Relationship between Food Tourism and Tourists' Characteristic Concepts; Food Neophobia, Variety-seeking Tendency, Hedonic Consumption, and Identity Affirmation

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Abstract

The empirical objectives of this study include, firstly, to identify the underlying dimensions in food tourism, secondly, to identify and test the tourists' characteristic variables that explain participation in food tourism, and finally to examine the relationship between food tourism and the characteristic variables. Derived from existing food tourism literature, three underlying dimensions of activities in food tourism are given: (1) dining at restaurants serving local cuisine, (2) purchasing local food products, and (3) dining at high quality restaurants. Four valid conceptual variables were used to test whether there are significant relationships between them and food tourism variables. They are food neophobia, variety-seeking, hedonic consumption, and identity affirmation. Based on the survey responses from 164 tourists visiting Kanghwa-do, Namisum, and Yongjong-do, multi-regression analysis was employed. The findings suggested that there were negative relationships between food neophobia and all other dimensions in food tourism. In addition, variety seeking, identity affirmation, and hedonism have positive influence on the dimensions of food tourism. Therefore, utilizing various culinary cultures, food tourism activities with increasing the availability and branding of indigenous local dishes are strongly advised to the destinations concentrating in the food tourism market.

Key words: food tourism, food neophobia, variety-seeking tendency, hedonic consumption, identity affirmation.

I. INTRODUCTION

In the tourist experience, consumption is an essential aspect which cannot be left out. Tourists do not only consume sights and sounds but also the taste of the location they are visiting. During a tourist’s visit, a majority or all of their food consumption occurs by dining out. Long LM (1998) stated that food played a significant role when one was experiencing another culture, since food consumption was one way of experiencing a different culture on a sensory level and not just intellectually. Local food was a critical characteristic of a destination, in addition with other characteristics (such

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as attractions and contributions) to the overall tourist experience (Symons M 1999). Food, therefore, is an essential constituent of tourism production as well as a consuming factor.

According to Shenoy SS (2005), dining out had evolved to be a form of leisure. Some people today do not eat meals just for the necessity to fulfill their hunger but for their pleasure. Atmosphere and occasion are also factors that contribute to the leisure experience. In addition, according to Korea culture and tourism institute (2007), compared to lodging and aviation, food service industry had the highest contribution to industrial development at expenditure of private spending in Korean tourism. Thus, experiencing local food and cuisine may be one of the travel itineraries for the tourists. Such behaviors makes the study of tourists’ food consumption interesting as well as complex.

People have more access to different cuisines from all over the world due to the market forces of globalization and the growth of dining out as a form of consumption. This trend has resulted in an increased emergence of food themed magazines (e.g., Cuisine, and Food and Travel), radio shows (e.g., Chef's Table), and television shows, particularly in cable television which focuses broadcasts on travel and food.

All tourists spend money on food during their travels. While traveling, among all possible areas of expenditures the probability of tourists making cuts in their food budget was very slim (Pyo SS et al. 1991). Viewing this at an economic standpoint, tourists’ food consumption makes a substantial contribution to the local restaurants, dining places, the food industry, and ultimately the visiting nation’s economy.

As a result, competition is in a constant increase in the world of tourism marketing. All destinations are in attempt to package their region in a unique way attract tourists. In addition, developing the local cuisine which were exclusive to the destination was an effective marketing tool to differentiate itself from other destinations (Shenoy SS 2005; Koh BS & Kang SW2004).

Globalization has compressed time and space. Making people have easier access in experiencing ethnic and foreign foods at their home despite the fact that when one is visiting a certain destination, the tourist is exposed to unfamiliar foods at a greater degree. This trend raises the question as to how destinations may package their food tourism (local cuisines) in a way that is unique and unfamiliar compared to what people taste at their home nation. As the foodways were being increasingly more global, promoting the novelty of local cuisines in destinations was becoming difficult (Richards G 2002).

Korean studies in tourism where food had been the focus of research have mainly been in folk food. Topics of these studies included menu development based on recognition and preference of folk food (Min KH 2008), traditional cuisine as a commercial scale in relation to local festival (Kim SC 2000), strategies for tourism commercialization of Korean food culture (Choi YJ & Won CS 2007; Sohn YJ 2005; Kwon SJ & Lee JH 2004), and evaluation on folk food (Kwon MY 2008). However, insignificant numbers of studies are available on food-centric tourism activities. Thus a conceptually based research which is set in a positivistic paradigm within the framework of social sciences that empirically examine food tourism and identifies variables explaining participation in food tourism is needed.

The goals of this study are as follows: firstly, understanding the underlying dimensions of food tourism, secondly, formulating and test a conceptual framework to identify the conceptual variables that
explain participation in food tourism, finally, examining the relationship between the dimensions of food tourism and tourists' characteristic concepts.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Food Tourism

There are insignificant numbers of empirical studies on the subject of food tourism. More detailed discussions on food tourism are needed in literature to further understand the subject. When food and tourism were combined as a form of tourism, one might define the matter as either gastronomic tourism (Hjalager & Richards 2002), culinary tourism (Long L 2004) or food tourism (Hall CM et al. 2003). All these terminologies indicate almost the same concept.

Gastronomic tourism describes the act of eating at ethnic and regional cuisine restaurants. This implied that everyone, not only tourists, in the conventional sense can take part in food tourism (Zelinsky W1985).

Culinary tourism, when described in an anthropological perspective could be defined as "an intentional, exploratory participation in the foodways of an other" (Long LM 1998). Here, the word 'Other' consisted of five categories: culture, region, time, religion, and socio-economic class (Long LM 2004). Additionally, participation included the acts of consumption, preparation, and presentation for consumption of a food item, cuisines, meal system, or eating style considered to be a culinary system different to one's own (Long LM 1998). The sites for participation in culinary tourism has also be identified as restaurants, ethnic restaurants, festivals, festive food events (especially those that are dedicated to a particular product like apple, peach, shrimp, etc), and cooking demonstrations that use home grown, freshly picked products at community festivals.

Food tourism was described as "visitation to primary and secondary food producers, food festivals, restaurants, and specific locations for which food tasting and experiencing the attributes of specialist food production region are the primary motivating factor for travel" (Hall CM & Mitchell R 2001).

In addition with a description of food tourism, Hall CM et al. (2003) presented food tourism segmentation which is based on the "importance of a special interest in food as a travel motivation". Four criteria is applied in their food tourism segmentation. The first criteria, known as the gourmet/cuisine/gastronomic tourism segment, states that a high interest in food tourism is indicated when the traveler's motive to a destination is primarily based on visiting a restaurant, market or winery, and all the traveler's activities are food related. The second criteria, also known as the culinary tourism segment, states that participation in food related activities as a part of wider range of activities at the destination indicates a moderate interest. The third criteria, labeled as the rural/urban tourist segment, states that a low interest is indicated by participation in food related activities just out of curiosity. The fourth criteria, the unlabeled segment, is when one shows no interest in food related activities or considers food subsidiary to all other interests as a tourist.

Based on existing literature, this study uses the frequency of participation in food related activities as a criterion to segment tourists and measure the extent of food tourism. The current definition of food tourism applied in this study was a revised version of Hall CM & Mitchell R's (2001) definition. This study redefines food tourism as a tourist's food related activities at the destination. Such
activities include consuming ethnic and distinctive cuisines, visiting primary and secondary food producers, purchasing local food products or food pertinent products, and experiencing the characteristics of unique food producing region. Therefore, what determines the position of tourists along the continuous pursuit of tourism was the degree of participation (Brotherton B & Himmetoglu B 1997). For example, a high participation will indicate a high special interest tourism. Included in the study is a view on culinary tourism that perceives it as a special interest tourism. It suggests that an interest in food and activities related to food is a major, if not primary reason, influencing travel behavior.

Thus, the current study’s segmentation criterion was based on the degree of interest as observed through the frequency of activities and not on motivation like that of Hall CM & Mitchell R’s (2001). The decisive factor of segmentation is not food tourism, but the participation frequency in food tourism by tourists.

In summary, all these previous studies contribute to the understanding of food tourism by emphasizing two important points. The first point is that food tourism encompasses numerous classes of food related activities and has a multidimensional aspect to it. The second point is that there is a continuum of tourists based on their participation in food related activities.

2. Concepts that Explain Participation in Food Tourism

Literature in food tourism suggests the relevance of four tourists’ concepts that influence participation in food tourism. The following section reviews literature pertinent to these four concepts. Each owes their origin to differing fields such as food studies, social psychology, and consumer behavior.

1) Food Neophobia

To understand why people have the propensity to avoid or approach novel, unfamiliar, and foreign foods, researchers in food and nutrition have applied the concept of food neophobia (Shenoy SS 2005).

Food consumption is a dynamic process which runs along axes from the exotic to familiar, from the inedible to the edible, and from unpalatable to the palatable (Long L 2004). Generally, there is a shift from familiar to exotic in food tourism. Different ingredients, dishes, and eating styles of preparation method of the host community can be associated with exotic foods. According to Jochnowitz E (1998), for food to function as a tourist attraction, it needed to fall sufficiently outside of the ordinary and suitably inside the boundaries of what is palatable. However, the perception of what constitutes exotic, inedible, or unpalatable was determined by each individual’s personal taste, personalities, cultural preferences, and aesthetics (Shenoy SS 2005).

Food neophobia is one personal trait which discourages tourists from experiencing local cuisines (Cohen E & Avieli N 2004) and ultimately affects the food tourism experience (Mitchell R & Hall M 2003). The fear of experimenting with different foods and tasting unfamiliar tastes effect many tourists to avoid local cuisines (Cohen E & Avieli N 2004). Further empirical studies are necessary to investigate how food neophobia participates in food tourism (Shenoy SS 2005).

In order to subdue the tourists' neophobic tendencies, destinations and restaurants had utilized strategies such as renaming the exotic dishes or translating the names into English (Shenoy SS 2005) or other familiar languages. For example, the Korean dish Kimchi has been translated into
Korean pickle. Developing tourism-oriented culinary establishments was another attempted strategy (Cohen E & Avieli N 2004). This strategy develops a innovative and creative version of the local dishes, transformed to suit the tourist's appetite. This function was described as a "culinary environmental bubble" by Cohen E and Avieli N (2004).

In summary, the inherent trait within a person to avoid novel foods plays a crucial factor in determining the extent of participation in food tourism. The proposition arrived, as a consequence to the literature review of the concept, is stated below.

Hypothesis I: Food neophobia is negatively related to at least one dimension of food tourism.

2) Variety Seeking Tendency
The concept of variety seeking tendency is derived from the consumer behavior literature. This concept is known as the consumer's inherent desire for variety, due to changing taste, constraints, feasible alternatives, and other changing factors (McAlister L & Pessemier E 1982). Generally, a stimulation is needed for variety seeking tendency to occur. Such tendency was an underlying explanatory variable for the consumption of hedonic products like food, vacations, entertainment gadgets, etc (Ratner RK et al. 1999; Warde et al. 1999; Vantrijp H & Steenkamp JB 1992).

When food is the focus of study in tourism literature, variety seeking tendency in respect to food is considered as an important variable which explains food consumption of tourists. In food tourism, providing tourists with diverse opportunities to experience varieties of food was a hallmark (Shortridge B 2004). At the same time, culinary tourists were opened to variety of foods and were characterized by this personal attribute (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett B 2004). The tourist's variety seeking tendency of food stated that there were obvious demands for variety of culinary traditions as well as demand for variety within a culinary system (Molz JG 2004).

In the perspective of tourist destinations, possessing an array of ethnic restaurants providing a multiplicity of culinary experiences and a variety of dishes were an essential attribute to a destination (Niell K et al., 2000; Sparks B et al. 2003). This attribute influenced the overall image and reputation of a destination and most importantly the tourist's satisfaction with the destination (Shenoy SS 2005). Good examples of destinations with this attribute is New York, London, and San Francisco. These cities have developed a reputation of 'foodie' destinations where the sheer variety of culinary cultures can be experienced (Shenoy SS 2005).

In summary, after reviewing literature, tourist's variety-seeking tendency of food can be a form of cultural experimentation. Additionally, literature supports the assumption that a destination's ability to provide a variety of culinary traditions along with a multiplicity of dishes within a culinary tradition, undoubtedly contributes to its overall attraction and satisfaction as a holiday destination. Thus, tourism literature pertinent to food consumption, show that variety seeking tendency towards food plays a crucial role in explaining participation in food related activities. The proposition arrived, after reviewing literature pertinent to variety-seeking tendency, is stated below.

Hypothesis II: Variety-seeking tendency is positively related to at least one dimension of food tourism.

3) Hedonic Consumption
Hedonic consumption is another concept which appears in consumer behavior literature that has
been applied into tourism studies. Hedonic consumption is defined as "those facets of consumer behavior that are related to the multi-sensory, fantasy, and emotive aspects of one's experience with the products" (Hirschman E & Holbrook M 1982). According to Hopkinson GC & Pujari D (1999), the hallmark of hedonically valuable experience lied in the aesthetic or the physical enjoyment a product provides. This resulted in an increased arousal, heightened involvement, perceived freedom, fantasy fulfillment, and escapism in the consumer (Hopkinson GC & Pujari D 1999).

Applying hedonic attitudes in food consumption, there was an emphasis on the taste of food, a preference for cultural eating practices, a desire for complex cultural dishes or a desire for elaborate and extravagant foods, and a focus on the cultural practice of eating food as well as the end benefits (LeBel JL 2000). Additionally, food consumption is not just a physiological sensation, for example, a pleasure felt when eating a rich dessert or drinking alcohol. It could also be a social pleasure, emotional pleasure, or intellectual pleasure. For example, social pleasure includes pleasures felt while having food and drinks with friends and family. Emotional pleasure and intellectual pleasures could be any pleasures felt while cooking a fine meal, appreciating finer foods, or consuming beverages (LeBel JL 2000).

Modern tourists are in constant need for a high and immediate gratification (Boniface P 2003). Two elements which provide sensory and tactile pleasure while satisfying this need more easily than any other tourist attractions were food and beverages (Shenoy SS 2005). Since food tourism had more experiential aspects than functional aspects of the travel experience, food tourism was hedonic in nature (Mitchell R & Hall M 2003).

Tourist's hedonic attitude towards food consumption and the ability of food tourism to satisfy the sensation seeking attitude of tourist, motivated tourists to take part in food tourism (Mitchell R & Hall M 2003). Similarly, culinary tourist seek to experience the culinary 'Other' for the sake of experiencing it and not to satisfy hunger (Long L 2004). The outcome of such experiences is pleasure which is aesthetic in nature and stems from the consumption of food and not what the food represents.

The tourist's hedonic attitudes toward food, from the destination's perspective, is what makes local food a tourist attraction and an important food attraction of a destination. Boniface P's (2001) study which researched tourist brochures and destination advertisements, supports this proposition. The researcher noted that the food and wine of the region was greatly emphasized in the destination's positioning strategy. Additionally, advertisements promoting a particular destination's food and wine are examples which support this trend.

In summary, modern tourism is becoming more than just 'gaze' oriented (Urry J 2002). It is more experience oriented and food plays an important role as a medium of experience based tourism. Tourist's hedonic attitudes of food, rather than utilitarian attitudes, influence their perception of food as a part of the destinations attractions that provide a pleasurable and memorable experience. Therefore, one of the motivations to travel includes the experience of food in a particular destination. If not a motivation, food plays at least a significant part of the tourist's overall activities in a destination and ultimately provides peak tourist experiences during their holiday. This made food tourism a natural consequence of hedonism (Telfer DJ & Hashimoto A 2003). The proposition arrived at after reviewing of literature is represented below.
Hypothesis III: Hedonic consumption attitude towards food is positively related to at least one dimension of food tourism.

4) Identity Affirmation

When tourists participated in food tourism, they were exploring and reinforcing their own identity as well as exploring the identity of the "Other" (Wilson 2004). Therefore, food can be considered as a expressive medium of identity expression and identity affirmation. In addition, because food is often shared among a group of people, a food system binds people by distinguishing the in group from the out group.

Finally, culinary tourists dining in a multi-cultural setting, attributed to sign value by consciously or unconsciously using such acts of dining as a way of status differentiation (Wilson L 2004). Experiencing local cuisines is considered to be an important activity during a tourist's visit to a destination. The perceived sign value attributed by consumer to the product (food) was one of the factors of involvement and was a significant stimulus in participation of food tourism (Shenoy SS 2005).

In summary, tourism is becoming more and more niche-oriented and activity oriented. As a result, tourist's interests are swaying over to destinations which offer them opportunities to participate in their favored activities. Additionally, individuals who show enduring involvement with food and food related activities perceive food as a form of identity expression and identity affirmation. The proposition derived after the review of literature is presented below.

Hypothesis IV: Identity affirmation with food related activities is positively related to at least one dimension of food tourism.

1. Operational Definition and Measurement Instrument

1) Food Tourism

Tourist's food related activities at a destination can be defined as food tourism. Food related activities include dining, purchasing local food products or food pertinent products, experiencing the characteristics of an unique food-producing region, and so on. The fourteen items of food tourism was based on Shenoy SS's (2005) measurement of 'participation in food tourism'. The major categories are: (1) dining at establishments serving local, regional or distinctive cuisines (Dine Local), (2) visiting food festivals and specific locations for tasting the attributes of specialist food production region (Dine Elite), (3) purchasing of food and food related products (Purchase Local).

2) Food Neophobia

Food Neophobia is defined, in the current study, as a personal trait of the tourist which has negatively effects the tourist's initiative to experience...
local cuisines. Further, the three items of food neophobia were developed by Pliner P & Hobden K's (1992) Food Neophobia Scale (FNS).

3) Variety-seeking Tendency with Respect to Food
Tourist's variety-seeking tendency with respect to food is the tourist's proneness for variety of culinary traditions and/or a demand for variety within a culinary system. The five items to measure this tendency were developed from VARSEEK scale constructed by Van Trijp H & Steenkamp JB (1992).

4) Hedonic Consumption
Hedonic consumption is seen as the related facets of consumer behavior to one's multisensory, fantasy, and emotional experience with the product. The respondents' hedonic consumption attitude towards food was measured using Hedonic Consumption Attitude Scale (Batra R & Ahtola O 1991). The four items were measured on a seven point semantic differential scale.

5) Identity Affirmation
Food is a preeminent mean of self expression, in the essence that food is a declarative function and possess the ability to define characteristics of the consumer (Wilson L 2004). Therefore, identity affirmation suggest that food is an expressive medium of identity expression and identity affirmation. The respondents' identity affirmation with food-related activities was measured by the eight items based on the Modified Involvement Scale by Kyle et al. (2004).

2. Questionnaire Construction
The questionnaire consisted of six sections. First section measured the frequency of the tourists' participation in food related activities at a destination. The second section measured respondents' variety-seeking tendency toward food, followed by food neophobia in section three. The forth section measured respondents' identity affirmation with food related activities, while section five measured the respondents' hedonic attitude towards food. The sixth section measured the respondents' demographic status. The survey combined unipolar scale, 5-point Likert type scales and semantic differential scales.

3. Sampling Frame
A total of 50 respondents, who had food tourism experience, was surveyed on the purpose of preliminary survey. After this had been modified, the sample of tourists was obtained randomly from several sites in order to get a cross-section of tourists with diverse interests. The sample was collected from Kanghwa-do, Namisum, and Yongjong-do. The number of respondents collected from Kanghwa-do was 70 and accounted for 35% of the total respondents. Respondents visiting Namisum formed 32.5% (n=65) of the total respondents. Finally, Yongjong-do visitors made up of 32.5% (n=65) of total respondents. It had been conducted from May 1st to July 3rd, 2009. The number of faithful 164 cases out of 200 were analyzed.

4. Analysis Method
Collected data was analyzed using SPSS 10.0 and AMOS 4.0. Firstly, frequency analysis was conducted to understand the respondents' characteristics and reliability. Secondly, factor analysis was examined to verify reliability and validity of measurement items. Further, in order to identify the variables that explain participation in food tourism, standard multiple regression was performed between the dimensions - Dine Local, Purchase Local, and Dine Elite - of food tourism (dependent
variables) and food neophobia, variety seeking tendency, hedonic consumption, and identity affirmation (independent variables).

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Respondents’ Characteristics

The following table displays the respondents’ characteristics. The majority of respondents was female (n=87, 53%), and the rest of the 47% of the respondents were males (n=77). The age category of 20-29 formed the majority of the respondents (n=62, 37.8%) followed by the age category of 30-39 (n=51, 31.1%). With respect to education level, nearly half of the respondents’ highest education was a 4-year college degree (n=71, 43.3%). Further, majority of respondents were unmarried (n=81, 49.4%), employed full time (n=49, 29.9%) and had an average household income of more than 4 million won (n=55, 33.5%).

2. Reliability and Validity of Measurement Scales

A Cronbach’s alpha is the most commonly used measure of reliability for a set of two or more construct indicators. Their values range between 0 and 1, with higher values indicating better reliability (Hair et al 2006). In addition, the value higher than 0.6 identifies high reliability (Lee HY 2006). Further, to identify validity of food tourism scales, exploratory factor analysis was conducted. After the Varimax rotation, factors with eigenvalues above 1 were extracted and items with factor loading above 0.5 were considered significant. In addition, this study used confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to examine validity of attitude towards food. CFA is the analysis method when measurement variables for a construct has been already established.

1) Reliability and Validity Analysis of Food Tourism

Table 2 exhibits the final structure of 14 items operationalized as food tourism. According to Lee HY (2006), a Cronbach’s alpha greater than 0.60 is considered moderately reliable. Cronbach’s reliability coefficient alpha for the three factors ranged from 0.782 to 0.843.

Principle component analysis was employed to extract factors and the factors were rotated through Varimax. For the 14 items, three interpretable factors with eigenvalue above 1 were extracted, explaining

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1</th>
<th>Result of the Demographic Analysis of the Respondents</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Respondent Characteristics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>87 (53.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>20−29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30−39</td>
<td>51 (31.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40−49</td>
<td>31 (18.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 or More</td>
<td>20 (12.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>2-year Collage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-year Collage</td>
<td>71 (43.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master or More</td>
<td>33 (20.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Other</td>
<td>34 (20.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee Status</td>
<td>Short Term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full Time</td>
<td>49 (29.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>41 (25.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retired</td>
<td>13 (7.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Entrepreneur</td>
<td>28 (17.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marital Status</td>
<td>Married</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unmarried</td>
<td>81 (49.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Others</td>
<td>8 (4.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Household Income</td>
<td>Less than 2M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2M~2.99M</td>
<td>38 (23.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3~3.99M</td>
<td>47 (28.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 M/More</td>
<td>55 (33.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Total</td>
<td>164 (100.0)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
60.4% of the total variance (see Table 2). Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) is 0.882, which presents measurement of sampling adequacy.

Dine Local, consisted of five items indicative of a desire to experience local flavor and explained 20.351% of the variance. The eigenvalue of this factor was 2.85 with a coefficient alpha of 0.78.

Purchase Local, had five items indicative of a desire to purchase local food items/activities and explained 20.062% of the variance. It showed an eigenvalue of 2.81 and coefficient alpha of 0.79. The factor was labeled Purchase local as it displayed a preponderance of items which were connected to purchasing products, kitchen equipments, cookbooks etc., to take back home and experience the culinary specialties of the region.

Dine Elite, consisted with four items indicative of a desire for eating at premium and renowned places. This signifies dining as a status symbol. This factor had an eigenvalue of 2.8. It explained 19.986% of the variance and demonstrated a reliability coefficient alpha of 0.84.

2) Reliability and Validity Analysis of Attitude Towards Food

The reliability coefficient along with the dimension of the independent variables used for this study are reported in Table 3.

As indicated, the scales used in this study showed acceptable levels of reliability. Identity affirmation showed a reliability coefficient of 0.908 and was made up of eight items.

Likewise, the five items measuring the variety seeking tendency toward food showed a reliability coefficient of 0.873.

The three items in food neophobia scale showed a reliability coefficient of 0.692. Also, the four items measuring hedonic consumption showed a
reliability coefficient of 0.918. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was conducted to measure the validity of measurement items in attitude toward food. CFA was applied to all the twenty items and chi-square of 183.845, degree of freedom of 147, and p-value of 0.021 ($p<0.05$). Further, the value in chi-square/df should be less than three to secure overall goodness of fit (Kim KS 2004). In addition, the value of chi-square/df shows 1.251 so that overall goodness of fit is identified.

Further, Table 4 presents standardized estimates.

Table 3: Result of the Reliability Coefficients of Scales

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Number of Items</th>
<th>Cronbach's alpha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identity Affirmation</td>
<td>2.900</td>
<td>0.823</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0.908</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variety Seeking</td>
<td>3.272</td>
<td>0.847</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.873</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Neophobia</td>
<td>2.910</td>
<td>0.830</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.692</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hedonic Consumption</td>
<td>5.570</td>
<td>1.129</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.918</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4: Result of CFA of Attitude toward Food

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Estimates</th>
<th>Standardized Estimates</th>
<th>S.E.</th>
<th>C.R.</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identity Affirmation</td>
<td>I actively interact with the people in gatherings related to food.</td>
<td>1.127</td>
<td>0.796</td>
<td>0.111</td>
<td>10.197</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Participating in activities related to food provides me with an</td>
<td>0.994</td>
<td>0.725</td>
<td>0.100</td>
<td>9.942</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>opportunity to be with friends.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>When I am participating in activities related to food, others regard</td>
<td>0.850</td>
<td>0.623</td>
<td>0.109</td>
<td>7.792</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>me as the way I want them to see me.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Changing my preference from activities related to food to another</td>
<td>0.983</td>
<td>0.735</td>
<td>0.123</td>
<td>8.000</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>leisure activity would require major rethinking.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I can tell a lot about a person by seeing him/her participating in</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>0.746</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>activities related to food.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Participating in activities related to food occupies a central role in</td>
<td>1.098</td>
<td>0.752</td>
<td>0.122</td>
<td>9.027</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>my life.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>When I am participating in activities related to food, I can really</td>
<td>0.980</td>
<td>0.693</td>
<td>0.110</td>
<td>8.896</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>be myself.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Participating in activities related to food says a lot about who I am.</td>
<td>1.165</td>
<td>0.838</td>
<td>0.093</td>
<td>12.572</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variety Seeking</td>
<td>I think it is fun to try out food items I am not familiar with.</td>
<td>1.322</td>
<td>0.810</td>
<td>0.170</td>
<td>7.760</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I am eager to know what kind of foods do people from other countries</td>
<td>1.212</td>
<td>0.744</td>
<td>0.159</td>
<td>7.619</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>eat.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I like to eat exotic foods.</td>
<td>1.255</td>
<td>0.754</td>
<td>0.159</td>
<td>7.869</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Items on the menu I am unfamiliar with, make me curious.</td>
<td>1.298</td>
<td>0.761</td>
<td>0.133</td>
<td>9.795</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I am curious about food products that I am not familiar with.</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>0.646</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Neophobia</td>
<td>I like to try a new ethnic restaurant(R).</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>0.624</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I look for food from different countries(R).</td>
<td>1.005</td>
<td>0.635</td>
<td>0.126</td>
<td>7.963</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>At dinner parties, I will try new food(R).</td>
<td>0.878</td>
<td>0.584</td>
<td>0.138</td>
<td>6.345</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hedonic</td>
<td>To me, food is pleasant.</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>0.832</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To me, food is nice.</td>
<td>0.981</td>
<td>0.786</td>
<td>0.080</td>
<td>12.242</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To me, food is happy.</td>
<td>1.104</td>
<td>0.932</td>
<td>0.072</td>
<td>15.457</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To me, food is agreeable.</td>
<td>1.049</td>
<td>0.900</td>
<td>0.072</td>
<td>14.689</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chi-square = 183.845, Degree of freedom = 147. Probability level = 0.021
GFI= 0.905, AGFI =0.864, NFI = 0.914, TLI = 0.976, CFI = 0.981, RMR = 0.061, RMSEA = 0.039

*R: reverse coding
for a measurement model. As illustrated, factor loading of all measures were moderate (ranging from 0.624 to 0.932). The factor loadings showed that relevant measurement items performed moderately well in reflecting the designated underlying construct.

In assessing model fit the following seven indices were employed: GFI (Goodness of Fit Index: \( \geq 0.90 \)), AGFI (Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index: \( \geq 0.90 \)), RMSEA (Root Mean Square Residual: <0.05), NNFI (Non-Normed Fit Index: \( \geq 0.90 \)), NNFI (Non-Normed Fit Index: \( \geq 0.90 \)), and GFI (Comparative Fit Index: \( \geq 0.90 \)). From the perspective overall fit of the measurement model, all indices evidenced an adequate fit.

〈Table 5〉 contains a correlation matrix depicting the association between the dependent variable and independent variables. Looking down the first three columns, we can see that food neophobia, had the highest correlation with dine local and dine elite. In addition, identity affirmation had the highest correlation with purchase local. The correlation matrix also shows the input data met the study objectives of grouping variables.

3. Testing Hypotheses

Standard multiple regression was conducted between the dimensions of food tourism and food neophobia, variety-seeking, hedonic consumption, and identity affirmation so as to identify the variables to explain participation in food tourism.

The first regression model was run with all the independent variables and the factor Dine Local. 〈Table 6〉 displays the unstandardized regression coefficient (B) and intercept, the standardized regression coefficient (\( \beta \)), \( R^2 \) and adjusted \( R^2 \). The overall model was significant \( (F=23.759) \) while explaining 35.8\% of variance in Dine Local.

Further, variety seeking tendency, food neophobia, and hedonic consumption were found to significantly explain the variance in Dine Local. Altogether, 37.4\% (35.8\%) of the variability in Dine Local was predicted by knowing the scores on variety seeking, food neophobia, and hedonic consumption.

The regression coefficient (\( \beta \)) gives a measure of the contribution of each variable to the model. They signify the expected change in the dependent variable for each unit increase in the independent variable, after the independent variables are standardized (Tabachnick & Fidell 2001). Thus, for every unit increase in variety-seeking, dine local

\[ \begin{align*}
\text{Dine at a local restaurant} & \quad 1 \\
\text{Purchase a local food product} & \quad 0.546 & 1 \\
\text{Dine at a fancy restaurant} & \quad 0.769 & 0.518 & 1 \\
\text{Identity affirmation of food} & \quad 0.378 & 0.674 & 0.274 & 1 \\
\text{Hedonic} & \quad 0.446 & 0.340 & 0.464 & 0.368 & 1 \\
\text{Neophobia} & \quad -0.765 & -0.619 & -0.716 & -0.604 & -0.434 & 1 \\
\text{Variety seeking} & \quad 0.613 & 0.338 & 0.449 & 0.465 & 0.351 & -0.803 & 1 \\
\end{align*} \]

* N=164. All correlations with absolute value above 0.157 are significant at \( p<0.001 \).
Table 6: Result of the Regression Analysis of the Conceptual Variables Explaining Dine at a Local Restaurant

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Unstandardized Regression Coefficient</th>
<th>Standardized Regression Coefficient</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>P value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>2.729</td>
<td>0.547</td>
<td>4.989</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identity Affirmation</td>
<td>-0.049</td>
<td>0.073</td>
<td>-0.051</td>
<td>-0.674</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variety Seeking</td>
<td>0.246</td>
<td>0.078</td>
<td>0.263</td>
<td>3.135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Neophobia</td>
<td>-0.314</td>
<td>0.083</td>
<td>-0.330</td>
<td>-3.784</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hedonic Consumption</td>
<td>0.137</td>
<td>0.049</td>
<td>0.196</td>
<td>2.806</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The second regression model was run with all the independent variables and the factor Purchase Local. Table 7 displays the un-standardized regression coefficient (B) and intercept, the standardized regression coefficient (β), $R^2$ and adjusted $R^2$. The overall model was significant ($F = 31.242$) while explaining 42.6% of variance in Purchase Local.

Further, identity affirmation, and food neophobia increased by 0.263 units and for every unit increase in food neophobia, participation in dine local decreased by 0.330 units. Further, for every unit increases in hedonic consumption, participation in food tourism increased by 0.196 units. It can be stated that tourists who seek more variety, who are less food neophobic, and who perceive food more as a means of identity affirmation are more likely to consume local food at local restaurants.

Table 7: Result of the Regression Analysis of the Conceptual Variables Explaining Purchase a Local Food Product

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Unstandardized Regression Coefficient</th>
<th>Standardized Regression Coefficient</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>P value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>1.633</td>
<td>0.574</td>
<td>2.845</td>
<td>0.005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identity Affirmation</td>
<td>0.544</td>
<td>0.077</td>
<td>0.510</td>
<td>7.093</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variety Seeking</td>
<td>-0.132</td>
<td>0.082</td>
<td>-0.127</td>
<td>-1.603</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Neophobia</td>
<td>-0.275</td>
<td>0.087</td>
<td>-0.260</td>
<td>-3.161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hedonic Consumption</td>
<td>0.081</td>
<td>0.051</td>
<td>0.105</td>
<td>1.588</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
were found to significantly explain the variance in Purchase Local. Altogether, 44% (42.6%) of the variability in Purchase Local was predicted by knowing the scores on identity affirmation and food neophobia.

Based on the regression coefficient (β) for every unit increases in identity affirmation, purchase local increased by 0.510 units, and for every unit increase in food neophobia, purchase local decreased by 0.260 units. Thus, tourists who seek more identity affirmation and who are less neophobic are more likely to purchase local food and food related products to take back home.

The third regression model was run with all the independent variables and the factor Dine Elite. Table 8 displays the un-standardized regression coefficient (β) and intercept, the standardized regression coefficient (β̂), R² and adjusted R². The overall model was significant (F = 22.677) while explaining 34.7% of variance in Dine Elite.

Further, food neophobia, and hedonic consumption were found to significantly explain the variance in Dine Elite. Altogether, 36.3% (34.7%) of the variability in Dine Elite was predicted by calculating the scores on food neophobia and hedonic consumption.

As for the regression coefficient (β), every unit increased in food neophobia, dine elite decreased by 0.454 units and for every unit increase in hedonic consumption, dine elite increased by 0.295 units. Thus, tourists who seek more hedonic consumption and who are less neophobic are more likely to dine elite.

The results of three regression models revealed that food neophobia was a significant variable explaining variance for the following factors of food tourism: Dine Local, Purchase Local and Dine Elite. Hence, hypothesis 1 is supported. Next, variety-seeking significantly explained variance for: Dine Local. Therefore, Hypothesis 2 is supported. Further, hedonic consumption significantly explained variance for: Dine Local and Dine Elite. Hence hypothesis 3 is supported. Finally, identity affirmation explained variance in Purchase Local. Thus, hypothesis 4 is supported.

V. CONCLUSIONS

The current study was launched to fulfill the

| Table 8 | Result of the Regression Analysis of the Conceptual Variables Explaining Dine at a Fancy Restaurant |
|---------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------
| **Variable** | **Unstandardized Regression Coefficient** | **Standardized Regression Coefficient (β̂)** | **t** | **P value** |
| Constant | 3.390 | 0.624 | 5.436 | 0.000 |
| Identity Affirmation | −0.118 | 0.083 | −0.109 | −1.421 | 0.157 |
| Variety Seeking | 0.052 | 0.089 | 0.049 | 0.583 | 0.561 |
| Food Neophobia | −0.489 | 0.095 | −0.454 | −5.162 | 0.000 |
| Hedonic Consumption | 0.234 | 0.056 | 0.295 | 4.195 | 0.000 |
The purpose of gaining further understanding of food tourism and to empirically identify the variables that explain participation in food tourism. The four variables tested to explain participation in food tourism were food neophobia, variety-seeking, hedonism, and identity affirmation. Subsequently, four hypotheses were developed. Because food tourism is presented as a multi-dimensional construct, each dimension was tested for each predictor variables. Research results generally supported the proposed relationships.

Firstly, it was revealed by the multi regression analysis that food neophobia has a negative relationship with Dine Local, Purchase Local, and Dine Elite (dimensions) of food tourism. This finding implies that tourist’s fear of novel foods decrease their initiatives to dine at restaurants serving local cuisines or to attempt local dishes. That is, food neophobia is a impediment for local food in becoming a tourist attraction (Cohen E & Avieli N 2004). Therefore, hypothesis 1 (that food neophobia is negatively related to at least one dimension of food tourism) is supported. It can be concluded that food neophobia is statistically significant in explaining food tourism.

Secondly, positive relationships were found between variety-seeking tendency and Dine Local of food tourism. Positive relations suggest that tourist with higher variety-seeking tendency towards food have higher possibilities to consume local cuisines. In collaboration with the findings of Molz JG (2004), Nield K et al. (2000), and Reynolds PC (1993), the current study's results also conclude that variety-seeking tendency (as a form of cultural experimentation) is significant in explaining participation in food tourism. Thus, hypothesis 2 (that variety-seeking tendency is related to at least one dimension of food tourism) is supported.

Thirdly, hedonic consumption was positively related to Dine Local and Dine Elite of food tourism. This relation imply that tourists with hedonic attitudes towards food are more interested in local cuisines and would more likely consider food as a tourist attraction. Likewise, individuals with hedonic attitudes are more likely to dine at high-class restaurants. This result supports previous studies which found positive relationship between hedonism and food tourism (e.g., Long L 2004; Mitchell R & Hall M 2003; Quann S & Wang N 2003, Telfer DJ & Hashimoto A 2003). Hypothesis 3 (that hedonic consumption attitudes towards food is related to at least one dimension of food tourism) is supported.

Finally, identity affirmation was significantly related with Purchase Local of food tourism. Corresponding with Long L (2004), Molz JG (2004), and Wilson L’s (2004) results, the current study propose that tourists who use food as a social resource to express who they are posses higher possibilities of showing interests in food related activities at the destination. Behaviors such as purchasing local food products as souvenirs are all included as activities that form identity affirmation. Therefore, hypothesis 4 (that identity affirmation is related to at least one dimension of food tourism) is supported.

The conceptual framework that explains food tourism manifest the importance of all four variables (food neophobia, variety-seeking, hedonism, and identity affirmation). Given these findings, two conclusions can be made. Firstly, the fundamental structure of food tourism revolves around the local cuisines. Secondly, the fundamental structure of food tourism thrives on the ability of the destination to provide the tourist with new and different experiences and festivals related to food and culture which can enhance social activities.

Various practical suggestions can be derived
from the results of the study. These suggestions may be helpful to destinations and tourism suppliers who are seeking to develop positioning and marketing strategies for local foods and cuisines. As tourism marketing is increasingly becoming more competitive, destinations continue to pursue creative and unique selling propositions in positioning themselves. It is suggested that there is nothing more unique than the local foods and cuisines in each destinations. Therefore, promotions of local foods is highly recommended.

In further contribution, this study portrays the classes of activities that comprise food tourism. All forms of food businesses such as local restaurants, high class restaurants, local pubs, farmer's markets, shops selling culinary paraphernalia (e.g., utensils, cook books), and even roadside vendors are an integral part of the food tourism experience. This contribution emphasizes the importance of destination marketing organizations and tourist suppliers. According to Wanhill S & Rassing C (2000), food tourism images promoted for the destination were consistent with the tangible food tourism experiences provided by the small and medium enterprises (Wanhill S & Rassing C 2000). Additionally, the role of small local suppliers and producers in operating a well-coordinated set of activities for the betterment of tourist experiences through food trails is substantially important.

The study is focused in exploring the relationships between the independent variables and the dimensions of food tourism. The first limitation of the study is the exploratory nature. The exploratory nature of the study comprises the research with limitations to any exploratory studies. Similar with any empirical generalization, it is essential to cautiously transform the theory to practical terms keeping in mind the limitations assumed in the study. The presented conceptual framework could be practiced as a decision-support tool. However, the researcher must noted that the directional impact of interaction to the relevant measurement variables could be exclusive to each destination.

The second limitation of the study is found in the study sample. The generalization of the results is restrained due to a homogeneous sample. Therefore, future researches concerning in similar fields should consider this limitation.

The field of food tourism is abundant with possibilities. The results of the current study is just the tip of an iceberg with so much more to be investigated. It is advised to future scholars to further explore the role of various tourism and leisure concepts and their influences in explaining food tourism. For example, role of tourist motivational factors (the 'push' and 'pull' factors in food tourism) is a subject which can be studied. Understanding the relative importance of tourist's intrinsic motivation to that of the destination's attribute may enhance the study of food tourism. A different topic of study which may be researched is the role of leisure specialization in explaining the special interest market of food tourism. Previous studies have applied this concept in their explanations of the intensity of participation in leisure activities. Furthermore, the different intensity of participation in food tourism could be analyzed through this concept.

Other suggested area for extensive research is further discussed. The role of authenticity in food tourism, ideal replacements (such as sensation seeking) to explain participation in food tourism, developing a taxonomy of food tourists by segmenting tourists based on participation levels in food tourism, and identification of variables that predict membership in food tourists segments are some suggested areas. Additionally, how socio-demo-
graphic variables effect the levels of participation in food tourism is a recommended area of research.

Finally, the current investigation is an attempt to build theoretical and conceptual foundations for the study of food tourism. This study has contributed to that end.

REFERENCES


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2009년 11월 28일 집 수
2010년 1월 30일 1차 논문수정
2010년 4월 12일 2차 논문수정
2010년 6월 9일 개 개 개 정