” (Abramson & Haskell, 2006). Not only a cultural celebration, a festival is consumed socially, especially by people who share similar interests. In addition, people are pleased by the fact that they can enjoy a moment outside of the normal environment of daily life; thus, the festival plays an important role in the community. This claim, supported by previous research,
indicates that festivals are vital expressions of human activity, contributing to lives both socially and culturally (Allen, O’Toole, Harris, & McDonnell, 2011).

Previous literature indicates that festivals have been researched in multiple disciplines (Arcodia & Whitford, 2006; Getz, 2010; Matheson, 2005). Most research on festivals has examined economic impacts (Getz, 2000, 2008; Harris, Jago, Allen, & Huyskens, 2001; Page & Connell, 2010), experience (Axelsen & Swan, 2010; Manthiou, Lee, Tang, & Chiang, 2014; Robinson & Clifford, 2012), place attachment (Davis & Martin, 2014; Lee, Kyle, & Scott, 2012; Ram, Bjork, & Weidenfeld, 2016), satisfaction and loyalty (Kim, Suh, & Eves, 2010; Lee, Lee, Lee, & Babin, 2008; Wan & Chan, 2013; Yoon, Lee, & Lee, 2010), motivation (Park, Reisinger, & Kang, 2008), destination branding (Lee & Arcodia, 2011), and festivalscape (Bruwer & Kelley, 2015; Mason & Paggiaro, 2012).

A number of reviews of different topics in festival literature have been undertaken, particularly in wine tourism (Beverland, Hoffman, & Rasmussen, 2001; Bruwer, & Lesschaeve, 2012; Sparks, 2007), food (Boo, Ghiselli, R, & Almanza, 2000; Kim, Suh, & Eves, 2010; Organ, Koenig-Lewis, Palmer, & Probert, 2015), rural destination (Gration, Arcodia, Raciti, & Stokes, 2011; Janiskee, 1980, 1991; Moscardo, 2007), music (Bourdeau, De Coster, & Paradis, 2001; Bowen & Daniels, 2005; Wilks, 2012), and cultural festival settings (Abreau, 2005; Agrusa, 2000; Felsenstein & Fleischer, 2003). The current study goes beyond the research areas and settings mentioned above; state fairs were chosen as the study setting.

Fairs have been common events since they began in the American colonies in the 18th century. The first fairs were known primarily for agriculture, and they served as a
showcase for regional farm products and livestock (Reed & Rodgers, 2009). The fair was a commercial venue where merchants from distant countries would come together, bringing their native wares to trade with one another (IAFE, 2017). Consequently, the term “fair” was derived from trading activities among foreign merchants. The fair was perceived as beneficial to the community as “the fairs gave rural families an opportunity to see first-hand the latest agricultural techniques, equipment, crops and livestock” (Reed & Rodgers, 2009).

Among the kinds of popular fairs in the United States is the state fair. A state fair is an annual state event, usually held in late summer or early fall, to celebrate the state’s agricultural traditions, through exhibitions of livestock and farm products (Gaskell, 2000). In addition, it is one of the few events at which rural people gather in large numbers to sightsee or display new products, processes, and ideas (Gaskell, 2000). The state fair is an important state social event; people attend a yearly town meeting, as well as educational exhibitions and entertainment activities.

Hospitality and tourism-related research on state fairs, however, provides an inadequate understanding among scholars and practitioners due to insufficient literature. Prior research on the state fair has been conducted in multiple areas such as: medical cancer screening in a state fair setting (Rogers, Goodson, Dietz, & Okuyemi, 2016), veterinary livestock disease at the state fair (Thunes & Carpenter, 2007), memory (Nelson, 2009), and history (Pratt & Marling, 1993; Warner-Ward, 1953). As food is an important element at state fairs (Iowa State Fair, 2016), scholars have emphasized the nutritional content of the food at the fair. This nutritional information is accessible to fairgoers from mobile phones (Litchfield, Martin, & Schultz, 2015). Additionally, since
state fairs have dealt with various food stands and livestock, food safety and hygiene have been thought to be a major concern (Winter, Ivy, & Horney, 2013).

**Food and Tourism**

Food has been recognized to be a critical component that affects the overall experience of a destination in the tourism context. Food is not just nourishment to satisfy hunger (Quan & Wang, 2004; Tikkanen, 2007), but it also represents regional heritage and is a cultural heirloom that shows the unique and authentic features of a destination (Everett & Aitchison, 2008). That is, local dishes represent a place and convey its history and culture. In addition, people visit a destination for pleasant memories that include novel experiences with food and taste; this is called food tourism (Buhalis & Costa, 2006). The uniqueness of local food is an important element in food tourism, as food can portray regional dishes and specialties that have the potential to motivate people to travel (Groves, 2001; Robinson & Clifford, 2012).

**Food Tourism**

Food tourism plays a significant role as one of the major economic resources for a destination. The food tourism industry has developed rapidly with 30% growth over the last decade, and it offers many opportunities for entrepreneurs (Chang, 2014). Travelers spend more than $209 billion annually on food services in the United States with an average of one-third the total on fine-dining sales and almost a fourth on casual-dining sales (National Restaurant Association, 2015). This shows that there is a symbiotic relationship between food and the restaurant and tourism industry. Also known as culinary tourism, gastronomic tourism, or gourmet tourism, food tourism has grown
considerably and has become one of the most dynamic and creative segments of tourism (UNWTO, 2012).

Table 2.1 shows the definitions of food tourism from different sources. Established 10 years ago, the World Food Travel Association (WFTA), formerly known as the Food Tourism Association, defined food tourism as the pursuit and enjoyment of unique and memorable food and beverage experiences regardless of the distance of the destination (WFTA, 2016). Additionally, as shown in Table 2.1, Buhalis and Costa (2006, p.137) defined food tourism as “visitation to primary and secondary food producers, food festivals, restaurants and specific locations for which food tasting and/or experiencing the attributes of specialized food production regions are the primary motivating factors for travel.” In other words, food tourism can be explained as the act of traveling to another destination in order to consume its food. For instance, France, Italy, and Thailand have been known for their cuisine; thus, a number of visitors travel to these locations to experience the food.

**Table 2.1.**

**Food tourism definition**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author(s)/ Year</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Definition Food Tourism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Buhalis and Costa (2006)</td>
<td>Tourism business frontiers: Consumers, products and industry</td>
<td>Visitation to primary and secondary food producers, food festivals, restaurants and specific locations for which food tasting and/or experiencing the attributes of specialized food production regions are the primary motivating factors for travel</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2.1. (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author(s) / Year</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Definition Food Tourism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stanley and Stanley (2015)</td>
<td>Food Tourism: A Practical Marketing Guide</td>
<td>Act of people discovering the history and heritage of their food, as well as discovering new foods and new food preparation procedures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Everett and Aitchison (2008)</td>
<td>The Role of Food Tourism in Sustaining Regional Identity: A Case Study of Cornwall, South West England</td>
<td>Heritage and cultural heirloom that can represent unique and authentic features in destinations and attractions (i.e. events, activities, festivals, and celebrations)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World Tourism Organization (2012)</td>
<td>Global Report on Food Tourism</td>
<td>An experiential journey that is related to a particular lifestyle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ignatov and Smith (2006)</td>
<td>Segmenting Canadian Culinary Tourists</td>
<td>Traveling trips for the purpose of purchase or consumption of regional foods (including beverages), or the observation and study of food production</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to Stanley and Stanley (2015), food tourism has become important to the world tourism industry over the last decade for two main reasons; 1) an increasing desire on the part of many people to discover the history and heritage of their food, 2) tourists’ desire to discover new foods and new food preparation procedures. This
information suggests that food tourism is about searching for knowledge about food, both old (historical) and new.

The significance of food on tourism simply cannot be ignored. Food is not only a basic human need, but also an essential element of the overall tourism experience (Hjalager, & Richards, 2002; Ignatov & Smith, 2006). That is, food is an integral part of the experience and provides a major contribution to an individual's vacation. Though one must eat to survive, eating is more than just survival and pleasure. Everett and Aitchison (2008) indicated that food is heritage and a cultural heirloom that can represent unique and authentic features in destinations and attractions (i.e. events, activities, festivals, and celebrations). When food transforms tourists from passive visitors into engaged participants, food tourism has emerged.

A report from the World Tourism Organization (2012) provides characteristics of food tourism through its definition: “the experience of gastronomic tourism is an experiential journey that is related to a particular lifestyle (see Table 2.1) that includes; 1) experimentation, 2) learning from different cultures, 3) the acquisition of knowledge and understanding of the qualities or attributes related to tourism products, including the culinary specialties produced in each region. Gastronomy may be a visitor’s main motivation, or at least one particular reason to travel to a particular destination. Therefore, gastronomic tourism applies to tourists and visitors who plan their trips partially or wholly in order to taste the cuisine of a place or to carry out activities related to gastronomy (UNTWO, 2012).

Based on the above notion, food tourism is known to offer experiential knowledge to travelers. Ignatov and Smith (2006) supported this statement and defined culinary
tourism as traveling for the purpose of purchase or consumption of regional foods (including beverages), or the observation and study of food production.

Most previously existing food tourism definitions offer different perspectives of traveling for food. Regarding the purpose of this study, the definition of food tourism is extended, incorporating the concept of authenticity, to provide precision to the entire study according to the topic and conceptual model. Moreover, the concept of food tourism becomes more explicit as it encompasses both a comprehensive approach to food tourism and the role of authentic food. As such, the following definition of food tourism is proposed: the experiential activity of traveling to places to sample the local cuisine and embrace the originality, genuineness, and the authenticity of the food spectrum.

**Authentic Food**

Authenticity is something that many individuals have sought through their travel experiences both in the past and present. Indeed, throughout the first part of the new millennium, authenticity has been a hot topic in tourism’s foremost journals (Buchmann, Moore, & Fisher, 2010). Because individuals appreciate authentic experiences or objects that reflect their culture, values, or beliefs (Molleda, 2010), the retail industry offers a variety of authentic goods, including original art (Bentor, 1993), traditional souvenirs (Harkin, 1995) access to historical reconstructions (Handler & Gable, 1997), and food (Lu & Fine, 1995). Specifically, food appears to be a strong cultural element, closely related to the perception of authenticity. Researchers have focused on authentic food, since it has become a potential vehicle to attract customers (Lu & Fine, 1995).

In a foodservice context, authentic food refers to a genuine form of a product based on a particular setting - place, region, or country (Groves, 2001). Food can be
perceived as authentic when it is unique, homegrown, natural, and homemade and has distinctive extrinsic product attributes. The perceived authenticity of a food product increases the value of the product (Taylor, 2001). Likewise, food is observed to be authentic according to the following three factors: 1) product-related factors (e.g., name, label, appearance, packaging, and description); 2) situational factors (e.g., the settings); and 3) and personal factors (e.g., knowledge and experience) (Kuznesof, Tregear & Moxey, 1997).

Dean, Murphy, and Downey (2006, p. 1) concluded that the authenticity of a food may be related to different important aspects such as “the process history of a product (e.g. fresh meat as opposed to frozen, thawed meat), its geographic origin (e.g. Greek olive-oil should be produced only from olives that are grown in Greece), or the species or variety of ingredients (instant coffee labeled as 100% Arabica should not contain any other coffee-bean variety).” Furthermore, authenticity is an attribute that could be specifically relevant to an ethnic restaurant (Lui & Jang, 2009). Supporting most scholars on the definition of authenticity, Mohammad and Chan (2011) refer to authenticity as pertaining to whether the food and environment reflect the genuine or “real” taste and culture of the ethnic origin. That is, the cuisine is not adjusted to meet local tastes. Ebster and Guist (2004) indicate that only customers who are familiar with the food and culture of the ethnic origin can judge its authenticity.

However, there is still no consensus on the acceptable definition of authenticity when debates about its meaning and validity continue to play a central role in the tourism literature. Cohen (2007) argues that multiple meanings and definitions of authenticity exist. Furthermore, he suggests that most theorists and researchers have agreed to define
authenticity according to other definitions related to their studies as follows: 1) Authenticity as customary practice or long period of usage, 2) Authenticity as genuineness in the sense of an unaltered product, 3) Authenticity as sincerity when applied to relationships, 4) Authenticity as creativity with special relevance to cultural performances including dance and music, and 5) Authenticity as the flow of life in the sense that there is no interference with the setting by the tourism industry or other managers (Cohen, 2007).

Referencing these concepts, the current study intends to investigate the perception of authentic food in forming travel experiences and place attachment in the state fair setting. While Groves (2001) defined authentic food as a genuine form of a product based on a particular setting - place, region, or country - she also believed that food could be perceived as authentic when it is unique, homegrown, natural, and homemade and has distinctive extrinsic product attributes. Thus, concurrent with my research objective, the following definition of authentic food is proposed: having a value of being unique, noteworthy, significant, and of only belonging to a particular place, region or country.

**Experience**

Experience has become an indispensable element in travel and tourism. Recent trends in tourism focus on development and delivery of the travel experience as it creates notable and memorable moments (Pine & Gilmore, 1998). Though tourists always expect to have experiences that can be called authentic, the relationship between authenticity and experience has been widely debated by tourism scholars (Rickly-Boyd, 2012; Wang,
It is generally thought that authenticity in tourism offers not only low costs and high quality services, but also genuine experiences (Pine & Gilmore, 2008).

In the tourism context, the concept of authenticity has played a prominent role in understanding tourist motivation and experience (Cohen, 1988; Crang, 1996). The word authenticity is derived from the Greek word “authentikos,” and the Latin word “authenticus” meant trustworthy (Cappannelli & Cappannelli, 2004, p. 1). Later, the word would also be used to describe anything genuine, tangible, or true (Kennick, 1985) or characterized by honesty and simplicity (Boyle, 2003). Additionally, what is authentic may be something that is sincere, original, and innocent (Fine, 2003). Finally, scholars have tried to conceptualize the meaning of authenticity using different associations and denotations, with genuineness (Stern, 1996; Aaker & Drolet, 1996), timelessness and tradition (Aaker & Drolet, 1996).

Authenticity can be interpreted in several ways, including objective authenticity, constructive authenticity, and existential authenticity. According to Wang (1999), objective authenticity is related to the authenticity of originals. Constructive authenticity is more subjective, symbolic, and reflective of a personal evaluation. Existential authenticity is not defined through the personal, subjective judgment of the product or service’s authenticity, but it is formed by personal feelings and perceptions of authenticity when a product is consumed.

Researchers have also suggested other aspects associated with authenticity, such as originality and cultural, personal or positive valuation (Stern, 1996; Ballantyne et al., 2006). According to Jain (2014), authenticity refers to tourists’ personal evaluation of the
extent to which their expectations and impressions of a destination hold true during a visit.

Therefore, there are many opportunities to communicate authenticity to different visitors through different means and messages. The International Ecotourism Society (2014) suggests that to have unique and authentic experiences, tourists should interact with local people, being part of the real lives of the locals, as well as participate in local traditions and customs. For example, Island Spirit tour agency promotes an authentic Fijian experience by connecting guests with nature and engaging with local communities. The service also provides a steady income for the communities.

Increasingly, companies have made an effort to please tourists by providing authentic goods or events (Fisher & Smith, 2011). For instance, in a recent study conducted by Minihan (2014), although the media could cover the story of winemaking, a winery owner still sees the value of providing an authentic face-to-face experience. Tourists consider the balance of activities defined by the supplier and the ones they themselves identify in order to obtain memorable, authentic experiences (Binkhorst & Dekker, 2009). Overall, it can be concluded that the understanding, awareness, and perception of authenticity is wide, though it is personal and subjective in nature.

**Experience Economy Model**

A theory or model could be applied in order to support the model of experiential research, especially in food tourism. The studies of Pine and Gilmore (1998, 1999) are seminal in the theorization of consumer behavior and the “experience economy.” This concept has been subsequently implemented especially in the tourism industry, where
“experiences have always been at the heart of the entertainment business” (Pine & Gilmore, 1998, p. 99).

Travel experience has been recognized as an important concept in tourism research, as experience creates notable and memorable moments (Pine & Gilmore, 1998). The term, experience is defined as “a subjective mental state felt by visitors during a service encounter” (Otto & Ritchie, 1996, pg. 166). Later, Moscardo (2009) proposed that tourist experience can be defined as a “continuous process made up of a set of events or activities occurring at a destination that often involves contact with tourism-related organizations and their personnel, and are driven by expectations of some sort of benefit” (p. 101). Several reviews devoted to understanding the tourist experience (Manthiou, Lee, Tang, & Chiang, 2014; Quadri-Felitti & Fiore, 2012; Quan & Wang, 2004; Ritchie & Hudson, 2009) confirm the paramount importance that scholars of both consumer behavior and tourism literature attribute to this topic.

Pine and Gilmore (1998, 1999), introduced the experience economy concept for understanding experiential products for consumers by offering a framework of experiential consumption that has practical significance to the tourism industry. They provide a classification to explain the evolution of economic offerings: extract commodities → make goods → deliver services → stage experience. In their paper, they claim that in 21st century, businesses not only supply commodities for goods, but also services (i.e. telephone service, event services). While commodities, goods, and services are external to consumers, experience is inherently personal, existing only in the minds of individuals who have been engaged at an emotional, physical, intellectual, or even spiritual level. Essentially, Pine and Gilmore claim that experiences are different from
services and goods. Nevertheless, they still emphasize that experiences, like goods and services that are delivered, have to and meet customer needs.

Pine and Gilmore’s experience economy constructs have been tested and employed in different tourism-related studies by several scholars (Kim, Ritchie, & McCormick, 2012; Oh, Fiore, & Jeoung, 2007; Quadri-Felitti & Fiore, 2012) and practitioners (LTL Consulting, 2004; Voss, 2004). Tourism experiences have been conceptualized and measured in multiple tourism settings such as bed-and-breakfast establishments (Oh et al., 2007), zoos (Tsaur, Chiu, & Wang, 2007), the cruise industry (Hosany & Witham, 2010), and film festivals (Park, Oh, & Park, 2010). However, no studies have measured tourists’ experiences in festival settings, particularly using the four realms’ experience-economy concept shown in figure 2.1. Therefore, this study investigates the festival experience in relation to perceived authentic food and place attachment.

![Figure 2.1. The four realms of an experience by Pine and Gilmore (1998)](image-url)
Pine and Gilmore (1998, 1999) identified four realms of consumer experience based on consumers’ level of participation and connection with their environment. These realms are: education, entertainment, escapism, and esthetic (see Figure 2.1). The figure above describes how a consumer’s level of participation ranges from active (i.e. consumers consume and produce services) to passive (i.e. consumers only observe and show mental presence). Furthermore, consumers’ connection with their surrounding environment ranges from absorptive (i.e. the consumer has a certain distance to engage with the experience) to immersive (i.e. the consumer is involved with the experience). Synthesizing prior research, many scholars have applied this concept to tourism studies to understand travelers’ experiences in various settings (Manthiou et al., 2014; Oh et al., 2007; Quadri-Felitti & Fiore, 2012; Rivera, Semrad, & Croes, 2015). The four types of experience used as major constructs are discussed in more detail as follows.

**Education experience.** Education plays a significant role in most aspects. In fact, consumers’ demand for learning experience is increasing (Ritchie, Carr, & Cooper, 2003). Education always actively engages consumer’s minds, intrigues them, and increases their desire to learn something new (Pine & Gilmore, 1998). Consumers play an important role in determining their experience because experience is active and absorptive. As a result, consumers involved in any educational experience will increase their knowledge and improve their skills. Cartwright and Baird (1999) proposed three sources of educational value in their tourism studies in which, first, tourists are allowed to “dip in,” immerse, and learn new cultures during vacation. Secondly, tourists can learn about destinations and landmarks along their journey. Finally, tourists can learn from
programs offered during their vacation, such as dance lessons, wine-tasting, cooking demonstrations, and so on.

**Entertainment experience.** Entertainment is one of the oldest forms of experience and involves passive involvement from the individual. In other words, it occurs when tourists passively observe activities or performances presented by others in their surroundings. Some common examples of entertainment experiences include live shows and concerts. Entertainment always remains an essential component of the tourism product (Hughes & Benn, 1995). This is supported by a previous study that investigated the influence of programs, amenities, and entertainment quality on the festival setting (Cole & Chancellor, 2009). Among the three attributes, entertainment quality was found to have the most significant impact on optimal experience, attendees’ satisfaction, and intention to return.

**Escapism experience.** Escapist experience refers to the extent to which an individual is completely captivated and immersed in an activity (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). Escapist experience requires active participation and is highly absorptive. Tourism provides abundant experiences for escapism, particularly during vacation. Vacation implies escape aids, solving problems, renewal of strength, energy, new lifeblood and happiness (Krippendorf, 1987: 17). Uriely (2005) added that vacationing provides a psychological escape from the daily routine of life. Some typical examples of the escapism experience include theme parks, simulation, and vacation destinations. Simulator rides have gained much attention and have become the ultimate form of escapist experience (Pine & Gilmore, 1998). A prior study on cruise tourism stated that cruise vacations allow tourists to enjoy the privilege (Teye & Leclere, 2002), to “escape”
the everyday routine (Qu & Ping, 1999) and to be in a different world (Yarnal & Kerstetter, 2005).

**Esthetic experience.** The esthetics dimension can be defined as the consumers’ comprehension and interpretation of the physical environment around them (Bitner, 1992) including ambient conditions; spatial layout and functionality; and signs, symbols and artifacts. Esthetic experience entails passive participation and the consumer does not influence or affect the experiential outcome. In other words, the consumer is immersed in an activity but has little effect on his or her environment, for example, indulging in a coastal sunset. Physical atmosphere plays an essential role in the tourism industry where it is found to be prominent in determining visitors’ future behaviors and intentions (Bonn et al., 2007). According to Pine and Gilmore (1999), esthetic experience is the most crucial realm of tourist.

**Experience Economy in the Festival Context**

**Education.** In the context of tourism, specifically in festival settings, attendees increase their skills and knowledge, either general or specific, through educational experiences at the destinations they visit (Oh et al., 2007). For instance, visitors to the Indiana State Fair may learn about agriculture by participating in a “mock farm activity” that requires participants to engage and become a farmer. The Iowa State fair offers the largest livestock showcase in the country that allows visitors to learn how to handle cows and milk them. Visitors may increase their knowledge and skills while engaging in such experiential and educational events. In order for tourists to gain knowledge and/or skills at an educational event, they must actively engage their minds, and they must engage their bodies for physical activity (Pine & Gilmore, 1999). The importance of the
educational component in festivals has received a good deal of attention in prior research (Charters & Ali-Knight, 2002; Crompton & McKay, 1997; Mehmetoglu & Engen, 2012).

Entertainment. Entertainment is one of the oldest forms of experience. According to Pine and Gilmore (1999), entertainment is the most highly developed and ubiquitous component in the tourism industry. Watching and listening to a Casting Crowns concert at the 2015 Iowa State or watching a clown ride a unicycle are examples of entertainment experiences. More specifically, when people passively observe activities performed by others, an entertainment experience occurs. Most travel or tourism-related studies utilize entertainment experiences as a measure of a trip’s outcome (Crick-Furman & Prentice, 2000). Several scholars (Axelsen & Swan, 2010; Cole & Chancellor, 2009; Van Zyl & Botha, 2003) have also conducted festival-related research that employs the experience element. Cole and Chancellor (2009) identified three festival attributes based on visitors’ experiences: programs, amenities, and entertainment quality. Findings show that among all attributes, entertainment quality has the most significant influence on visitors’ experience, satisfaction, and return intention.

Escapism. Tourism is a way for people to escape from their normal routines. When people travel, and stay in places outside their usual environment, the escapism experience emerges. Getz (2007) confirmed that individuals look for a change and novel experiences in order to escape from their daily life. An escapism experience requires a high level of immersion and involvement in a specific place and activities (Pine & Gilmore, 1999). For example, the Indiana State Fair offers an education program called Vet Camp, which challenges future veterinarians in grades 6 through 12 to learn and develop their animal-doctor skills. That is, the visitors are typical middle and high school
students; however, they immerse themselves in the new environment and act as veterinarians. Previous studies support the idea that escapism is one of the motivations for people to attend a festival (Kim, Uysal, & Chen, 2002; Uysal, Gahan, & Martin., 1993; Morgan, 2009).

**Esthetics.** Factually, esthetics involve emotion, feeling, and sensation. Pine and Gilmore (1999) defined the esthetic experience as the evaluation of one’s physical environment or an overall atmosphere or mood as it relates to one’s emotions. Given the state fair as the setting of this study, “esthetic experience” is more appropriately referred to as a “festivalscape,” which concerns the general atmosphere experienced by festival patrons and its influence on their emotions and behavior (Lee et al., 2008). Bitner (1992) claimed that physical surroundings (e.g., lighting, color, signage, textures, quality of materials, style of furnishings, layout, wall decor, and temperature) affect both employee performance/job satisfaction and customers’ feelings and actions. For instance, a previous study by Mehmetoglu and Engen (2012) showed that esthetics positively influences visitors’ satisfaction.

**Place Attachment**

Place attachment emphasizes the meaning attached to a place by an individual (Tuan, 1974). Similarly, it is described as the affective relations of an individual to a particular setting (Hidalgo & Hernandez, 2001) or a strong connection between a tourist and a destination (Smith, Siderelis, & Moore, 2010). Moreover, place attachment refers to “the extent to which an individual value and identifies with a particular environmental setting” (Moore & Graefe, 1994, p. 17). The concept of place attachment has received
increasing attention over the last four decades and has been adopted by almost all social science divisions (Lewicka, 2011) including tourism, environmental psychology, and natural resource management (Halpenny, 2010; Kyle, Graefe, & Manning, 2005; Ramkissoon, Weiler, & Smith, 2012; Raymond, Brown, & Robinson, 2011; Vaske & Kobrin, 2001). Wide acceptance of the concept has contributed to different ways of thinking about and understanding attachment to place.

Place attachment was first introduced within leisure and recreation studies in 1981 (Schreyer, Jacobs & White, 1981; Wickham & Kerstetter, 2000), and it was later introduced in the tourism field. Place-related studies gained more attention from scholars due to several factors, which also have indirect contributions to the field. Lewicka (2010) summarized them as: 1) the economic processes of converting attractive rural areas to recreation and tourism sites; 2) the stability of financial status in which outdoor recreational activities became affordable, resulting in more leisure tourists; and 3) the growing awareness of particular places in which ecosystem management strategies could be preserved.

Researchers and scholars have achieved a general consensus that place attachment is a multidimensional construct (Halpenny, 2010; Hidalgo & Hernández, 2001; Scannell & Gifford, 2010). Place attachment consists of four dimensions including place identity (Hinds & Sparks, 2008; Prayag & Ryan, 2012; Stedman, 2002), place dependence (Bricker & Kerstetter, 2000; Prayag & Ryan, 2012), place affect (Hinds & Sparks, 2008; Kals, Shumaker, & Montada, 1999), and social bonding (Hammit, Backlund, & Bixler, 2006; Ramkissoon et al., 2012).
Place Identity

One of the most widely adopted dimensions of place attachment is place identity, which describes the identification of tourists with a particular physical environment or value (Gross & Brown, 2006; Yuksel, Yuksel, & Bilim, 2010). Morre and Graefe (1994) defined place identity as “a place that can be valued by a recreationist because it is a ‘good’ place to undertake a particular activity. A place also can be valuable because it is seen as ‘special’ for emotional or symbolic reasons” (p. 20).

The place identity construct can be considered a fundamental component in the development of a person’s place attachment. The initial conception of place identity defined the dimension as “…a substructure of the self-identity of the person consisting of broadly conceived cognitions about the physical world in which the individual lives. These cognitions represent memories, ideas, feelings, attitudes, values, preferences, meanings, and complexity of physical settings that define the day-to-day existence of every human being” (Proshansky, Fabian, & Kaminoff, 1983). Not all places or environments have a strong association with an individual’s self-identification process, but often people identify with places that reflect their identities (Kyle, Mowen, & Tarrant, 2004).

Place Dependence

Place dependence has received increasing attention in tourism and recreation studies because most recreation activities, such as hiking and skiing, depend on particular facilities and environments. For example, if a consumer has experience with a certain recreational location and feels it is a good place for a specific activity, he would attach to that setting (Kyle et al., 2005). Place dependence can be defined as the extent to which a
certain place meets the tourists’ demand (Ramkissoon et al., 2012; Tsai, 2012). “How well a setting serves goal-attainment given an existing range of alternatives (how does this setting compare to others for what I like to do?)” was a definition given by Jorgenseon and Stedman (2001, p. 234)

Prior research has emphasized that place dependence is the perceived strength of connection between an individual and specific settings. It is reflected in consumers’ evaluations of a place (Yuksel, Yuksel, & Bilim, 2010). In other words, dependence involves a mechanism of evaluating and comparing current output with alternative options output. In a tourism context, festivals and events always become vehicles in attracting tourists and allowing them to attach to the place.

**Place Affect**

This dimension has recently been added to place attachment, and it refers to the “emotional responses or activity in the sympathetic nervous system” (Jorgensen & Stedman, 2001, p. 237). Tuan (1977) suggested that emotions connect human experiences, including experiences related to the physical world. In prior studies, place affect refers to emotional feelings of tourists towards a destination (Tsai, 2012; Yuksel et al, 2010).

Individual interactions with a natural setting could promote emotional attachment to place that lead to affective attachment to a particular place over time. For instance, a study on lakeside vacation homeowners’ attachment to their home, conducted by Jorgenson and Stedman (2001), found that the affective element had a higher score than other place attachment’s dimensions.
Social Bonding

This less-studied dimension has recently gained attention from scholars. Social bonding refers to social relations in a specific place (Ramkinssoon et al., 2012). Social interactions always seem to be part of place attachment. By the same token, social bonding between individuals and groups occurs during visits to a place (Hammitt, Backlund, & Bixler, 2006; Hammitt, Kyle, & Oh, 2009; Scannell & Gifford, 2010a, 2010b).

It is worth mentioning that social interactions can be considered to be a significant factor contributing to attachment to a specific place (Kyle et al., 2005). This is supported by Guest and Lee (1983), who indicated that social involvement with friends and family is one of the strongest and compelling sources of place attachment. For the purpose of this study, social bonding is assumed to have an important role in festival settings where family and friends gather.

Conceptual Framework

Researchers have investigated place attachment of attendees (Lee, Kyle, & Scott, 2012) and authentic experiences (Robinson & Clifford, 2012) in the context of festivals; however, none of the past studies has looked at the influence of food on experiences at festivals. According to the research questions, how food influences attendees’ experience at the state fair and to what extent food could contribute to place attachment was explored. In order to better explain the relationships among constructs in the model, theory and concepts are applied and described below.
Cue Utilization Theory

Consumers often feel uncertainty about the products or services that they aim to purchase in terms of the products’ quality and benefits. To overcome consumer uncertainty, companies must inform consumers about products or services and give consumers cues about their credibility (Akdeniz et al., 2014; Erdem & Swait, 1998). According to Dawar and Parker (1994), there are five functions for using cue signals in assessing product quality when there is: 1) a need to lower the perceived risk of purchase, 2) a lack of expertise and ability to assess quality, 3) low consumer involvement, 4) the product is too complex to assess the objective quality, and 5) only certain information are accessible. This implies that cues could be very useful to assist consumer decision-making process.

Cue-utilization theory has been well recognized as a rationale for explaining product evaluation by consumers. This theory posits that consumers depend on cues and characteristics to help them evaluate products (Richardson et al., 1994). For instance, previous literature has noted that products and brands offer a variety of cues, such as price, brand name, packaging, color, etc. Furthermore, cues provide a basis for consumers’ assessment and impressions regarding the quality of a product (Cox, 1962; Jacoby, Olson, & Haddock, 1971).

Cue utilization theory suggests that products or services consist of intrinsic and extrinsic cues that serve as surrogate indicators of their quality. Consumers are expected to judge the quality of the product based on these cues (Cox, 1967; Olson, 1972). For example, price has been widely seen as a perceived product quality cue (Andrews & Valenzi, 1971; Grewal, Roggeveen, & Lindsey-Mullikin, 2014; Jacoby, Olson, &
According to cue utilization theory, consumers use cues to obtain information and assist in decision-making (Dodds, 1995). Product or service cues are important in persuading people to choose a product.

In addition to price cues that could be used by consumers include country-of-origin (Elliot & Cameron, 1994; Peterson & Jolibert, 1995), product composition (Olson, 1972), brand name (Dodds, 1991), and store name (Dodds, 1991; Dodds, 1995). Moreover, cue utilization theory has been applied to understanding servicescape, authenticity, food consumption (Wang & Matilla, 2015), service environment (Ebster & Guist, 2004; Grayson & Martinec, 2004; Jang, Liu, & Namkung, 2011; Kolar & Zabkar, 2010; Lu & Fine, 1995; Taylor, 2001), and product evaluation (Cordell, 1997; Olson, 1977; Olson & Jacoby, 1972). This theory has not received much attention from scholars in the tourism field; thus, the current study contributes to research in this area.

In the context of business and the economy, products are naturally known as intrinsic and extrinsic. Intrinsic attributes refer specifically to aspects of a product that are immutable and permanent, for example, such physical aspects as shape, ingredients, flavor, color, and aroma. Extrinsic attributes describe the elements that complement a product such as price, brand name, and country of origin (Forney, Pelton, Caton, & Rabolt, 1999; Jamal & Goode, 2001; Zeithaml, 1988). Previous studies provide fewer associations between intrinsic and extrinsic attributes; however, later research suggests that modification of product properties (extrinsic) could influence changes in product attributes (intrinsic) (Garrido-Morgado, Gonzalez-Benito, & Martos-Partal, 2016). Scholars have agreed to use both extrinsic and intrinsic attributes in order to evaluate
product or service quality (Akdeniz et al., 2014; Gooner & Nadler, 2012; Richardson et al., 1994; Szibillo & Jacoby, 1974).

In foodservice management studies, authentic food is seen as an indication of the quality of the food. A study of an ethnic restaurant setting conducted by Wang and Matilla (2015) elaborated that perceived authenticity and consumers’ familiarity with ethnic restaurants influence consumers’ behavioral and patronage intentions. That is, perceived authentic food offers a cue and forms a surrogate indicator of the event quality and experience (Olson & Jacoby, 1972).

This study seeks to identify whether authenticity could be perceived as a cue in assessing food quality. The importance of food authenticity is of particular interest to for researching the views of state fair attendees. Authenticity is an extrinsic product cue and as such, it is distinct from other product characteristics. Authentic food as a cue or an indicator could affect state fair attendees’ experience positively or negatively, and it may be a factor determining whether they attach to the place where the state fair is held. The previous statement was supported by Wang and Matilla (2015) who noted that authentic food could provide memorable experiences and build attachment to a particular place.

**Research Model**

Referring to the theory and models discussed above, this research proposed a model (Figure 2.2) that illustrates how authentic food was perceived and could influence attendees’ experiences at the state fair in terms of education, entertainment, escapism, and esthetic experiences. Depending on their level of positive or negative experience, attendees were assumed to have a different attachment level to the state fair and the state where the state fair was located.
**Research Hypotheses**

**Relationship between perceived authentic food and experience**

This research postulates that state fair attendees who identified food as authentic have a positive experience during their visit, resulting in emotional attachment to a particular state fair and the place where the state fair was located. Not only focused on food, this study also posits that overall experience at the state fair influences attendees’ attachment to the place.

A previous study mentioned that food representing a destination provides tourists with opportunities to experience and obtain positive cultural memories (Okumus, Altinay, & Roper, 2007). As for the association between perceived authentic food and experience, depending on the degree that the attendees perceived food as authentic, the level of experience was differently directed as positive or negative. Thus, the following hypothesis was proposed:

H1: Attendees who perceive high food authenticity have a more positive festival experience.
Relationship between perceived authentic food and place attachment

A study on authenticity conducted by Jiang, Ramkissoon, Mavondo, and Feng (2017) investigated the relationships between destination image, existential authenticity, and place attachment in the tourism context. The findings revealed that there was a positive and significant effect of existential authenticity on place dependence, place identity, place affect, and social bonding, in which all factors represent place attachment.

According to Debenedetti et al. (2014), emotional bonds to commercial settings such as restaurants and theaters originate in the customer’s perception of authenticity. In other words, a feeling of attachment to a place begins with how people perceive authenticity. Previous research revealed place attachment as a predictor of authenticity (Ram et al., 2016), while the recent study by Jiang, Ramkissoon, Mavondo, and Feng (2017) reversed these relationships and showed authenticity as a positive antecedent of all dimensions of place attachment.

Bezirgan (2014) found that foods that were locally grown and raised had significant effects on place attachment to a destination. According to Tsai (2016), local and authentic foods enable tourists to create memorable experiences and thus develop their attachment to local destinations. The relationships between perceived food authenticity and place attachment depends on the degree to which attendees emphasize the importance of authentic food that thereby increase the strength of attachment to the place. This study assumes that festival attendees that had food at the state fair would have positive feelings about it and emotionally bond to that particular place and fair. The following hypothesis was suggested:
H2: State fair attendees’ perceived authenticity of state fair food will have a positive effect on their place attachment.

**Relationship between experience and place attachment**

A study by Cardinale, Nguyen, and Melewar (2016) explored associations between experience during winery visit and visitors’ emotional attachment to the winery’s locale. The results indicated that positive experience in a winery (i.e. relaxing, educational, entertaining, aesthetic, and a well-served tasting of good products developed emotional attachment to the place in which the winery is located.) The authors also found that visitors’ attachment to a place depends on previous visits and positive experiences during winery visits. In order to create a positive overall experience for visitors, activities and features should include quality service, quality products, an attractive environment, entertainment, and an educational program.

Synthesizing previous works, researchers prove that tourists’ experiences of unique landscapes, the people they meet, the activities, and memories they associate with that particular place could develop a personal link to the places that they visit (Gross & Brown, 2008). Vaske and Kobrin (2001) described that past experience helped to attach to a particular environment, increasing place dependency. Moreover, Bitner, Booms, and Mohr (1994) employed experience as one of the measurement items to assess emotional bonds to a place.

In a food tourism context, a recent study by Tsai (2016) found that tourists’ experiences positively influenced cognitive place attachment after consuming authentic local foods. It showed that authentic local foods enable tourists to create memorable experiences and develop their attachment to local destinations. In festival settings,
attendees become strongly emotionally attached to the festival after experiencing distinct attributes from other festivals (Esu & Arrey, 2009). That is, they could evaluate and decide which festivals provide the best features. Authentic and memorable festival experiences lead attendees to develop a positive emotional attachment to a particular festival (Hudson et al., 2015; Lee et al., 2012). Prior research has also suggested that emotional attachment to a specific festival develops as people experience and become committed to the event over time (Filo, Groza, & Fairley, 2012; James, Rayns, & Romney, 2006; Kim & Jamal, 2007).

Bitner, Booms, and Mohr (1994) affirmed that one of the variables to measure emotional attachment was positive past experiences. The link between experience and place attachment was determined by the degree of attendees’ satisfaction with their experience; thus, their bond to the place was assumed to be different. Below was the proposed hypothesis:

H3: State fair attendees’ experience will have a positive effect on their place attachment.

The mediating effects of experience

According to Baron and Kenny (1986) and Preacher and Hayes (2004), there were three main conditions that must be met to establish mediation. Firstly, the independent variable (perceived authentic food) was directly related to the dependent variable (place attachment). Secondly, the independent variable (perceived authentic food) was directly related to the mediating variable (experience). Thirdly, the mediating variable (experience) was directly related to the dependent variable (place attachment). In other words, a significant relationship between perceived authentic food and place attachment have reduced (partial mediation) or have no longer be significant (full mediation) when
controlling for the experience (Baron & Kenny, 1986; Preacher & Hayes, 2004). Thus, this study intended to analyze whether experience mediates the relationship between perceived authentic food and place attachment. Therefore, it was hypothesized that:

H4: Attendees experience at the state fair mediates the effect of perceived authentic food on place attachment.

**The moderating effect of perceived authentic food**

In addition to the relationships that have been discussed, this study also investigated a moderation effect of perceived food authenticity on the association between experience and place attachment. In other words, attendees’ perceived level of food authenticity at the state fair affects the relationship between experience and attachment to the state where the state fair was held. This hypothesis was consistent with a previous study that indicated that food offerings play an important role in affecting the emotional state of consumers (Hamburg, Finkenauer, & Schuengel, 2014). Thus, following was the proposed hypothesis:

H5: Perceived authentic food at the state fair moderates the effect of experience on place attachment among state fair attendees.

H5-1: The influence of experience on place attachment will be stronger in the group that has high perceived authentic food.

H5-2: The influence of experience on place attachment will be reduced in the group that has low perceived authentic food.
CHAPTER 3. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes methodologies employed to seek answers to the research questions. It explains research design, data collection procedures, and data analysis employed to examine the relationships between perceived authenticity of food, experience, and place attachment. The chapter starts by describing the research design including sampling and instrumentation. The second section presents pilot study procedures. The third section explains data collection procedures. Finally, this chapter addresses a series of data analysis processes.

Use of Human Subjects

Approval from Iowa State University Human Subjects Institutional Review Board was obtained before the data collection process began (Appendix A). Participants were clearly informed of the purpose of the study and assured confidentiality of their responses in the online survey accompanying the survey questions (Appendix B). All researchers involved in this study completed the Human Subjects Research Assurance Training authorized by Iowa State University.

Research Design

A research design can be considered a plan of action. The study was conducted using a quantitative method approach through survey questionnaires in order to explore the role of perceived authentic food, at a state fair, on experience and attachment to a state. Quantitative research gathers data by rigorous scientific methods (Finn, Eliott-
White & Walton, 2000), using statistical analysis and numerical evidence to arrive at conclusions, usually engaging large numbers of samples to prove reliability (Veal, 1997). Examples of quantitative research approaches include surveys, experiments, statistics, structured observation and content analysis (Silverman, 2006).

This study used a widely recognized data collection technique: surveys, to draw a picture of the current state of a group. This method has been utilized as the most important source of data collection for tourism analysis (Smith, 1995). Surveys follow a deductive approach, which means that the research “begins with a theoretical or applied research problem and ends with empirical measurement and data analysis” (Neuman, 2003, p. 267). The findings from the surveys were used to draw conclusions on the extent to which attendees perceived food at the state fair to be authentic and how that affected their experience and sense of bonding with the place.

Survey Instrument

The questionnaire is comprised of four sections: perceived authentic food, experience, place attachment, and demographics. All measurements were taken using multiple items developed from previous studies and modified for applicability to the content of this study.

Perceived Authentic Food

Perceived authentic food was modified from authentic food measures from previous scholars (Ab-Latif, Lee, & Jeong, 2018). Authentic food is measured from four perspectives: unique, original, traditional, and local. Each dimension was evaluated with five items, five items, four items, and seven items respectively, yielding a 21-item scale.
in total. A 5-point Likert scale ranging from one (extremely disagree) to five (extremely agree) was utilized for the survey.

**Experience**

Attendees’ experience was measured by adapting experience economy measurement items developed by Manthiou et al. (2014). Visitors’ experience is assessed in four dimensions: education, entertainment, escapism, and esthetics. Each dimension was measured with four items, yielding a 16-item scale in total. A 5-point Likert type scale was used, ranging from one (extremely disagree) to five (extremely agree).

**Place Attachment**

Place attachment was measured using four perspectives of place identity, place dependence, place affect, and social bonding, adapted from Ramkissoon, Smith, and Weiler’s study (2013). Each dimension was measured with three items, yielding a 12-item scale in total. A 5-point Likert type scale was used, ranging from one (extremely disagree) to five (extremely agree).

**Demographics**

The demographic section was comprised of information such as gender, income, age, occupation, education, nationality, and ethnicity. Furthermore, questions regarding residency and years of attendance at the state fair were included in order to break down overall survey response data into meaningful groups of respondents. The questionnaire used in this survey is attached as Appendix B.
Pilot Test

The purpose of conducting a pilot study is to make sure the ideas in each question are clear to the respondents. In addition, a pilot study is undertaken as a means to check for questionnaire clarity and the right use of terms, i.e., the meaning and relevance of each item (Kraemer, Mintz, Noda, Tinklenberg, Yesavage, 2006; Lancaster, Dodd, & Williamson, 2004). The results of the pilot study may show that some questions may need to be reworded or that alternatives may have to be added.

Prior to the final process of data collection, a pilot study was concluded to safeguard against the possibility of inaccuracy in the main survey. Two steps were taken (Moser & Kalton, 1996). First, an extensive review process of the questionnaire that had been developed was conducted by professionals and two faculty members at Iowa State University. This step required a thorough review, involving having the wording for each item checked and modified if necessary. The second step involved a pilot survey in August 2017 with 112 participants through online survey questionnaire, Mturk using Qualtrics. Out of 112 participants, 98 completed the pilot survey. Each participant received a reward of $.50, totaling $50.00 with additional $34.00 in service fees to MTurk.

Exploratory Factor Analysis

An exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was undertaken to determine whether the items belonged and represented the corresponding factor with acceptable factor loadings. EFA is known to decrease error variance of indicator correlations prior to confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) in order to test the measurement model (Yoon & Uysal, 2005). Data obtained from the pilot study utilized a factor analysis extraction method, Principal
Axis Factoring (PAF) along with a rotation of orthogonal (varimax) to determine whether the solutions were stable across each method and whether there were sizable correlations between the extracted factors (Costello & Osborne, 2005).

Item inclusion decisions were based on factor loadings with a cut-off value of 0.40, eigenvalues greater than one, Scree plot, variance explained, and Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test. The internal reliability of each factor was then analyzed using Cronbach’s alpha with a reliability score of .70 (Netemeyer, Bearden, & Sharma, 2003). If a factor has fewer than six items, however, .60 may be acceptable (Cortina, 1993). It is important to verify that each item was loaded only on one component with specific factor loadings as suggested by previous researchers (Chen & Hsu, 2001; Gursoy & Gavcar, 2003). Thus, based on the findings, the items that had factor loadings lower than .40 or cross-loaded on more than one factor were eliminated. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin is a statistic that indicates the proportion of variance in your variables that might be caused by underlying factors (Cerny & Kaiser, 1977). High values (close to 1.0) generally indicate that a factor analysis may be useful with your data. However, if the value is less than .50, the results of the factor analysis probably won't be very useful.

Perceived authentic food was initially designed to measure four perspectives; unique; original; traditional; and local, using 27 items. However, due to cross loading with another factor, six items were deleted, and the remaining items were loaded into corresponding factors with the coefficient values of .87, .90, .78, and .92, respectively. In addition, the variance explained by each indicator was over 60% and KMO was above .5, as shown in Table 3.1.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items/ Factor</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>Means</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Factor 1 – Unique</strong> (α = .87, E = 3.48, %Var = 16.57)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food at the state fair is unique.</td>
<td>0.58</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
<td>0.16</td>
<td>3.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The taste of food at the state fair is unique, not found in other places.</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>-0.18</td>
<td>3.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The serving style of food at the state fair is served in unique ways.</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td>3.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No other state fairs offer the food that the state fair offers.</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>3.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food at the state fair clearly distinguishes itself from other state fairs.</td>
<td>0.73</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td>3.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Factor 2 - Original</strong> (α = .90, E = 5.98, %Var = 28.46)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food at the state fair represents its state.</td>
<td>0.31</td>
<td>0.58</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>3.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The origin of food at the state fair comes from its state.</td>
<td>0.34</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>3.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food at the state fair tells the story of its state.</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td>3.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food at the state fair shows some heritage of its state.</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>0.73</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>3.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food at the state fair is connected to the culture and history of its state.</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>3.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Factor 3 - Traditional</strong> (α = .78, E = 2.21, %Var = 10.51)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food at the state fair is traditional.</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.59</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>3.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food at the state fair has been unchanged over time.</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.82</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>3.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food at the state fair evokes nostalgia from the past.</td>
<td>0.30</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>3.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food at the state fair has remained consistent over the years.</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>3.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Factor 4 - Local</strong> (α = .92, E = 1.77, %Var = 8.48)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food at the state fair is local.</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>3.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The main ingredients of food at the state fair are from the state.</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td>3.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food at the state fair is made from homegrown ingredients.</td>
<td>0.52</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>0.53</td>
<td>3.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food at the state fair is prepared by local people who live in the state.</td>
<td>-0.10</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>3.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food at the state fair is served by local people.</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>3.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food at the state fair is commonly labeled as made in the state.</td>
<td>0.48</td>
<td>0.39</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td>3.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Much of food at the state fair is produced in the state.</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td>3.58</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. KMO = .89; 63.97% Explained; α = Cronbach’s alpha; E = Eigenvalues; %Var = % Variance explained*
Experience was designed to measure four variables: education; entertainment; escapism; and esthetics, using 16 items with four items for each variable. The EFA results indicated that all items loaded only on one factor with the coefficient value of .93, .75, .82, and .75, respectively. In addition, the variance explained by each indicator was over 60% and KMO was above .5, as shown in Table 3.2.

Place attachment was originated to measure four variables: place dependence; place identity; place affect; and social bonding, through 12 items with three items for each variable. The EFA results indicated that all items loaded only on one factor with the coefficient value of .88, .90, .93, and .66, respectively. In addition, the variance explained by each indicator was greater than 60% and KMO was close to 1.0, as presented in Table 3.3.

In summary, the EFA results determined the items that represent the corresponding factors according to the acceptable factor loadings. From this analysis, the final questionnaire was modified for the use of data collection and analysis with a total of 49 items in three variables, consisting of 21 items for perceived authentic food, 16 items for experience, and 12 items for place attachment.
### Table 3.2.
**Factor loadings, reliabilities, and means of Experience**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items/ Factor</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>Means</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Factor 1 – Education (α=.93, E = 3.41, %Var = 21.33)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The experience at the state fair has made me more knowledgeable.</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>3.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I learned a lot from my experience at the state fair.</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td>-0.05</td>
<td>3.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It stimulated my curiosity to learn new things at the state fair.</td>
<td>0.81</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>3.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My experience at the state fair was highly educational for me.</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>3.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Factor 2 – Entertainment (α=.75, E = 3.26, %Var = 20.35)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The activities at the state fair were amusing.</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td>-0.14</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>3.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watching others perform at the state fair was captivating.</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td>0.48</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>3.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I really enjoyed watching what others were doing at the state fair.</td>
<td>0.52</td>
<td>0.48</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>3.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activities at the state fair were entertaining.</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>-0.03</td>
<td>0.58</td>
<td>4.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Factor 3 – Escapism (α=.82, E = 3.01, %Var = 18.79)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I felt I played a different character at the state fair.</td>
<td>0.30</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>2.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I felt like I was living in a different time or place at the state fair.</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
<td>0.92</td>
<td>-0.03</td>
<td>2.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The experience at the state fair let me imagine being someone else.</td>
<td>0.29</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.82</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>2.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I completely escaped from my daily routine at the state fair.</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>0.56</td>
<td>0.30</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>3.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Factor 4 – Esthetic (α=.75, E = .74, %Var = 4.63)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I felt a real sense of harmony at the state fair.</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>-0.04</td>
<td>0.53</td>
<td>0.48</td>
<td>3.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The setting at the state fair paid close attention to design details.</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>0.37</td>
<td>3.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It was pleasant just being here at the state fair.</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.82</td>
<td>3.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The setting of the state fair was very attractive.</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>0.29</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td>3.67</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. KMO = .84; 65.09% Explained; α = Cronbach’s alpha; E = Eigenvalues; %Var = % Variance explained*
### Table 3.3.
*Factor loadings, reliabilities, and means of place attachment*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items/ Factor</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>Means</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Factor 1 - Place dependence (α = .88, E = 2.59, %Var = 21.57)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For what I like to do, I could not imagine anything better than the settings and facilities provided at the state fair.</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>2.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For the activities I enjoy the most, the settings and facilities provided by the state fair are the best.</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>3.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I enjoy attending this National Park and its environment more than any other parks.</td>
<td>0.73</td>
<td>0.16</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>3.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Factor 2 - Place identity (α = .90, E = 1.96, %Var = 16.29)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I identify strongly with the state fair.</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>3.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel the state fair is part of me.</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>3.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attending the state fair says a lot about who I am.</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>0.52</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>3.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Factor 3 - Place affect (α = .93, E = 2.56, %Var = 21.31)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am very attached to the state fair.</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>3.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel a strong sense of belonging to the state fair and its settings/facilities.</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>0.29</td>
<td>3.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The state fair means a lot to me.</td>
<td>0.29</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>0.39</td>
<td>0.30</td>
<td>3.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Factor 4 - Social bonding (α = .66, E = 1.47, %Var = 12.27)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Many of my friends/family prefer the state fair over many other fairs.</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td>0.42</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>3.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If I were to stop attending the state fair, I would lose contact with a number of friends.</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>3.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My friends/family would be disappointed if I were to start attending other fairs.</td>
<td>0.30</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.46</td>
<td>2.71</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* KMO = .87; 71.45% Explained; α = Cronbach’s alpha; E = Eigenvalues; %Var = % Variance explained α = Cronbach’s alpha

With data collected from this survey, Cronbach’s alpha values were measured to check for internal consistency across items and constructs. All measurement subscales had an acceptable internal consistency of alpha values with a range between .66 and .93. However, due to unclear or repetitive meanings, some items were modified or removed. For example, the item *food at the state fair has its own features that are distinctive from other state fairs* was removed due to its similar meaning to the item *food at the state fair*
clearly distinguishes itself from other state fairs. In addition, the item the serving style of food at the state fair is one of a kind was modified, when the content was unclear, into the serving style of food at the state fair is served in unique ways. Overall, testing from the pilot survey modified the wording and contents of the questions, and removed 6 items. This resulted in the usage of 21 items for perceived authentic food, 16 items for overall experience, and 12 items for place attachment.

**Sampling**

The population for this study was state fair attendees. The target population was the attendees who have visited state fair(s) in the United States. This study aimed to collect data from at least 400 respondents who had attended a state fair in the past three years. For this study, the sample was chosen based on the following criteria: 1) subjects have visited one or more state fairs in the past three years; and 2) they have purchased and eaten the food at the state fair.

**Data Collection**

The survey data was collected through an online survey tool, Qualtrics via Amazon Turk (MTurk) in September 2017. MTurk is a crowdsourcing platform that is a reliable, cost-effective and high-quality source (Crump, McDonnell, & Gureckis, 2013; Rand, 2012; Simcox & Fiez, 2014; Sprouse, 2011). It is a viable data collection vehicle for conducting research in the social sciences (Buhrmester, Kwang, & Gosling, 2011; Mason & Suri, 2012) and manages a large participant pool that tends to be more diverse than standard internet samples (Buhrmester et al., 2011).
The survey was launched on September 1, 2017 and closed on September 19, 2017. A total of 749 responses were collected; however, only 564 participants completed the surveys, a response rate of 75.30%. Each participant received a reward of $.50, totaling $282.00 with additional $111.00 in service fees to MTurk.

Data Analysis

Data Screening and Normality Assumptions

To prepare the data for this study, three initial steps were undertaken: 1) dealing with missing observations in the data file; 2) checking the data set for errors and outliers; and 3) screening the data to check the normality, linearity, homoscedasticity, and multcollinearity of observed variables.

Dealing with missing values is an important procedure to undertake before beginning statistical analyses (Pallant, 2011). Missing data is a cause of biased results, and thus affects the accuracy, statistical power, and validity of the results (Sinharay, Stern, & Russell, 2001). In this study, no missing data was found because the online survey approach ensured participants did not miss any questions in order to complete the survey.

IBM SPSS Statistics 24 was employed to identify any inaccuracies of observed variables in the data file. Outliers were detected at the two levels; univariate and multivariate. First, the normality test can be analyzed through skewness and kurtosis, as well as distributions of z-scores for variables examined for univariate outliers (Kline, 2005). In current study, skewness and kurtosis boundaries at the univariate level are greatly disputed on indicators for perceived authentic food (i.e. traditional, local) and
experience (i.e. entertainment, esthetic), ranging from -1.4 to -1.01 for kurtosis and -.02 to 1.95 for skewness, while the rest of the variables are not skewed. These skewed variables measured attendees’ perception of authentic food and their experience at the state fair, in which the perception and experience are expected to be relatively high in nature. An examination of z-scores for those variables showed that 11 cases were considered extreme with z-scores greater than three.

To further detect the outliers, influential analyses were undertaken at the multivariate level by checking Mahalanobis distance statistic, standardized difference in fit value (SDF), standardized difference in beta (SDB), and Cooks’ distance (COO). The results suggested that 11 cases were outliers, which was consistent with the univariate results. Therefore, these 11 cases were removed from the dataset for subsequent data analyses. Moreover, multicollinearity was tested through tolerance value and variance inflation factor (VIF) among variables of the latent factors to ensure they were not highly correlated. The findings indicated that all VIF values among the indicators were less than three, ranging from 1.27 to 2.62, suggesting that the variables were not highly correlated; thus, the linearity and homoscedasticity assumptions were largely met.

**Structural Equation Modeling**

Structural equation modeling analysis (SEM), which is a statistical method for measuring multivariate analysis, is also known as the linear structural relationship model, covariance structure analysis, latent variable analysis, and confirmatory factor analysis (Hair, 2010). SEM evaluates the indices of the goodness of fit between the hypothesized model and the data to determine if the model explains the data based on the adequacy of:
Chi-square statistic ($\chi^2$), comparative fit index (CFI), Non-normed fit index (NNFI), root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA), and its confidence interval (CI).

In the past two decades, SEM, which is recognized as a powerful statistical technique, has gradually become a major tool for theory testing and modeling in many different disciplines (for example, in social, psychological, and behavioral science research). A number of tourism researchers have also applied this technique (Manthiou et al., 2014; Oh et al., 2007; Reisinger & Mavondo, 2007). SEM provides greater flexibility for the interplay between theory and data than first generation techniques, such as principal component analysis, factor analysis, and regression (Chin, 1998). SEM involves a two-step approach: 1) examination of a measurement model; and 2) examination of a structural model (Byrne, 1998).

In this study, SEM was used to estimate the causal relationship among authentic food, experience and place attachment (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988). The investigation of the structural model allows for obtaining the predictive validity of the latent constructs. These are also known as exogenous and endogenous variables, similar to independent and dependent variables (Hair et al., 1995). These variables can either be a construct that is not observed directly from the data but is derived from the theory, or an indicator variable that can be measured from direct observation of the data (Byrne, 1998).

This study employed Mplus software to test the hypothesized relationships through structural equation modeling (SEM). Mplus is an effective analytical tool to examine a broad array of models based on a wide choice of estimators for analyses of continuous, categorical, dichotomous, and censored data (Byrne, 2012).
**Item parceling**

Item parcels are the sum or mean of responses to several indicators designed to measure the same construct (Kishton & Widaman, 1994). Item parcels involve creating a smaller number of measured variables from a larger set of items. Previous researchers provide evidence that the use of item parcels instead of items can be beneficial for substantial improvement of the ratio of the sample size to the number of variables, particularly when dealing with large numbers of measured variables or estimated parameters (Hall, Snell, & Foust, 1999; Hau & Marsh, 2004; Marsh, Hau, Balla, & Grayson, 1998).

The advantages of item parceling are; 1) increased reliability of item parcel responses, 2) more definitive rotational results, 3) less violation of normality assumptions, 4) closer approximations to normal theory-based estimation, 5) fewer parameters to be estimated, 6) more stable parameter estimates, 7) reduction in idiosyncratic characteristics of items, and 8) simplification of model interpretation (Bandalos & Finney, 2001; Hau & Marsh, 2004, p.328). For example, Marsh et al. (1998) demonstrated no difference between item parcels and items in terms of convergence to proper solutions, parameter estimates, and SEs of parameter estimates. They compared 12 items with four parcels that were constructed with the same 12 items (three items each), and found both approaches yielded similar solutions (i.e., item convergence, factor loadings and correlations, and standard errors of parameter estimates).

There are several approaches to construct item parcels. Cattell and Burdsal (1975) used EFA to compute congruence coefficients in order to group items into parcels. Kishton and Widaman (1994) observed the differences in the model fit of CFA between
unidimensional parceling of items and domain representative parceling of items. They found that the latter parceling method improved the psychometric properties of the behavioral measures of personality as compared to the former parceling approach.

Nasser, Takahashi, and Benson (1997) categorized items into parcels on the basis of similar item content and factor structure. It was found that parcels constructed using this approach produced better model fit than individual items did.

Based on the nature of the data of this study with some non-normally distributed variables, item parceling appeared to be an effective procedure to yield more robust CFA solutions. Applying Nasser et al.’s item parceling method to this study, the indicators designed to measure the conceptually similar subscale in the previous analysis were grouped into parcels, and summed to create score aggregates for further analyses. Those item clusters served as the indicator variables for the underlying latent constructs in the next step of data analysis.

**Measurement model**

The measurement model was examined through confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). This procedure computed construct validity, convergent validity, and discriminant validity by assessing the extent to which the observed measures in the measurement model adequately represented each latent construct. The subsequent analysis was then associated by simultaneously testing the hypothetical relationships among the constructs.

The primary function of CFA is to explore the relationship between the latent variables and the observed variables. After the items are selected through EFA, CFA is applied to test whether measures of a construct are consistent with the researcher's understanding of the nature of that construct (or factor). Additionally, CFA regards each
(latent) variable as an indicator and highlights its correlation with other observed variables (Everitt & Dunn, 1992).

An appropriate measurement model has to satisfy two criteria. The first is that each of the observed variables can effectively measure the latent variables. Secondly, the structured loading of a single observed variable is not allowed to be significant with other latent variables (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988). In other words, the factor loading between the latent variable and observed variable should be between 0.50 and 0.95.

**Internal reliability**

A scale should consistently reflect the construct it is measuring. The reliability of a measure indicates the stability and internal consistency of each item measured under the same underlying construct (Sekaran, 2006). In this study, reliability analysis was used to assess the homogeneity among the items and the goodness of the measure using Cronbach’s alpha ($\alpha$) and composite reliability (CR). Nunnally (1978) supported by Pallant (2011), suggested that the ideal value of Cronbach’s alpha coefficient of a scale should be .70 as a minimum to indicate high internal consistency. This approach, however, has been recognized as having a weakness of rarely meeting its underlying assumption that all items are equally weighted in the formation of a scale; this may result in underestimates of scale reliability (Raykov, 1997, 1998). Thus, composite reliability was also used to measure the degree to which items were free from random error and yielded consistent results (Bentler, 2005).

**Construct validity**

Construct validity refers to the extent to which the measurements in a study represent the corresponding theoretical constructs that provide confidence regarding the
assessment by pattern coefficients, composite reliability, and average variance extracted (AVE). Construct validity can be determined through tests of convergent and discriminant validity.

Convergent validity is the extent to which measures within one construct are similar and related to each other, converging on the respective construct, which should be moderately high. Convergent validity is identified by showing that indicators for latent variables correlate with each other to an acceptable degree. Acceptable goodness-of-fit measures for a model indicate convergent validity when it is also the case that pattern coefficients are at least 0.60 for all indicators using a common rule of thumb (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988; Hair et al., 1998; Segars, 1997). The rule of thumb by Fornell and Larcker (1981) suggested that the construct with AVE values of less than .50 is considered questionable in terms of its validity.

Discriminant validity is examined based on the correlations among latent constructs. It is measured by comparing the AVE and the squared latent factor correlation between a pair of constructs (Fornell & Lacker, 1981). The AVE value should be greater than its correlation with other constructs, and each item should have a greater effect on itself than on other constructs (Fornell & Lacker, 1981).

**Structural equation modeling (SEM)**

**Hypotheses testing**

This study analyzed a holistic proposed model to evaluate the fit of the hypothesized structural equation model. The SEM model was tested to validate the causal relationships among constructs. In addition, a modification process was applied to the
selected model, to determine if the model could be further improved to represent a good fit to the data and adequately describe the meaningful relationships among the constructs.

**Mediating effect**

The matrices estimate for total, direct, and indirect effects were tested to further investigate the mediating effect. A direct effect shows an impact on a variable; an indirect effect comprises the paths from one variable to another, mediated by an additional variable; and the total effect is the sum of direct and indirect effects (Brown, 1997). In other words, the test of mediating effect evaluates whether a mediating variable significantly carries the influence of an independent variable on a dependent variable.

The statistical significance of these hypothesized indirect effects was tested with the bias-corrected bootstrap sampling procedure that is available in the Mplus program. The bootstrapping method is a non-parametric test. It does not violate assumptions of normality, and it generates a more accurate estimate of standard error, thus increasing statistical power (Preacher & Hayes, 2004). The bootstrap function is an empirical method to determine the significance of statistical estimates and minimize the violation of normality (Byrne, 2012). Thus, the indirect effects were calculated using the maximum likelihood bootstrap procedures with the bias-corrected bootstrap function based on 1000 samples via Mplus version 8.

Three crucial conditions must be fulfilled before conducting further mediation analysis, 1) X significantly predicts Y (PAF > PA), 2) X significantly predicts M (PAF > EXP), and 3) M significantly predicts Y (EXP > PA) (Baron & Kenny, 1986; Preacher & Hayes, 2004). As presented in Figure 4.1, all three conditions were met, as all the direct
effects were statistically significant. Therefore, further mediation analysis was allowed to be undertaken.

**Moderating effect**

A moderator is a variable that explains conditions under which a given predictor is related to an outcome (Aiken & West, 1991) or is expected to alter the strength of a causal relationship between two variables (Wu & Zumbo, 2008). A moderation or interaction effect emerges when a moderating variable changes the direction or magnitude of the relationship between two variables:

a) Enhance – an increase in moderating effect would increase the effect of the predictor (X) on the outcome (Y),

b) Buffer – an increase in moderating effect would decrease the effect of the predictor (X) on the outcome (Y), and

c) Antagonist – an increase in moderating effect would reverse the effect of the predictor (X) on the outcome (Y) (Aiken & West, 1991).

A key part of moderation is the measurement of variable X (EXP) to Y (PA) causal relationship for different values of M (PAF). Relevant to this current study, this analysis was performed to address the hypothesis that state fair attendees who have a higher level of perceived authenticity of food would demonstrate greater attachment to the place where the state fair is held. Therefore, in order to investigate if perceived authentic food moderates the relationship between experience and place attachment, a reasonable modeling strategy through Mplus was conducted as follows: first, a model without interaction should obtain a good fit in terms of the maximum likelihood-ratio $\chi^2$
(Klein & Moosbrugger, 2000). Later, an interaction term was added and the interaction significance was tested using a likelihood-ratio $\chi^2$ difference test.
CHAPTER 4. RESULTS

This chapter presents results from the data gathered from state fair attendees throughout the United States. Descriptive statistics were reported based on the demographic background of the respondents. The findings provide the statistical analysis of confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) for the measurement model and the structural equation modeling (SEM) for the structural model. Additionally, the reliability and validity test were reported to support the findings through the correlation, AVE, and Cronbach’s alpha.

Respondent Characteristic

Response Rate

A total of 749 people participated in the survey, but only 642 have visited a state fair and tried food at the state fair. Of the 642, 78 did not complete the survey; this accounts for 564 participants. Eleven additional cases were outliers based on data screening and were eliminated. Therefore, a total of 553 people completed the survey, yielding a 73.83 percent usable data rate.

According to Kline’s (2005) guidelines, sample size adequacy should be based on the ratio of cases to estimated free parameters. These have to be at least 5:1, and they must be higher for statistical precision of results when using structural equation modeling (SEM). Hence, the sample size of 553 is sufficiently adequate to test the proposed model, using SEM corresponding to 49 parameters in this current study.
Demographics of Respondents

Table 4.1 presents the demographic profile of the respondents. Of the 553 participants in the study, 40 percent of the participants were male and 60 percent were female. The 31-40-year-old age group made up the highest proportion (37.8 percent) of the sample group followed by participants who were between 21 and 30 years old (34.7 percent). Fifteen percent of participants were 41 to 50 years old, and 10.8 percent ranged in age between 41 and 60 years old. The majority of the respondents were white, non-Hispanic (77.8 percent), followed by Asian (7.4 percent), African American (6.9 percent), Hispanic or Latino (5.6 percent), other (1.4 percent), and Native American (.9 percent). 17.9 percent of respondents had completed a post-graduate degree, 39.8 percent had completed a bachelor’s degree, 33.5 percent had some college or technical school, and 8.3 percent held a high school diploma.

21.7 percent of the respondents reported an annual household income ranging from $20,000 to $39,999; 21 percent reported a range from $40,000 to $59,999; 17.7 percent reported an income of between $60,000 and $79,999, and 10.5 percent reported an income of less than $20,000.

474 of the respondents were residents of the state (85.71 percent) where the state fair was held. Only 79 were non-residents (14.29 percent).
Table 4.1.  
Respondents’ demographic profile

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency (N)</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>221</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>332</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 – 20 years old</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 – 30 years old</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>34.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 – 40 years old</td>
<td>209</td>
<td>37.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41 – 50 years old</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51 – 60 years old</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>8.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Race</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>6.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>7.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic or Latino</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native American</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White, Non-Hispanic</td>
<td>430</td>
<td>77.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some high school or less</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school graduate</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some college/ technical school</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>33.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University graduate</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>39.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-graduate degree</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>17.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Income</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than $20,000</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>10.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$20,000 – 39,999</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>21.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$40,000 – 59,999</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$60,000 – 79,999</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>17.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$80,000 – 99,999</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$100,000 – 119,999</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>6.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$120,000 – 139,999</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over $140,000</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Residency</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>474</td>
<td>85.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>14.29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Visitors’ Profile

Attendees’ visits to the state fair and their experiences are presented in Table 4.2. The respondents have visited a state fair in all five regions of the United States. The highest number of participants went to state fairs in the Midwest region (24.77%), closely followed by the Southeast region (24.05%), the Northeast region (19.35%), the Western region (16.46%), and the Southwest region (15.37%). 99 of the respondents were first-time state fair visitors (17.9%); 90 respondents had visited state fairs twice (16.27%), and 80 respondents had visited three times (14.47%). Approximately 108 people (23.15%) had been to the state fair between 4 and 5 times; 71 respondents had visited 6 to 10 times (12.84%), and the remaining respondents had visited 11 or more times (18.99%).

Most respondents (43.04%) visited a state fair in 2016; around one-fourth of the respondents (27.12%) visited in 2017; and another one-fourth (24.23%) visited in 2015. A small number of respondents (n=31) visited a state fair in 2014. In terms of reasons to visit a state fair, respondents reported that among the major motives were: an outing with family and friends (19.69%); food (19.51%); exhibitions (18.82%); and amusements (14.30%). Most of the respondents indicated that food at the state fair is perceived to be authentic (81.01%).
### Table 4.2.
**Visitors’ profile**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Visit Experiences</th>
<th>Frequency (N)</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>State fair region</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southwest</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>15.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>16.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midwest</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>24.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southeast</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>24.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northeast</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>19.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number of visit to state fair</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 time</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>17.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 times</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>16.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 times</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>14.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 times</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>8.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 times</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>10.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10 times</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>12.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 or more times</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>18.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Year(s) of visit to state fair</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>27.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>238</td>
<td>43.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>24.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>5.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reasons to visit state fair</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amusements/ rides</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>14.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exhibitions</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>18.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family/ friends outing</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>19.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>19.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music showcases</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>5.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tradition</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>9.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sightseeing</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>8.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (i.e. support local businesses)</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>4.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Food at the state fair is authentic</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>448</td>
<td>81.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>18.99</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Descriptive Analysis

Before testing the measurement model, item parceling was conducted for the latent variables of perceived authentic food, experience, and place attachment. Based on the similarity of means, reliability, and factor loadings, the 21 items of perceived authentic food were parceled into four subscales of unique, original, traditional, and local as presented in Table 4.3.

In addition, means statistics were examined to verify the agreement of the variables. As described in Table 4.3, the mean score for 21 perceived authentic food items ranges from 2.82 to 3.82 indicating a moderate score (Shahzada, Khan, Noor, & Rahman, 2014). The highest mean score results show that respondents clearly reported that food at the state fair is served by local people (M= 3.82, SD= 0.98), followed by the statement that they agreed about which food at the state fair is prepared by people who live in the state (M= 3.74, SD= 1.00) and food at the state fair represents its state (M= 3.72, SD= 1.04). Furthermore, Cronbach’s alpha values for the four indicators were .87, .91, .73, and .92, respectively, which was above the suggested level of .70 (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994).

Moreover, the experience variables that were measured by experience economy scales consisting of 16 items were also confirmed by the EFA pretest. By checking reliability, means, and inter-correlations, and balancing the number of items for each subscale, the 16 items were classified into four subgroups; education, entertainment, escapism, and esthetics, consistent with the previous research (Manthiou et. al, 2014).
Table 4.3.  
Descriptive statistics, reliabilities, and estimates for perceived authentic food (PAF)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators/ parceled items</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>β</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PAF1: Unique (α=.865)</td>
<td>3.20</td>
<td>.87</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Food at the state fair is unique.</td>
<td>3.53</td>
<td>1.01</td>
<td>.74*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. The taste of food at the state fair is unique, not found in other places.</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td>.75*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. The serving style of food at the state fair is served in unique ways.</td>
<td>3.18</td>
<td>1.07</td>
<td>.63*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. No other state fairs offer the food that the state fair offers.</td>
<td>2.82</td>
<td>1.12</td>
<td>.78*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Food at the state fair clearly distinguishes itself from other state fairs.</td>
<td>3.10</td>
<td>1.11</td>
<td>.85*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAF2: Original (α=.911)</td>
<td>3.47</td>
<td>.93</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Food at the state fair represents its state.</td>
<td>3.72</td>
<td>1.04</td>
<td>.77*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Food at the state fair comes from its state.</td>
<td>3.45</td>
<td>1.04</td>
<td>.77*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Food at the state fair tells the story of its state.</td>
<td>3.25</td>
<td>1.11</td>
<td>.85*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Food at the state fair shows some heritage of its state.</td>
<td>3.48</td>
<td>1.11</td>
<td>.86*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Food at the state fair is connected to the culture and history of its state.</td>
<td>3.45</td>
<td>1.09</td>
<td>.86*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAF3: Traditional (α=.732)</td>
<td>3.61</td>
<td>.74</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Food at the state fair is traditional.</td>
<td>3.60</td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td>.70*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Food at the state fair has been unchanged over time.</td>
<td>3.12</td>
<td>1.02</td>
<td>.56*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Food at the state fair evokes nostalgia for the past.</td>
<td>3.65</td>
<td>0.98</td>
<td>.65*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Food at the state fair has remained in consistent existence over the years.</td>
<td>3.57</td>
<td>0.93</td>
<td>.62*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAF4: Local (α=.922)</td>
<td>3.57</td>
<td>.84</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Food at the state fair is local.</td>
<td>3.60</td>
<td>0.98</td>
<td>.81*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. The main ingredients of food at the state fair are from its state.</td>
<td>3.52</td>
<td>1.04</td>
<td>.86*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Food at the state fair is made from homegrown ingredients.</td>
<td>3.43</td>
<td>1.04</td>
<td>.83*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Food at the state fair is prepared by local people who live in the state.</td>
<td>3.74</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>.74*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Food at the state fair is served by local people.</td>
<td>3.82</td>
<td>0.98</td>
<td>.68*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. Food at the state fair is commonly labeled as made in the state.</td>
<td>3.39</td>
<td>1.04</td>
<td>.74*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. Much of food at the state fair is produced in the state.</td>
<td>3.53</td>
<td>1.04</td>
<td>.87*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. α = Cronbach’s alpha; β = standardized estimates; * p < 0.01, two-tailed

Table 4.4 presents the mean score for 16 experience economy items ranging from 2.37 to 4.08, indicating a moderate score (Shahzada, Khan, Noor, & Rahman, 2014). The highest mean score results show that the respondents implicitly agreed that the activities held at the state fair were amusing and entertaining, respectively (M= 4.08, SD=.74, M=
4.08, SD= .75), followed by the notion of having a pleasant time at the state fair (M= 4.05, SD= .80) and enjoying watching what others were doing at the state fair (M= 3.93, SD= .86). The reliability for each was .91, .83, .81, and .81, respectively, which is an acceptable internal consistency (Cortina, 1993).

Table 4.4.
Descriptive statistics, reliabilities, and estimates for experience (EXP)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators/ parceled items</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>β</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>EXP1: Education (α=.910)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. The experience at the state fair has made me more knowledgeable.</td>
<td>3.39</td>
<td>.91</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. I learned a lot from my experience at the state fair.</td>
<td>3.29</td>
<td>1.01</td>
<td>.86*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. It stimulated my curiosity to learn new things at the state fair.</td>
<td>3.46</td>
<td>1.02</td>
<td>.82*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. My experience at the state fair was highly educational for me.</td>
<td>3.18</td>
<td>1.06</td>
<td>.81*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EXP2: Entertainment (α=.829)</strong></td>
<td>4.08</td>
<td>.66</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. The activities at the state fair were amusing.</td>
<td>4.08</td>
<td>0.74</td>
<td>.70*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Watching others perform at the state fair was captivating.</td>
<td>3.84</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td>.72*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. I really enjoyed watching what others were doing at the state fair.</td>
<td>3.93</td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td>.79*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Activities at the state fair were entertaining.</td>
<td>4.08</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>.76*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EXP3: Escapism (α=.811)</strong></td>
<td>2.90</td>
<td>.89</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. I felt I played a different character at the state fair.</td>
<td>2.37</td>
<td>1.11</td>
<td>.78*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. I felt like I was living in a different time or place at the state fair.</td>
<td>2.58</td>
<td>1.18</td>
<td>.85*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. The experience at the state fair let me imagine being someone else.</td>
<td>2.44</td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td>.86*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. I completely escaped from my daily routine at the state fair.</td>
<td>3.62</td>
<td>1.04</td>
<td>.42*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EXP4: Esthetic (α=.805)</strong></td>
<td>3.79</td>
<td>.74</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. I felt a real sense of harmony at the state fair.</td>
<td>3.45</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td>.72*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. The setting at the state fair paid close attention to design details.</td>
<td>3.35</td>
<td>1.02</td>
<td>.72*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. It was pleasant just being here at the state fair.</td>
<td>4.05</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>.64*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. The setting of the state fair was very attractive.</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>0.93</td>
<td>.78*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. α = Cronbach’s alpha; β = standardized estimates; * p < 0.01, two-tailed
Based on the similarity of means, reliability, and factor loadings, the 12 items of place attachment were parceled into four subscales of place dependence, place identity, place affect, and social bonding as presented in Table 4.5. The descriptive analysis displayed in Table 4.5, shows that all 12-place attachment means scores range from 2.73 to 3.91, which implies a moderate score (Shahzada, Khan, Noor, & Rahman, 2014). The highest mean score results show that the respondents value the state fair with the statement “the state fair means a lot to me” ($M= 3.91$, $SD= 1.09$). They also agreed that the state fair is a part of them ($M= 3.82$, $SD= 1.16$) and stated that they were very attached to the state fair ($M= 3.77$, $SD= 1.17$). Cronbach’s alpha values range from .66 to .93. Yong, Hua, and Mei (2007) posit that a Cronbach’s alpha value of greater than 0.6 is considered acceptable.

Table 4.5.
Descriptive statistics, reliabilities, and estimates for place attachment (PA)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators/ parceled items</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>β</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>PA1: Place dependence (α=.879)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. For what I like to do, I could not imagine anything better than the settings and facilities provided at the state fair.</td>
<td>3.18</td>
<td>1.23</td>
<td>.83*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. For the activities I enjoy the most, the settings and facilities provided by the state fair are the best.</td>
<td>3.29</td>
<td>1.18</td>
<td>.92*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. I enjoy attending this National Park and its environment more than any other parks.</td>
<td>3.23</td>
<td>1.23</td>
<td>.79*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PA2: Place identity (α=.894)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. I identify strongly with the state fair.</td>
<td>3.74</td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td>.90*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. I feel the state fair is part of me.</td>
<td>3.82</td>
<td>1.16</td>
<td>.90*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Attending the state fair says a lot about who I am.</td>
<td>3.44</td>
<td>1.18</td>
<td>.79*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. α = Cronbach’s alpha; β = standardized estimates; * $p < 0.01$, two-tailed
Table 4.5. (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators/ parceled items</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>β</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PA3: Place affect (α=.933)</td>
<td>3.83</td>
<td>1.07</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. I am very attached to the state fair.</td>
<td>3.77</td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td>.91*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. I feel a strong sense of belonging to the state fair and its settings/facilities.</td>
<td>3.76</td>
<td>1.16</td>
<td>.91*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. The state fair means a lot to me.</td>
<td>3.91</td>
<td>1.09</td>
<td>.90*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PA4: Social bonding (α=.656)</td>
<td>3.24</td>
<td>.99</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Many of my friends/family prefer the state fair over many other fairs.</td>
<td>3.60</td>
<td>1.18</td>
<td>.85*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. If I were to stop attending the state fair, I would lose contact with a number of friends.</td>
<td>3.41</td>
<td>1.39</td>
<td>.46*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. My friends/family would be disappointed if I were to start attending other fairs.</td>
<td>2.73</td>
<td>1.31</td>
<td>.40*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. α = Cronbach’s alpha; β = standardized estimates; *p < 0.01, two-tailed

Based on the item parceling and the EFA, the initial variables included 12 indicators in three latent constructs, including four indicators for perceived authentic food (unique, original, traditional, and local), four for experience (education, entertainment, escapism, and esthetic), and four for place attachment (place dependence, place identity, place affect, and social bonding).

Prior to conducting CFA, the internal consistency of variables was checked by calculating Cronbach’s alphas and intercorrelations for the scales to determine which and how many indicators to use in measuring each construct. Table 4.6 exhibits the covariances and correlations among the 12 indicators examined in the study. The results indicated an average inter-item correlation among three constructs of perceived authentic food, experience, and place attachment. According to Clark and Watson (1995), average...
inter-item correlation s should fall somewhere between .15 and .50. The correlations among the indicators were all statistically significant, \( p < .001 \).

Table 4.6.  

*Covariance and correlation matrix of 12 indicators*  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>11</th>
<th>12</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Perceived Authentic Food</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. PAF1</td>
<td>.75</td>
<td>.65*</td>
<td>.36*</td>
<td>.56*</td>
<td>.53*</td>
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<td>.34*</td>
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<td>.38*</td>
<td>.30*</td>
<td>.25*</td>
<td>.20*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. PAF2</td>
<td>.53</td>
<td>.86</td>
<td>.53*</td>
<td>.76*</td>
<td>.52*</td>
<td>.40*</td>
<td>.25*</td>
<td>.54*</td>
<td>.31*</td>
<td>.33*</td>
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<td>.17*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. PAF3</td>
<td>.23</td>
<td>.36</td>
<td>.54</td>
<td>.47*</td>
<td>.33*</td>
<td>.37*</td>
<td>.23*</td>
<td>.41*</td>
<td>.20*</td>
<td>.26*</td>
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<td>.12*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. PAF4</td>
<td>.41</td>
<td>.59</td>
<td>.29</td>
<td>.70</td>
<td>.47*</td>
<td>.43*</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. EXP1</td>
<td>.42</td>
<td>.44</td>
<td>.22</td>
<td>.36</td>
<td>.83</td>
<td>.43*</td>
<td>.36*</td>
<td>.56*</td>
<td>.38*</td>
<td>.30*</td>
<td>.29*</td>
<td>.13*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. EXP2</td>
<td>.20</td>
<td>.24</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>.24</td>
<td>.26</td>
<td>.43</td>
<td>.20*</td>
<td>.61</td>
<td>.29</td>
<td>.32</td>
<td>.32</td>
<td>.14*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. EXP3</td>
<td>.27</td>
<td>.21</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>.29</td>
<td>.80</td>
<td>.45*</td>
<td>.26</td>
<td>.20</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. EXP4</td>
<td>.33</td>
<td>.37</td>
<td>.22</td>
<td>.33</td>
<td>.37</td>
<td>.30</td>
<td>.30</td>
<td>.54*</td>
<td>.41*</td>
<td>.39*</td>
<td>.37</td>
<td>.19*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Place Attachment</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. PA1</td>
<td>.36</td>
<td>.31</td>
<td>.16</td>
<td>.24</td>
<td>.38</td>
<td>.21</td>
<td>.26</td>
<td>.33</td>
<td>1.19</td>
<td>.70*</td>
<td>.67*</td>
<td>.47*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. PA2</td>
<td>.27</td>
<td>.32</td>
<td>.20</td>
<td>.28</td>
<td>.29</td>
<td>.22</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>.30</td>
<td>.81</td>
<td>1.12</td>
<td>.90*</td>
<td>.56*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. PA3</td>
<td>.23</td>
<td>.30</td>
<td>.20</td>
<td>.23</td>
<td>.28</td>
<td>.22</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>.29</td>
<td>.79</td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td>.53*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Covariances, correlations and variances are presented in the lower left, upper right triangle, and diagonal, respectively.

**Testing the Hypothesized Model**

**Measurement Model**

A confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) with maximum likelihood (ML) was used for this study to estimate the parameters of a statistical model in Mplus 8. The goodness of fit indices indicated that the measurement model provided an adequate fit to the data,  

\[
\chi^2 (51, N = 553) = 180.057, \ p < .001, \ CFI = .957, \ TLI = .944, \text{ and RMSEA} = .068. \]  

These
indices specified that the model fit the data well (Bollen, 1989; Schumacker & Lomax, 2004). Although the chi-square statistic $p$-value was significant, it is common for studies with large samples and large numbers of items to encounter significant chi square statistic (Hair et al., 1998; Jöreskog & Sörbom, 1996).

Given the good fit indices, reliability coefficients of the latent constructs, and adequate size of parameter estimates, the measurement model was considered statistically valid. Subsequent data analysis involved assessing construct validity and reliability of the latent constructs.

**Internal Reliability**

Reliability analysis was used to assess the homogeneity among the items and the goodness of the measure using Cronbach’s alpha ($\alpha$) and composite reliability (CR) (Nunnally, 1978; Pallant, 2010). As shown in Table 4.5, $\alpha$ values ranged from .66 to .93, values which were all greater than the recommended level of .6 (Yong, Hua, & Mei, 2007). In addition to the underlying assumption that all items are equally weighted in the formation of a scale, composite reliability was also computed to confirm that the items were free from random error and yielded consistent results. Table 4.8 shows the CR for all constructs ranged from .74 to .87, which exceeded the recommended .7 threshold level (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). This confirms that the measures are internally consistent.

**Construct Validity**

Once the adequacy of the proposed factor structure and the relationships among the latent and measured variables was established, construct validity through convergent and discriminant validity was tested.
Convergent validity

The strength of factor loadings, the significance of t-values, and estimates of the average variance extracted (AVE) were used to estimate validity (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Kyle, Absher, Norman, Hammit, & Jodice, 2007). The strength of factor loadings is determined by the size of a standardized loading in accordance with shared variances (i.e., squared multiple correlations, \(R^2\)). The standardized factor loadings of the measured variables with \(R^2\) values are shown in Table 4.7. The standardized factor loadings among items ranged from .47 to .94 and were statistically significant.

One indicator factor loading EXP3 (.47) was below the threshold of .50. Regarding \(R^2\) values of standardized factor loadings (Table 4.7), there were six factor loadings of PAF1 (perceived authentic food – unique), PAF3 (perceived authentic food – traditional), EXP1 (education experience), EXP2 (entertainment experience), EXP3 (escapism experience), and PA4 (social bonding). These were relatively low (\(R^2 = .49, .27, .44, .41, .22, .29\)) respectively, falling below the cutoff of .50; however, all standardized factor loadings were statistically significant (\(p < .001\)).

Another test for convergent validity is the estimates of the average variance extracted (AVE). The construct with AVE values of less than .50 is considered questionable in terms of its validity (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). As presented in Table 4.8, the AVE estimates for the constructs ranging from .43 to .63 with one construct had AVE values of less than the recommended cutoff, .50.
Table 4.7.
Standardized, unstandardized factor loadings, and variance for indicators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>ρ-value</th>
<th>β</th>
<th>R²</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. PAF1</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>27.00</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>.70</td>
<td>.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. PAF2</td>
<td>1.32</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>50.31</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>.87</td>
<td>.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. PAF3</td>
<td>.64</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>15.22</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>.52</td>
<td>.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. PAF4</td>
<td>1.11</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>39.32</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>.80</td>
<td>.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. EXP1</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>21.98</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>.66</td>
<td>.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. EXP2</td>
<td>.68</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>20.82</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>.64</td>
<td>.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. EXP3</td>
<td>.68</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>12.06</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>.47</td>
<td>.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. EXP4</td>
<td>1.02</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>34.36</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>.81</td>
<td>.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. PA1</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>31.74</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>.72</td>
<td>.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. PA2</td>
<td>1.26</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>89.91</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>.94</td>
<td>.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. PA3</td>
<td>1.23</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>76.61</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>.90</td>
<td>.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. PA4</td>
<td>.69</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>16.96</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>.54</td>
<td>.29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. B = unstandardized estimates; SE = standard error; β = standardized estimates

Given to the lower AVE value for the EXP construct, the study further investigated composite reliability (CR). Table 4.8 shows the CR for all constructs ranging from .74 to .87, which exceeded the recommended .7 threshold level (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). This confirms that the measures are internally consistent.

Although the loading for one of the dimensions of experience (escapism) is below .50 and the AVE estimates for experience is low, the CR value exceeded the cutoff value of .7, suggesting an acceptable convergent validity. Moreover, if the AVE of the resulting measure is within a few points of "acceptable" (.43), this may not always be "fatal" to
publishing a model test (Ping, 2007). Overall, the findings suggested a satisfactory reliability and convergent validity (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988).

**Table 4.8.**

*Correlations among three factors and construct reliability*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>PAF</th>
<th>EXP</th>
<th>PA</th>
<th>α</th>
<th>CR</th>
<th>AVE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. PAF</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>.65*.42</td>
<td>.37*.13</td>
<td>.84</td>
<td>.82</td>
<td>.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. EXP</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td>.42*.17</td>
<td>.74</td>
<td>.74</td>
<td>.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. PA</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.88</td>
<td>.87</td>
<td>.63</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Squared correlations among latent constructs are within parentheses.

* p < 0.01, two-tailed; α = Cronbach’s alpha; CR = composite reliability; AVE = average variance extracted

**Discriminant validity**

Discriminant validity is achieved when measures for different constructs are not strongly correlated among themselves. The discriminant validity was measured by comparing the AVE and the squared latent factor correlation between a pair of constructs (Fornell & Lacker, 1981). Table 4.8, which presents the factor correlation matrix of constructs in this study, indicated that the AVE of each construct was greater than the squared correlation coefficients between constructs, thereby achieving discriminant validity. Relationships among these variables were generally consistent with predictions. In sum, the measures of the proposed three constructs attained convergent and discriminant validities as well as high reliability.


**Structural Equation Modeling**

Following an assessment of the adequacy of the measurement model using CFA, the second part of the two-step approach was performed through SEM to investigate the relationships among hypothesized paths in the proposed framework. Before testing the hypotheses, SEM evaluated the overall model fit of the structural model and assessed goodness-fit-indices. The proposed model showed satisfactory fit to the data, $\chi^2 (48, N = 553) = 180.06, p < .001$, CFI = .956, TLI = .939, RMSEA = .071. All indices indicated an adequate model fit (Bollen, 1989; Schumacker & Lomax, 2004). The $R^2$ value for EXP and PA indicated that 18.2% and 12.2% respectively of the variance were explained by PAF. Thereby, the structural model remained for hypotheses testing.

**The Structural Model**

![Diagram](image)

*Figure 4.1. Results of the structural equation modeling analysis.*

Note: * $p < .001$

The next analyses evaluated the fit of the hypothesized structural equation model. There was a significant direct effect between perceived authentic food and experience at the state fair ($\beta = .13, t = 5.93, p < .01$), supporting hypotheses 1. In addition, as expected, perceived authentic food significantly influenced visitors’ attachment to the
place where the state fair is held ($\beta = .10, t = 6.66, p < .01$), which supports hypothesis 2. Experience was a significant positive predictor on place attachment ($\beta = .12, t = 6.68, p < .01$), supporting hypothesis 3. The summary of results is shown in Table 4.9. Estimated model, illustrating the direction and magnitude of the standardized path coefficient impact for the paths included in the model, are shown in Figure 4.1.

### Table 4.9.
*Parameter estimates*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypothesized paths</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>$t$-value</th>
<th>$p$-value</th>
<th>$\beta$</th>
<th>Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>H1: PAF $&gt;$ EXP</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>5.93</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H2: PAF $&gt;$ PA</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>6.66</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H3: EXP $&gt;$ PA</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>6.68</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Critical coefficient ($t$-value) $< 1.96$ indicates non-significant relationship; B = unstandardized estimates; SE = standard error; $\beta$ = standardized estimates

The findings indicated that perceived authenticity of food positively influenced attendees’ experience at the state fair as well as their attachment to the place. Further, their experience at the state fair positively affected their attachment to the place where the state fair is held.

**Mediating Effect**

A mediation relationship between the predictor variable and visitors’ attachment to place is specified in the model shown in Figure 2.2. Matrix estimates for total, direct, and indirect effects were tested to further investigate the mediating effect. A direct effect shows an impact on a variable. An indirect effect includes the paths from one variable to another mediated variable by an additional variable; the total effect is the sum of direct and indirect effects (Brown, 1997). In other words, the test for mediating effect evaluates
whether a mediating variable significantly carries the influence of an independent variable on a dependent variable.

The statistical significance of these hypothesized indirect effects was tested with the bias-corrected bootstrap sampling procedure that is available in the Mplus program. The bootstrapping method is a non-parametric test and does not violate assumptions of normality. It generates a more accurate estimate of standard error, thus increasing statistical power (Preacher & Hayes, 2004). The bootstrap function is an empirical method to determine the significance of statistical estimates and minimize the violation of normality (Byrne, 2010). Thus, the indirect effects were calculated using the maximum likelihood bootstrap procedures with the bias-corrected bootstrap function based on 1000 samples via Mplus version 8.

In order to examine the statistical significance of the weights of sub-constructs and the path coefficient, a bootstrapping procedure with 1000 iterations was performed (Chin, Peterson, & Brown, 2008). As presented in Figure 4.1, three conditions suggested by Baron and Kenny (1986) and supported by Preacher and Hayes (2004) were met in order to conduct a mediation analysis because all the direct effects were statistically significant. Specifically, 1) PAF significantly predicts PA, PAF significantly predicts EXP, and 3) EXP significantly predicts PA. Therefore, further mediation analysis was allowed to be undertaken.

To date, there has been one mediation path observed. The total indirect effect of perceived authenticity of food on attachment to the place is presented in Table 4.10. The findings revealed that expected indirect effects were statistically significant, supporting hypothesis 4.
Table 4.10.
Statistically significant indirect effects of perceived authentic food on place attachment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>95% CI</th>
<th>β</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. PAF &gt; EXP &gt; PA (+)</td>
<td>.015</td>
<td>[.009, .023]</td>
<td>.012</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. The 95% confidence interval (CI) shows the lower and upper 2.5% of the bootstrap estimates for the indirect effects. Cases where the confidence interval does not include zero are statistically significant. Specific significant indirect pathways are listed for each predictor. The sign of the net effect of each pathway is provided in parentheses; B = unstandardized estimates; β = standardized estimates

Observing the confidence interval of the indirect effects relationship that does not contain zero means that the pathways are statistically significant. Specifically, perceived authentic food (PAF) at the state fair had a significant indirect effect on place attachment (PA) through experience (EXP), β = .012. Overall, it was found that perceived authentic food was a significant factor for affecting experience and forming attachment to the place.

Moderating Effect

A moderation analysis was conducted to investigate whether or not perceived authenticity of food moderates the relationship between experience and place attachment as presented in the figure 4.2.

Interaction effect approach

As suggested by Klein and Moosbrugger (2000), and supported by Muthen and Asparouhov (2015), the baseline model was first analyzed, and the findings indicated that the model fit the data well $\chi^2 (51, N = 553) = 180.057$, $p < .001$, CFI = .957, TLI = .944, RMSEA = .068, and loglikelihood-ratio = -7443.484.
Next, a model with an interaction term was tested, and the path coefficients are presented in Figure 4.2. The likelihood-ratio $\chi^2$ for the moderation model is 7442.938 where the difference test with the baseline model is .546 (Table 4.11). A significant moderating effect could be detected when the difference in $\chi^2$ values between tested models is greater than 3.84 for each parameter difference (Awang, 2012). According to the results, there was one parameter difference with only .546 difference in loglikelihood-ratio $\chi^2$ between models, which is below the threshold of 3.84, suggesting no moderating effect in the proposed model. This indicates that hypothesis 5 was not supported.

**Table 4.11.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interaction Testing</th>
<th>Baseline Model</th>
<th>Moderation Model</th>
<th>$\chi^2$ Difference</th>
<th>Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. of free parameter</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Not supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loglikelihood-ratio</td>
<td>-7443.48</td>
<td>-7442.938</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: $\chi^2$ difference < 3.84 indicates non-significant moderating relationship; * $\rho < .001$
Invariance test approach

Considering the non-significance moderating effect in the model, this current study has used a different approach in testing a moderating effect by clustering the moderator variable into subgrouping variables. According to Zedeck (1971), a subgrouping variable is the basis for splitting a sample into subgroups where the validity coefficient of the predictor variable for one subgroup is significantly different from the coefficient of the other subgroup. A previous study of subgroup analysis hypothesized that the usefulness of an interest test would be improved by identifying subgroups of male and female engineering students (Frederiksen & Melville, 1954). This statement confirms the importance of segregating the samples in finding meaningful moderating effects in the hypothesized model.

This study has divided the samples into 2 groups based on score: 1) low perceived authenticity of food, and 2) high perceived authenticity of food. The median of the moderator variable (perceived authentic food) was obtained. Scores of 3.48 and below were gathered into the first group, labeled “low perceived authentic score,” which contained 276 samples (49.9%). Scores greater than 3.49, gathered in the second group and labeled “high perceived authentic score,” contained 277 participants (50.1%). This analysis was conducted to examine whether or not these individuals differed from the participants whose perceptions about experiencing authentic food at the state fair were lower.

The analysis was executed in Mplus statistical software. First, the model was analyzed as in Figure 4.3 with two different groups, and later, a constraint model was examined in order to find a significant difference. This was in order to detect the
moderating effects in the model. The first model was analyzed and the findings indicated that the model adequately fit the data, $\chi^2 (50, N = 553) = 128.614, p < .001, \text{CFI} = .949, \text{TLI} = .943, \text{RMSEA} = .075$, and loglikelihood-ratio = 4979.070. The constraint model also fit the data well, $\chi^2 (51, N = 553) = 129.134, p < .001, \text{CFI} = .949, \text{TLI} = .945, \text{RMSEA} = .074$, as did the loglikelihood-ratio = 4979.330.

Table 4.12
**Interaction testing through invariance test**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interaction Testing</th>
<th>$\beta$</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>$t$-value</th>
<th>Loglikelihood-ratio</th>
<th>$\chi^2$ Difference</th>
<th>No. of free parameter</th>
<th>Parameter difference</th>
<th>Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subgrouping</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-4979.07</td>
<td>.26</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-- Low</td>
<td>.51*</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>4.29</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Not supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-- High</td>
<td>.63*</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>4.96</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constraint</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-4979.33</td>
<td>37</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>-- Low</td>
<td>.57*</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>6.25</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-- High</td>
<td>.57*</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>6.25</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: $\chi^2$ difference < 3.84 indicates non-significant moderating relationship; * $p < .001$; $\beta$ = standardized estimates; SE = standard error

The results in Table 4.12 indicated the relationship between experience and attachment to the place across two groups. Observing the coefficient estimates between two groups, there was little evidence of moderation where the path was stronger for the attendees who perceived authentic food more = .63, rather than the attendees who perceived food less at the state fair = .51. However, looking at the basis for moderating effect that we applied earlier by observing the significant test between two models, there was one parameter difference with only .26 difference in $\chi^2$ between models, which is below the threshold of 3.84, suggesting no moderating effect in the research model. Again, it indicates that hypothesis 5 was not supported.
Table 4.13.  
Summary of hypotheses testing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypotheses</th>
<th>Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>H1: Attendees who have higher perceived authentic food have a more positive festival experience.</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H2: Attendees who have higher perceived authentic food express stronger attachment to the place.</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H3: Attendees with positive state fair experience exhibit stronger attachment to the place.</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H4: State fair attendees experience mediates the relationship between perceived authentic food and place attachment.</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H5: Perceived authentic food at the state fair moderates the effect of experience on place attachment among state fair attendees.</td>
<td>Not supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H5-1: The influence of experience on place attachment have stronger in the group that has high perceived authentic food.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H5-2: The influence of experience on place attachment have reduced in the group that has low perceived authentic food.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The summary of hypotheses testing is shown in Table 4.13. In sum, the initial model proposed in the study was partially supported where perceived authenticity of food significantly predicted experience and place attachment. In addition, a mediating effect was found in the model as hypothesized; perceived authenticity of food at the state fair had a significant indirect effect on attachment to the place. However, there was no significant interaction effect of perceived authenticity of food on the relationships between experience and place attachment.
CHAPTER 5. DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

This chapter consists of 1) discussion, 2) implications, and 3) limitations. This chapter begins with the discussion, summary and interpretation of the findings presented in Chapter 4. It includes theoretical and practical implications, addresses the limitations of this study, suggests recommendations for future research, and provides an overall conclusion regarding the research.

Discussion of the Study Results

The main intention of this study was to gain insight into attendees’ perceptions on authentic food at a state fair and determine how it influences their experience and attachment to the place. Particularly, this study applies cue utilization theory to examine whether perceived authenticity of food plays a role in influencing experience and place attachment. Given past studies supporting the relationships between experience and place attachment, the present study sought to expand the scope of the research to authentic food and state fair attendees. The hypothesized model fit the data well. It supported the direct and indirect effects of authentic food on experience and attachment to a state fair, except for a hypothesized moderating effect of perceived authentic food on the relationship between experience and place attachment. In sum, attendees’ perception of authentic food has a significant effect on experience, which in turn affects attendees’ attachment to the place where a state fair is held.

This current study examined perceived authenticity of food from four perspectives: unique, original, traditional, and local. The measurement model showed that
all factor loadings of the indicators of perceived authenticity of food were statistically significant, ranging from .52 to .87. This result implies that all of the indicators are important elements to measure perceived authentic food. Respondents generally agreed that food at the state fair is somewhat different; that it belongs to a certain place; is locally grown; is fresh; and that food has the characteristic of showing the heritage of a place over generations. The measure of perceived authenticity of food provided an understanding of attendees’ perception of food at the state fair, whether or not the food was authentic from their perspectives. Findings reflect the current trend of the importance of food at the state fair, where majority of the state fair attendees agreed that food plays an important role and was the top attraction at the state fair (Iowa State Fair, 2016).

Experience at the state fair was measured using the experience economy concept based on the factors of education, entertainment, escapism, and esthetics. All factors loaded significantly in the measurement model ranging from .47 to .81, indicating the factors are crucial components to assess experience at a state fair. Of all indicators, entertainment had the highest mean ($M= 4.08$) showing it was the most crucial indicator for evaluating attendees’ experience. This element reflects attendees’ appreciation of activities such as a cooking show and competition, rides, live concerts, and animal showcases. Entertainment provides enjoyment for the visitors and improves their experience at the fair.

This current study is the first to apply the construct of place attachment to a state fair setting. The concept was measured in four dimensions: place dependence, place identity, place affect, and social bonding. These constructs describe emotional connection, identity with a state, functional dependence, and social interaction with
family and friends. All factor loadings were statistically significant with ranges of .54 to .94, implying that all of the indicators are crucial components in assessing place attachment. Among the indicators, place affect had the highest mean ($M = 3.83$). This indicates that place affect should be considered one of the significant indicators to evaluate the degree of attachment to place. That is, place affect might be a meaningful gauge to evaluate an individual’s connection to a state.

**Relationships among Constructs**

Authentic food was viewed as a catalyst for linking the constructs in our model. First of all, perceived authenticity of food strongly influenced attendees’ experience at the state fair. That is, attendees who perceived state fair food to be authentic (e.g., unique, original, traditional, and/or local) were more likely to have positive experience at the state fair. Attributes of authentic food such as differentness, uniqueness, and otherness, allow state fair attendees to evaluate and distinguish food as authentic or inauthentic to the state fair; authentic food creates memorable experiences for attendees. The significant path from perceived authentic food to experience was consistent with previous findings (Kim et al., 2010; Zeng et al., 2012), indicating that individuals had good experiences when they encountered unique products or events.

Perceived authenticity of food was also found to have a direct impact on place attachment. This finding suggests that when food is perceived as unique, original, traditional, and local, state fair attendees are most likely to engage with and attach to the place where the state fair is held. This direct positive relationship of authentic food to place attachment explains that a state fair offers an opportunity to build attendees’ connection and attachment to a given state. This finding is consistent with a previous
study that indicated that authentic food is related to an original place (Sims, 2009). For instance, the majority of those surveyed in this study agreed that food at the state fair represents the state, showing the connection between food and place. From the overall significant relationships, this study found the cue utilization theory to be successful in explaining the process of how authentic food leads state fair attendees to emotionally bonding with the state.

This study successfully discovered that experience has a significant role in influencing attendees’ attachment to the place where the state fair is held, which was consistent with previous research (Lee et al., 2010; Prayag & Ryan, 2011). For example, Lee et al. (2010) assessed festivalgoers’ experience and emotional value, which leads to attachment to a destination. This study found that providing delightful experiences to state fair attendees could result in positive evaluations and lead to an attachment feeling among state fair attendees.

**The Mediating Role of Experience on Perceived Authentic Food and Place Attachment**

This study further revealed the mediating effect of experience on the relationship between perceived authentic food and place attachment. That is, the indirect path from perceived authentic food through experience to place attachment was statistically significant. This finding indicated that attendees that have a higher perception of authentic food were more likely to have a more positive overall experience, which in turn results in higher attachment to place. This finding is supported by previous research by Tsai (2016), who found that experience can be a critical mediator to assess place attachment. This suggests that the overall experience creates positive and unforgettable
memories that can be considered as a critical component in forming an intimate relationship with a destination.

The Moderating Role of Authentic Food on Experience and Place Attachment

This study hypothesized that the relationship between experience and place attachment would be stronger when state fair attendees had a higher perceived level of authentic food. Both an interaction method analysis and invariance test revealed no significant moderating role of authentic food; perceived authenticity of food did not significantly strengthen the relationship between overall experience and connection to the destination. However, the finding implies that perceived authenticity of food at the state fair plays an important role for both groups in determining their level of attachment to the place. In addition, the findings suggest that even with the presence of authentic food at the state fair, authentic food has no impact in reducing or increasing the level of attachment among attendees towards the destination.

Implications

Theoretical Contributions

This study expands the literature on festival research by focusing on state fair business and attendees. The survey for this study was conducted on a national level, including state fairs from 48 states in the United States, which resulted in over 500 valid responses. This allowed for a high level of data accessibility, a more comprehensive view of the state fair business and enhanced representation of samples.

This research made an initial attempt to research visitors to state fairs, by focusing on their perception of food, overall experience and place attachment. Consumer research
has rarely paid attention to state fairs. Thus, this current study offers an innovative approach to understand the role of state fairs from the perspective of attendees’ behavior. This study provides new information on state fair attendees and seeks to understand food trends at the state fairs. Therefore, this study extends the literature on tourism, particularly in the state fair setting, suggesting further opportunities for researchers to examine attendees’ behaviors.

The study is among the first to investigate the importance of authentic food at the state fair by applying the cue utilization theory. The findings revealed that perceived authenticity of food had a significant effect on experience and place attachment. As a theoretical foundation, the cue utilization theory successfully identified the role of food in bridging food and attendees’ experiences and attachment to a destination. The identified theory enables the study to verify that perceived authenticity of food is an indicator in determining attendees’ experience and their emotional sense of a place. That is, the attributes of authentic food provide a basis for making inferences and perceptions about the state fair and motivate the state fair attendees to have positive experience and attachment to the place. Therefore, this research expands the application of cue utilization theory to food tourism research by offering a theoretical perspective to examine attendees’ perception of authentic food.

Furthermore, the study investigated attendees’ overall experiences at the state fair by applying the experience economy. This study provides an understanding on attendees’ evaluations of the state fair based on four components: education, entertainment, escapism, and esthetics. Therefore, it offers a significant contribution, introducing the experience economy concept to evaluate state fair attendees’ overall experience.
In addition, the study makes an initial attempt to examine the construct of place attachment by measuring attendees’ views on place identity, place dependence, place affect, and social bonding (Ramkissoon et. al., 2013b). By successfully examining the construct, this study highlights the importance of place attachment in evaluating attendees’ relationships with a place. Therefore, this study makes a significant contribution to introducing the concept of place attachment as a critical baseline to understand state fair business through attendee-state fair relations.

This study confirms and successfully presents a holistic concept of three constructs of perceived authentic food, experience, and attachment to a destination. Moreover, this study identified significant antecedents of place attachment in the state fair context. An advance framework was discovered to describe attendees’ place attachment by including key antecedents of perceived authentic food and experience. Hence, this study fills a gap in the literature on attachment to place in a state fair context and enhances festival research by providing a holistic model to explain attendees’ attachment to a destination.

**Practical Implications**

A state fair is not only an annual festival, but also a good opportunity for the community to attract tourists and promote itself as a destination. It was supported that state fair was emphasized as an auspicious channel to increase the local economy (Rohrer, September 2013). Therefore, this study suggests a resource for local restaurants, organizations, and businesses by communicating with the attendees that visited a state fair. Moreover, this study included the demographic profile of attendees, such as age and
residency, so that state fair organizers could use this information to tailor marketing strategies for future events based on attendees’ demographic information.

This study found that the majority of those who visited a state fair were around 20 to 40 years old. Involving Xennials and Millennials generation entails exploiting internet, digital technologies, and social media among as these consumers have significantly changed US media habits (Kilian, Hennigs, & Langner, 2012). Based on this, study, state fair organizers may wish to use more social media as a promotion resource. Social media applications such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram could provide opportunities to directly communicate with visitors, deliver useful information to them, and promote the attractions and features of destinations that interest them. Such marketing efforts may act as a stimulus for attendees to develop feelings of attachment at the destination. A positive communication-technology experience may motivate visitors to bond with a place in person.

The findings of this study suggest the important role of food at a state fair in connecting attendees to the respective state. This study discovered an important cue in which food that is perceived as authentic also acts as an indicator of a memorable and positive experience at the state fair. This finding suggests that state fair organizers may begin to distinguish perceived authentic food as a travel cue and utilize this understanding to attract attendees to visit the state fair. Essentially, organizers may be able to identify current and potential tourists and visitors, based on their signals of liking particular foods in order to effectively target them with marketing strategies.

The study found that perceived authenticity of food positively impacted attendees’ experience at a state fair. There is a large variety of food and beverages offered at state
fairs. The Iowa State Fair alone has more than 200 food and beverage booths. Pork chops are one example of food that is associated with the Iowa state fair, representing unique, original, traditional, and local attributes of the local cuisine. This study contributes a deeper understanding to state fair organizers that food meeting certain criteria (unique, original, traditional, and local) will be perceived as authentic. This information helps the organizers to improve their offerings and improve visitors’ experiences through authentic food. Ultimately, when the organizers meet visitors’ perception of an authentic, memorable food experience, they may attract them to a particular destination, and increase their satisfaction and trust (Kim et al., 2010). All in all, by presenting these relationships, state fair organizers should advance their marketing strategies to the next stage, making greater efforts to introduce authentic food at the state fair to invite potential visitors and magnetize currents attendees to the state fair.

This study discovered that experience was an essential mediator in forming place attachment. This means that experience is considered as the most prominent indicator that can be beneficial for practitioners for developing marketing strategies. The purpose of attendees’ visits to the state fair is related to experience, including food, rides, live concerts, livestock showcases, or people watching. Therefore, the features and services offered at the state fair should meet visitors’ expectations; festival organizers have a responsibility to deliver a high quality of experience to visitors to build connections to the state. If the attendees feel delighted with their overall experience, it allows state fair organizers to evaluate their success in delivering products and services that create a bonding between visitors and their destination.
Understanding factors influencing the attachment of individuals to a place is essential to organizations as they rely on attendees to sustain their business. In this study, results showed that perceived authentic food and positive experiences impacted attendees’ emotional attachment to the place where a state fair is held. State fair organizers should recognize the importance of travel experience in forming place attachment by making efforts to provide a variety of authentic food and opportunities, showcased in a safe and clean environment. Moreover, one of the significant practical implications of place attachment in a state fair setting is the place affect development among the attendees. State fair attendees usually develop a strong place affect to the state where the state fair is held because most state fairs in the U.S. are not confined to the state fairgrounds, but some events are located in outside venues. For example, organizers can arrange some events at the state coliseum or a local museum. Shuttle buses are offered so attendees are also able to view other attractions around town. These initiatives are beneficial to the state in developing attachment to the destination. Hence, this study has provided the state fair or event organizers with a measurement tool to identify how attendees attach to place through four dimensions. The ability to gauge state fair attendees’ attachment to a state will allow organizers to increase the intensity between the state fair attendees and bonding to a place.

Limitations and Future Research

There are several limitations requiring further examination and research. First, the data for the study was collected through an online survey. Therefore, people who do not use the Internet would be excluded from participating in the survey, which may
contribute to the inability to generalize the findings. In addition, more than 85% of the sample were residing the state where they visited the fair, which may have affected the results on place attachment. It suggests that future studies may consider obtaining data from attendees who visited festivals in another states or cities.

Secondly, corresponding to the data collection method using online survey through Amazon Turk (MTurk), this study has excluded individuals who are not holding the title as “worker” on MTurk. Again, this approach has limited the opportunity to obtain samples from various group of people. Future studies may consider varying the data collection method in means to gain more reliable responses.

Thirdly, as the data was obtained only among state fair attendees, the results omitted visitors of other festivals or fairs. Furthermore, the sample is not nationally representative of state fair attendees from each state; no participants visited Alaska State Fair, Montana State Fair, North Dakota State Fair, and Vermont State Fair were drawn for the study, thus again limits the generalizability of the findings. Hence, future research may consider including a larger number of locations, and settings other than state fairs, such as festivals, restaurants, or local businesses. This would increase the sample size, representativeness, and generalizability.

Fourthly, this study is pioneering the use of the perceived authentic food construct in order to examine its influence on experience and place attachment. The construct was developed in less than a year ago and still a work-in-progress to be submitted to a journal publication. This study is the first to test perceived authenticity of food using a brand-new measurement scale, therefore the results could be improved especially on a traditional dimension which has a relatively low factor loading (.52). Future studies may
conduct research and test the perceived authentic food construct from different perspectives or settings. Hence, thorough research is needed to investigate and test this measurement items to assure a more reliable outcome in the future.

Finally, perceived authentic food, experience, and place attachment were measured by four indicators each, and all indicators were obtained from item parcels. Item parceling was chosen to increase the reliability of any individual item used to create the parcel, since this study introduced a new construct of perceived authenticity of food. An investigation of second-order factors encompasses of model used in this study would be enlightening. This approach could suggest a more meaningful outcome that would allow future researchers to know specific statistical findings; thus, they would understand, in detail, precise relationships among items.

In summary, this research provided empirical evidence in support of the cue utilization theory that determines the relationships between constructs influenced by certain signals or cues. Moreover, this study undertook a significant examination of the role of perceived authentic food in influencing state fair attendees’ experiences and emotional attachment to the place. The application of cue utilization theory in this study has helped to forge the link between festivalgoers and a destination, extending the literature on food and tourism studies, and suggesting meaningful implications for destination marketers.
REFERENCES


Iowa State Fair (2016). *Survey key findings* [PowerPoint slides]. Retrieved from Iowa State fairgoer research study.pdf


Van Zyl, C., & Botha, C. (2003). Motivational factors of local residents to attend the arts festivals.


APPENDIX A.

HUMAN SUBJECT INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY
OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Institutional Review Board
Office for Responsible Research
Vice President for Research
2420 Lincoln Way, Suite 202
Ames, Iowa 50014
515 294-4566

Date: 1/5/2017
To: Zahidah Ab Latif
7E MacKay
CC: Dr. So Jung Lee
8A MacKay Hall

From: Office for Responsible Research

Title: The effect of perceived authenticity on local food towards festival experience and place attachment in the State Fair

IRB ID: 16-586

Study Review Date: 1/5/2017

The project referenced above has been declared exempt from the requirements of the human subject protections regulations as described in 45 CFR 46.101(b) because it meets the following federal requirements for exemption:

- (2) Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey or interview procedures with adults or observation of public behavior where
  - Information obtained is recorded in such a manner that human subjects cannot be identified directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects; or
  - Any disclosure of the human subjects’ responses outside the research could not reasonably place the subject at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to their financial standing, employability, or reputation.

The determination of exemption means that:

- You do not need to submit an application for annual continuing review.

- You must carry out the research as described in the IRB application. Review by IRB staff is required prior to implementing modifications that may change the exempt status of the research. In general, review is required for any modifications to the research procedures (e.g., method of data collection, nature or scope of information to be collected, changes in confidentiality measures, etc.), modifications that result in the inclusion of participants from vulnerable populations, and/or any change that may increase the risk or discomfort to participants. Changes to key personnel must also be approved. The purpose of review is to determine if the project still meets the federal criteria for exemption.

Non-exempt research is subject to many regulatory requirements that must be addressed prior to implementation of the study. Conducting non-exempt research without IRB review and approval may constitute non-compliance with federal regulations and/or academic misconduct according to ISU policy.

Detailed information about requirements for submission of modifications can be found on the Exempt Study Modification Form. A Personnel Change Form may be submitted when the only modification involves changes in study staff. If it is determined that exemption is no longer warranted, then an Application for Approval of Research Involving Humans Form will need to be submitted and approved before proceeding with data collection.

Please note that you must submit all research involving human participants for review. Only the IRB or designee may make the determination of exemption, even if you conduct a study in the future that is exactly like this study.

Please be aware that approval from other entities may also be needed. For example, access to data from private records (e.g., student, medical, or employment records, etc.) that are protected by FERPA, HIPAA, or other confidentiality policies requires permission from the holders of those records. Similarly, for research conducted in institutions other than ISU (e.g., schools, other colleges or universities, medical facilities, companies, etc.), investigators must obtain permission from the institution(s) as required by their policies. An IRB determination of exemption in no way implies or guarantees that permission from these other entities will be granted.
APPENDIX B.

COVER LETTER AND SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear state fairgoers,

We are inviting you to our survey to understand your experiences with authentic food at state fairs in the United States. It will take about 20-25 minutes to complete the survey that includes five sections about food at the fair, overall experience and sense of attachment to the state fair, and future visit plans. The survey for this research is voluntary and you may stop the survey at any time if necessary. All responses will be kept confidential and not used for other purposes. This study (IRB #16-586) was approved by the Institutional Review Board.

Your participation, insights, and time are truly appreciated. Please do not hesitate to contact me at zahidah@iastate.edu or my professor at sjlee@iastate.edu if you have any questions.

Section 1: Your State Fair Visit

1. Have you been to a state fair in the U.S. in the past three years?  
   [ ] Yes  [ ] No

2. Which state fair have you visited most recently?  
   ________ (Select a State [i.e. Iowa]).

3. Are you currently a resident of ________ (Select a State [i.e. Iowa])?

4. In what year did you most recently visit the [Iowa] State Fair?  
   [ ] 2017  [ ] 2015
   [ ] 2016  [ ] 2014
5. How many times have you been to the [Iowa] State Fair?

☐ 1  ☐ 7
☐ 2  ☐ 8
☐ 3  ☐ 9
☐ 4  ☐ 10
☐ 5  ☐ 11 or more
☐ 6

6. What was/were the main reason(s) for your visit to the [Iowa] State Fair?

☐ Amusements/rides  ☐ Music showcases
☐ Animal Exhibits  ☐ Tradition
☐ Art/craft displays  ☐ Sightseeing
☐ Family/friends outing  ☐ Support local businesses
☐ Food  ☐ Other, please specify: __________

7. Have you tried food at the [Iowa] State Fair?

☐ Yes  ☐ No

8. Food is regarded as an essential part of travel experiences. Authentic food refers to a genuine form of food or product that is unique, homegrown, natural, and homemade and has distinctive visible product attributes. Authenticity in food is a strong cultural element in tourism because food portrays national or regional specialties and represent unique and authentic features in destinations.

Among the food you had at the fair, did you think some of the food were authentic?

☐ Yes  ☐ No

9. List the name of the food(s) that you think were authentic at the Iowa State Fair.

________________________

10. Why do you think food at the Iowa State Fair is (or is not) authentic?

________________________
Section 2: Your experiences with food at the Iowa State Fair

The following is a list of statements regarding your experience associated with food authenticity at the Iowa State Fair. For each statement, please select the response that BEST indicates the extent to which you agree or disagree.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State Fair Food</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Food at the Iowa State Fair is unique.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The taste of food at the Iowa State Fair is unique, not found in other places.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. The serving style of food at the Iowa State Fair is served in unique ways.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. No other state fairs offer the food that the Iowa State Fair offers.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Food at the Iowa State Fair clearly distinguishes itself from other state fairs.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Food at the Iowa State Fair represents Iowa.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. The origin of food at the Iowa State Fair comes from Iowa.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Food at the Iowa State Fair tells a story of Iowa.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Food at the Iowa State Fair shows some heritage of Iowa.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Food at the Iowa State Fair is connected to the culture and history of Iowa.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Food at the Iowa State Fair is traditional.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Food at the Iowa State Fair has remained unchanged over time.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Food at the Iowa State Fair evokes nostalgia from the past.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Food at the Iowa State Fair has remained consistent existence over the years.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Food at the fair is local.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. The main ingredients of food at the Iowa State Fair are from Iowa.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
17. Food at the Iowa State Fair is made from homegrown ingredients. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5

18. Food at the Iowa State Fair is prepared by local people who live in Iowa. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5

19. Food at the Iowa State Fair is served by local people. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5

20. Food at the Iowa State Fair is commonly labeled as made in Iowa. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5

21. Much of food at the Iowa State Fair is produced in Iowa. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5

Comments:

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
Section 3: Your overall experience at the Iowa State Fair

The following is a list of statements regarding your overall experience at the Iowa State Fair. Please indicate the degree of agreement or disagreement on each statement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State Fair Food</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The experience at the Iowa State Fair has made me more knowledgeable.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I learned a lot from my experience at the Iowa State Fair.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. It stimulated my curiosity to learn new things at the Iowa State Fair.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. My experience at the Iowa State Fair was highly educational for me.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. The activities at the Iowa State Fair were amusing.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Watching others perform at the Iowa State Fair was captivating.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. I really enjoyed watching what others were doing at the Iowa State Fair.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Activities at the Iowa State Fair were entertaining.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. I felt I played a different character at the Iowa State Fair.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. I felt like I was living in a different time or place at the Iowa State Fair.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. The experience at the Iowa State Fair let me imagine being someone else.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. I completely escaped from my daily routine at the Iowa State Fair.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. I felt a real sense of harmony at the Iowa State Fair.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. The setting of the Iowa State Fair paid close attention to design details.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. It was pleasant just being here at the Iowa State Fair.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. The setting of the Iowa State Fair was very attractive.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comments:

__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
**Section 4: Your attachment to the place**

Listed below are your attitudes towards Iowa. For each statement, please select the response that **BEST** indicates the extent to which you agree or disagree.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State Fair Food</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. For what I like to do, I could not imagine anything better than Iowa.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. For the activities I enjoy the most, Iowa is the best.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I enjoy visiting Iowa more than any other state.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I identify strongly with Iowa.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I feel Iowa is part of me.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Visiting Iowa says a lot about who I am.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. I am very attached to Iowa.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. I feel a strong sense of belonging to Iowa and its settings/facilities.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Iowa means a lot to me.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Many of my friends/family prefer Iowa over many other state.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. If I were to stop visiting Iowa, I would lose contact with a number of friends.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. My friends/family would be disappointed if I were to start visiting other state.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comments:__________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
Section 5: Demographic Information

1. Gender:  □ Male     □ Female

2. Age:  □ 18 – 20 years old  
          □ 21 – 30 years old  
          □ 31 – 40 years old  
          □ 41 – 50 years old  
          □ 51 – 60 years old  
          □ Other, please specify ____________________

3. Racial or ethnic identity (select one only):
   □ African American
   □ Asian
   □ Hispanic or Latino
   □ Native American
   □ White, Non-Hispanic
   □ Other, please specify ____________________

4. Education Level:
   □ Some high school or less  
   □ High school graduate  
   □ Some college/ Technical school  
   □ University graduate  
   □ Post-graduate degree

5. Household Income:
   □ Less than $20,000  
   □ $20,000 – 39,999  
   □ $40,000 – 59,999  
   □ $60,000 – 79,999  
   □ $80,000 – 99,999  
   □ $100,000 – 119,999  
   □ $120,000 – 139,999  
   □ Over $140,000  
   □ I am not comfortable to answer

YOU COMPLETED THIS SURVEY!

Your contribution to this study effort is appreciated.
Please copy the following survey code to receive credit for taking our survey.
Survey Code: ZAL176WWJ8Q
Thanks again! Please hit the NEXT button to submit.