EVALUATING PUSH AND PULL FACTORS IN GASTRONOMY TOURISM DESTINATION DECISION—THE CASE OF AMISH COUNTRY

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EVALUATING PUSH AND PULL FACTORS IN GASTRONOMY TOURISM DESTINATION DECISIONS – THE CASE OF AMISH COUNTRY (37 pp.)

The purpose of this study was to examine the effects of push and pull factors and what influences visitors’ decisions to visit gastronomy attractions compared and other (non-gastronomy) attractions at a particular destination. The researchers wanted to prove that in the case of Amish country in Ohio, push factors will be more influential when decisions related to visiting various attraction were made by the tourist and that all the gastronomic and non-gastronomic attractions could be grouped together distinctively.

Survey questionnaires were distributed to visitors in Amish country for this study. A total of 185 surveys were used for the analysis. After conduction a paired t test, correlational analysis and an explanatory factor analysis, the results proved that pull motives were more significant when it came to destination attraction decision and that gastronomic attraction could be divided into two very exclusive sub categories.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would first like to thank my thesis advisor Dr. Aviad Israeli of Kent State University. The door to his office was always open whenever I ran into a trouble spot or had a question about my research or writing. He consistently allowed this paper to be my own work, but steered me in the right direction whenever he thought I needed it.

I would also like to thank the expert members of my committee, Dr. Philip Wang and Dr. Ning-Kuang Chuang, who were involved in the whole process of this research. Without their passionate participation and input, the validation survey could not have been successfully conducted.

Finally, I must express my very profound gratitude to my family for providing me with unfailing support and continuous encouragement throughout my years of study and through the process of researching and writing this thesis. This accomplishment would not have been possible without them. Thank you.
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Tourism is one of the largest industries in the world. According to the United Nations World Tourism Organization’s website (UNWTO Tourism Highlights, 2015), there has been a gradual increase in the volume of the tourism over the years. Quan and Wang (2004) found that food could be a main attraction or experience for tourists and the term “Gastronomic Tourism” came into being.

The word gastronomy is derived from Greek gastros, meaning stomach, and gnomos, meaning knowledge or law. Culinaria, on the other hand, is a term often used in the context of gastronomy that describes a region’s dishes, foods, and food preparation techniques, which gives rise to its distinctive cuisine (Kivela and Crotts, 2006). Gastronomy tourism is defined as a type of tourism in which the main objective is to explore and enjoy local delicacies, and gain memorable culinary experiences in the whole process (Horng & Tsai, 2012).

The purpose of this study is to investigate the characteristics of gastronomy tourism by evaluating the impact of push and pull factors (Crompton, 1979) on selection of attractions at a destination. The analysis will focus on the Amish Country and the German Kitchen dining attractions as a case example.

Tourism Development Motivations

Tourism development is acknowledged as an important factor for economic growth in rural and suburban areas. In the case of a national economy going through depression, tourism growth is regarded as a reasonable economic choice for regional
economic development. Developing tourism allows rural areas to take advantage of their unique tourism-related resources (Yang & Fick, 2014). Yang and Fik (2014) analyzed the development of the tourism industry by focusing on certain factors that help stimulate regional tourism flows and revenues. These factors include the number and size of tourist attractions, the extent of the supporting infrastructure, the rate of regional economic expansion, the volume of international trade, and events associated with various destinations. Many economies all over the world are looking to develop tourism attractions with a revenue potential, employment opportunities, and the development of a consistent image for their region. Gastronomy tourism is one potential feature which has helped such areas all over the world in this aspect.

**Importance of Gastronomy Tourism**

Local or authentic food contributes a great deal to destination branding and competitiveness. These qualities are necessary from a tourism development and a destination marketing perspective (Ignatov & Smith, 2006; Okumus et al., 2007). Kivela and Crotts (2006) and Okumus et al. (2013) highlighted that local food can be one of the main factors that tourists will consider in their destination decision process. Food can be used to generate the unique selling points of a destination. Kivela and Crotts (2006) wrote that, consumption of food is a pleasurable sensory experience, hence the pleasure factor or the “feel good” factor as a result of food consumption at a destination is a “pull factor” (Crompton, 1979) and a marketing and merchandising tool that should not be underestimated by destination marketers. Gastronomy Tourism has a worldwide reputation as niche marketing in the tourism industry, and destinations are making
progress on the potential to promote their cuisine as a unique tourism product (Ab Karim & Chi, 2010). When investigating the importance of gastronomy tourism in China, Chen and Huang (2016) found that, it is critical for destination marketers to stress the vital role of food tourism from the demand side. Furthermore, destination marketers should develop effective marketing strategies based on gastronomy tourism by carefully evaluating the needs, expectations, and behavior of tourists.

Previous research (Hall & Sharpies, 2003; Long, 2004; Quan & Wang, 2004) showed that different destinations have focused on local food as a significant tourist attraction. As culinary tourism gains popularity, more destinations are offering culinary attractions to compete with other popular gastronomic destinations (Horng & Tsai, 2012). For example, Canadian Tourism Commission improved the relationship between the national tourism image and cuisine by inculcating and promoting culinary tourism activities such as food festivals or wine festivals. Studies conducted in other countries, such as Croatia and South Africa, also show that consumers are suggesting to develop local cuisines or food related activities in tourist attractions (Horng & Tsai, 2012). Ab Karim and Chi (2010) compared various images of destinations and proposed that in order to use food as the main attraction and develop marketing strategies focused on food, it is important that the culinary destination marketers identify the destination image shared by visitors. This image and the factors that it includes can attract more potential visitors who are interested in trying different, unique, or strange foods.
Segmenting Gastronomic Tourists

The literature of gastronomic tourism includes different topics such as the relationship between culture and gastronomy (Bernard & Dominguez, 2000; Long, 2004; Scarpato, 1999), strategies for planning and marketing products related to gastronomy or gastronomic tourism regions (Hashimoto & Telfer, 2006; Sharples, 2003), and strategies for developing cuisine attraction (Cohen & Avieli, 2004; Fields, 2002).

Motivators are internal or external factors which attract or direct a person’s behavior (Maria, 2014). Dann (1977) proposed that in any kind of travel decision, there are two types of factors—push and pull. Push factors are internal to the tourist and are responsible for the desire to travel, urging the tourist to make that decision. Pull factors are external and are related with the destination attributes leading to a destination decision.

Crompton (1979) listed that in case of travelers, the push motives were escape, relaxation, prestige, self-exploration, regression, enhancement of kinship relationships, and facilitation of social interaction. The pull motivators were novelty and education. Many studies have relied on these motives to understand and measure the level of effect each or some of these have on the various decisions like destination choice, food related behavior and lodging options while on a vacation.

Destination Decision in Tourism

In the process of destination selection, the first step is the visitor’s need (or motivation) to visit the destination. This need or motivation may be triggered by an internal stimuli or it could be that an external stimulus. After the stage of need
recognition, the next stage includes searching for information. This state may encourage the consumer to actively search for information and it may heighten their attention to relevant information sources including advertising. It is vital that the marketers understand this process and identify the customers’ needs and sources of information, if they want to influence the destination decision process (Gartner, 1993).

**Purpose of Research**

The above discussion suggested that gastronomic tourism had a potential to promote a destination’s attractiveness and economic potential. Destination marketers should actively seek to understand the factors which can lead to an influx of gastronomic tourists to their region. The purpose of this study is to evaluate the importance of push and pull factors in motivating visitors to experience gastronomy attractions at a destination. The analysis will be conducted in a specific setting of the Amish Country destination in Ohio with its unique gastronomy setting of German Kitchen dining. The findings will demonstrate how to evaluate push and pull factors and their influence on gastronomic decisions and attraction selection.
CHAPTER II
LITERATURE REVIEW

Gastronomic Tourism and/or Culinary Tourism is one of the upcoming and promising sectors in the tourism industry. It has been defined by Hall and Sharples (2003) as “an experiential trip to a gastronomic region, for recreational or entertainment purposes, which includes visits to primary and secondary producers of food, gastronomic festivals, food fairs, events, farmers’ markets, cooking shows and demonstrations, tastings of quality food products or any tourism activity related to food.” One can understand from this definition that gastronomy tourism is essentially an activity in which one goes to and consumes food from a certain region or place. It has also been discussed by Finkelstein (1989), Johns and Clarke (2001), and Kivela and Johns (2002) that when a person travels to a place for holiday he tries local cuisine which may develop memories and feelings that are a part of the whole holiday experience. The International Culinary Tourism Association (ICTA) (2006) defines culinary tourism as dining while on vacation and as “something every visitor does.” However, research has shown that gastronomic experience is much more than that.

Long (2004) defined culinary tourism as experiencing and participating in the food habits of other people which include but are not limited to consumption, preparation, and presentation of food items. While gastronomy tourism is not widely regarded as an independent branch of tourism, it cannot be argued that it is an indispensable part of the biggest and ever growing tourism industry. Visitors not only
consume the local cuisine at a destination, they also purchase recipes and cultural baggage that make gastronomy an ideal product for tourist consumption (Fields, 2002).

Customer Motivations

Studies indicate that in most cases the key or the dominant factor motivating gastronomy tourism is the experience of consuming local foods and beverages (Kivela and Crotts, 2006; Telfer and Wall, 2000). According to Fields (2002) and McIntosh et al. (1995) motivating factors for experiencing foods and beverages of a particular place can be put into 4 categories. These are ‘physical motivators’, ‘cultural motivators’, ‘interpersonal motivators’, and ‘status and prestige motivators’.

Physical motivators refer to the refreshment of a person’s body and mind (Kim et al., 2009). Tasting local food from a region, thereby trying a new flavor can be termed a physical motivator as stated by Fields (2002). Cultural motivator, as explained by McIntosh et al. (1995) is something which will not only result in the enhanced knowledge of a person for a particular region but also a new kind of experience. In the case of gastronomy tourism, trying the local cuisine can be a cultural motivator because a person stands to gain both in terms of knowledge and experience (Fields, 2002). Interpersonal motivators relate to people’s desire to escape from daily routine, through meeting new people, and spending time with family and friends (McIntosh et al.,1995). Status and prestige motivators are associated with self- esteem and the need for recognition (McIntosh et al., 1995). All of these studies show that gastronomic tourism is enjoyed not only by food enthusiasts but also by families, hinting at the vast scope of this tourism niche.
**Marketing Strategy and Economic Impact**

Food is a reflection of the region’s culture and it’s people. It is therefore an ideal product to offer as a destination attraction and has many possibilities to be used as a marketing asset (Quan and Wang, 2004). In their study, Du Rand and Heath (2006) explained that destinations could use food as a means for establishing a competitive advantage in their marketing strategy. In a study on the tourism market in Hong Kong and Turkey, Okumus, Okumus, and McKercher (2007) found that both these destinations included gastronomy in their tourism marketing strategy. However, there were differences between the destinations based on the availability of destination image, market positioning, and product diversity. Marketing for any tourist destination was strongly influenced by the culinary uniqueness of that particular destination. The authors hypothesized that a destination like Hong Kong was perceived as a more happening, multi-cultural, and high-end urban destination, inculcating both Asian and western cultures into its cuisine. Whereas, for a destination like Turkey where the sun, sea and sand tourism is the main focus, guests usually go for that “new place” charm. After the initial appeal is gone, the destinations may have to market themselves on the basis of low cost to have more business.

Some of the issues related to gastronomic tourism marketing are the same as any other field of tourism—the number of visitors, and their level of involvement. When doing a study on food festivals, Maria (2014) found that for marketing purposes, there should be multiple ways of connecting the festival to the online space, such as using social networking sites. Presenting food attractions through travel agents and guides is
also extremely important, as many people that visit a tourist destination may not be computer savvy. Further, to increase number of guests, food festivals should be endorsed by national level government organizations and represented at international exhibitions. Additionally, local community and cultural associations that organize such events should also branch out and cooperate with foreign associations. Horng and Tsai (2012) concluded in a study that all organizations related to culinary tourism must continuously grow professional talent and they should effectively use their human resources to ensure that all strategies are implemented properly. If culture, history, and gastronomy are used for marketing, then it will help in building a positive image of the destination and can leave a unique and lasting impression in the minds of visitors. According to Gendzheva (2014), for new strategies of advertising postmodern destinations, it is unthinkable that a destination would not mention the uniqueness and quality of local cuisine. Hence, suggesting an urgent need to rethink marketing strategies in this area.

According to Ignatov and Smith (2006), from almost all of the activities in which tourists partake, consuming food is something that they cannot ignore. Gastronomy of a place is the one thing that can actually be a defining factor for the length of stay, off-season sales and increased spending ability. Tourists have the choice of making food the main agenda of their travel and this provides an avenue for increased income for the local population. In developing countries, tourism is a big contributor in the general development (Aslan, 2015). A recent study in Mexico showed how traditional cuisine, through the establishment of an annual cooking event established in 2004, played a
positive role in tourism development as well as had a positive impact on the local culture and economy (Giampiccoli & Kalis, 2012).

Gastronomy tourism can have a significant economic impact on the region and that is why it is often considered a strategic marketing tool to efficiently and effectively support destination management and marketing (Sotiriadis, 2015). If done properly, culinary tourism attractions will improve and that would act as a boost for the local economy. Gastronomic tourism is vast and therefore to understand it completely there needs to be a detailed discussion of the various avenues of gastronomic tourism development.

**Scope of Gastronomic Tourism**

To understand the scope of gastronomy tourism as a theme of general tourism, it is important to understand the various events and avenues that can lead to revenue generation. Local food at any destination is what essentially constitutes food tourism attractions, as it is the gateway to the culture of that particular region. Consumers are always attracted to such places, which presents an opportunity for them to indulge in that particular culture. Some of the consumption opportunities as described by Smith and Xiao (2008) are facilities, activities, events, and organizations.

*Facilities* refers to buildings and land uses associated with food production or preparation as well as distribution, ranging from pick-your-own operations, to food processing operations, to restaurants. Food service operations or various restaurants will be part of facilities, which enhance gastronomic identity of a region. *Activities* include educational opportunities such as attending cooking schools, participating in wine
tastings, and reading of books and magazines devoted to food. Wine tourism especially, is a major part of the culinary tourism. Events includes consumer shows highlighting food products and cooking equipment. According to Maria (2014), out of all of the events and activities related to gastronomic tourism food festivals are the most dominant ones. Organizations include those that serve the interests of culinary tourists or support the development of the culinary tourism market. These include restaurant classification systems that affirm the regional source and quality of foods served in participating restaurants, and quality assurance systems for wine and food.

According to Telfer and Wall (2000) food and eating out on trips and holidays constitutes approximately one-third of all tourist expenditures. In the American market, the percentage of US leisure travelers who travel to learn about unique dining experiences grew from 40% to 51% between 2006 and 2013 (American Culinary Traveler report, 2013).

Current Issues

One of the current issues in gastronomy tourism research is that of sustainability, as destinations become more commercial. The idea behind trying to promote gastronomy tourism as a mode of sustainable development is that it does not involve creating significant infrastructure for attracting visitors to participate in the destination’s cultural reality through cuisine. In this way, the cultural heritage of a place will not be depleted because of development away from their own identity. According to Gendzheva (2014) gastronomic tourists can exhibit their social responsibility during the trip and contribute
to raising the standards of living for the local community through knowingly and deliberately consuming locally produced products.

Other issues relate to preserving regional identity and branding. Both the industry and the government consider it useful and important to develop regional brands as a competitive advantage of a city or destination (Lee & Arcodia, 2011). Lee and Arcodia (2011) discuss how food tourism and food festivals can be used for creating and maintaining the destination’s image and branding. Food festivals can potentially highlight the region’s specialty food. The authors imply that regional food festival organizers and destination marketers need to know about the impacts and characteristics of such festivals in order to effectively build the destination’s brands.

Issues related to destination development are also need addressing. These include spending on food as a major item in the tourist budget, which in total may constitute a pillar of many national and sub-national economies. The estimates are that food and beverages account for as much as a third of overall tourist expenditures (Miler & Cerovic, 2003). Many governments and marketing organizations focus on their unique culture when it comes to attracting revenues through tourism. Food acts as a tool in rural development, which can help stimulate agrarian economies in danger of decline, thereby protecting existing jobs and creating employment.

Gastronomic Tourists

In simple terms, anyone who engages with gastronomy in tourism is a gastronomic tourist. There is however an important factor distinguishing the gastronomic tourist from the tourist who engages in culinary activities during travel. The former is
one who is motivated to travel specifically to engage in culinary/gastronomic tourism activities. The latter is one who engages in culinary tourism while traveling, but for whom culinary experiences are not necessarily the motivating factor for the trip.

In research done by Ignatov and Smith (2006) using data obtained from the Canadian Travel Activities and Motivations Study, three segments were defined: visitors who participate only in food-related activities, those who participate only in wine related activities, and those who participate in both. The food segment was the largest of the three, with nearly 25% of respondents fitting this category. Yun et al. (2011) segmented 781 tourists in two categories. First was a combination of the level of participation in culinary experiences and food-related activities. These were further divided into four distinct segments: deliberate, opportunistic, accidental, and uninterested culinary tourists. The second segmentation was based on attitudes toward food-related behaviors at home and when traveling, and three culinary tourist groups were highlighted. These groups were titled culinary-balanced, culinary-oriented, and familiarity-oriented tourists.

If a food enthusiast goes to an ethnic restaurant to try something new and different, it would be considered a part of culinary tourism as well. Chez (2011) wrote, “If a trip to the zoo is a safe way to interact with animals behind bars, a trip to an ‘ethnic’ restaurant is analogous to taking a wild animal safari—a way to interact with the ‘wild’ ‘ethnic’ other from the relatively safe vantage point of paying customer.” Just by going to an ethnic restaurant, a person can experience foods from that particular region which can say many things about the culture and the history of a place. Giampiccoli and Kalis (2012) show that through various community based tourism projects all over the world,
people in particular regions are successful in developing gastronomic tourism, helping it become an important catalyst for improving the local economy. Gastronomic tourism much more than traveling to a new destination and trying local cuisine.

**Destination Decisions**

Choosing a destination is a process which involves many factors. Tourist destinations must consider the importance of food in the unique cultural experience that the tourist is searching for. According to López-Guzmán and Sánchez-Cañizares (2012), in order to promote a tourist destination through its local cuisine, a series of basic features are necessary. For one, the destination must clearly differentiate its culinary resources. It must have its own cuisine recognized by tourists from all over the world. The destination must have a large number of establishments where tourists can enjoy local gastronomy. The authors concluded that although on some occasions cuisine is not the main motivation, it is still a key element in the destination decision.

Kivela and Crotts (2005) showed that gastronomy can be used as a tool for destination marketing. It has also been shown that if a guest’s expectations related to gastronomy are met then they have a high level of intention of revisiting. Ab Karim and Chi (2010) found that there is a significant relationship between destinations’ food image and travelers’ intention to visit the destination. Furthermore, they found that different factors emerged as significant in affecting travelers’ intentions. They compared the image of France, Italy and Thailand and found that dining and food-related activities were factors for travelers’ intention to visit. Italy had the highest rating in food or local cuisine compared to the other two countries, which may account for travelers’ highest
interests in visiting Italy. For Thailand, dining and cuisine significantly influenced travelers’ intent to visit the country. It can be seen that even for the destination popular for culinary tourism the reasons to visit can be different.

Research into the potential visitors’ lifestyles can be helpful in understanding their destination choice and food related behavior. These personal factors include time and budget constraints which directly influence on destination choice. Interpersonal factors are the ones which involve the relationships with others such as friends or family. Kim, Goh, and Yuan (2010) found that curiosity and variety in the food were factors that attracted tourists to gastronomic food events.
CHAPTER III
RESEARCH PURPOSE AND METHODOLOGY

Pervious research has shown that gastronomy tourism is a significant tourism experience (Long, 1998) and that destination decisions are effected by food choice (Hjalager, 2004; Henderson, 2009; Björk & Kauppinen-Räisänen, 2016). The purpose of this study is to add to this body of knowledge and to evaluate how visitors make decisions about visiting a tourist destination which has gastronomic attractions.

This study evaluates the importance of push and pull factors (Crompton, 1979) in destination gastronomy decisions. The study evaluates what influences visitors’ decisions to visit gastronomy attractions compared and other (non- gastronomy) attractions. The findings can provide insights about the motivators to visit a destination with gastronomy attractions. In addition, the findings can be useful for developing culinary attractions in tourism destinations.

Survey Hypotheses

The current study evaluates the relative impact of pull and push factors on visitors’ decisions to visit gastronomy attractions in the destination. The assumption is that push factors will have a stronger influence on the decision to visit gastronomy attractions, compared with pull factors. Therefore, hypothesis 1 states: H1: push factors will be considered more important than pull factors among tourists in a site with gastronomy attractions.

Another assumption is that tourists who are motivated by push factors to visit a destination for gastronomy motivations, will tend to visit more gastronomy attractions
than tourists without push factor motivations. Therefore, hypothesis 2 states: H2: visitors who are motivated by push factors will visit more gastronomy attractions compared with visitors who are not motivated by push factors.

In general, destinations will have a variety of attractions including gastronomy and non-gastronomy attractions. In such sites, it will be important to evaluate if intentions to visit the different attractions are grouped according to gastronomy or non-gastronomy motivations. To investigate this issue, hypothesis 3 states: H3: when intending to visit attractions at a destination, visitors will group gastronomy preferences such that gastronomy attractions and non-gastronomy attractions are grouped separately.

**Amish Country as a Case Example**

Amish country is an area in the state of Ohio, USA which encompasses 3-5 counties including Holmes, Tuscarawas, Coshocton and Wayne Counties. Approximately 40,000 Amish people live and work in this area. Holmes county has the highest number of Amish population. The Amish people live in homes without electricity or telephones, ride in horse buggies and wear very simple, homemade clothing. They chose this way of life because they did not want to conform the outside world. The Amish came to the United States in search of religious freedom, as did many people. In Europe, in the 16th century, there was an Anabaptist movement. They were called Anabaptists because they did not baptize infants as the Catholics did. The Amish were seen as the radicals of the Swiss Protestant Reformation. Between 50 and 100 Amish families arrived in America in the 1700s, settling mostly in Pennsylvania. Many others followed in the 19th century and spread into Ohio. ("Who Are the Amish?", n.d.).
Amish restaurants feature “Pennsylvania Dutch” and “Amish-style” cooking. Amish food typically is very filling, and not low-fat. (“What do Amish eat”, n.d.). Almost all Amish have gardens in their homes for producing fresh ingredients to be used in the cuisine. Some have their own livestock and egg farms. The Pennsylvania Dutch style of cooking consists of many preparations like the pot pies, butter noodles, chicken corn soup, varieties of bologna, chow-chow, chipped beef gravy, beets, apple butter, and other foods based on staples such as pork, potatoes, and cabbage. Baking is a big part of the Amish cuisine including pies, cookies, cakes, and a wide variety of breads. Sundays are reserved for church in the Amish community. All businesses are closed on Sunday. Amish country has been one of the top tourist attractions in Ohio. It is known for its unique cuisine and hence it was chosen as the site for this study.

**Methodology**

A survey was designed to evaluate the relative importance of different pull and push factors on the decision to visit gastronomy and non-gastronomy destination attractions (Appendix A). It consisted of three main parts. The first part included 10 statements adopted from Crompton (1979). Based on the various factors enlisted by Crompton (1979) statements were designed to reflect five push factors and five pull factors. For each statement, participants were asked to report their agreement with the statement using a seven-point Likert-type scale. The second part listed the most popular attractions in the destination including four gastronomy attractions and seven other attractions. Participants were asked to report their intentions to visit the specific place
during their current visit using a seven-point Likert-type scale. Finally, the last part included demographic questions.

**Data Collection**

After receiving IRB approval, data was collected through a paper survey distributed in Amish Country. The survey was distributed to visitors in the destination. Visitors in the context of this study were referred to as someone who was not a resident of Amish country. A visitor or a perspective participant for this study could be anyone who had made a trip to experience the various attractions at the Amish country, irrespective for the distance travelled. As the Amish people are religious, Saturday and Sunday were avoided for the purpose of data collection. Three days, August 17, 22, and 23 were selected for collecting data. The researchers went out to various attractions at the destination like the famous cheese factory and chocolate factory or the flea market to collect data. Participants were asked if they were visitors or local Amish country residents before they were asked to give their inputs for the study. The survey was kept anonymous to ensure willingness to participate. A total of 203 surveys were collected.

**Data Analysis**

Out of the 203 surveys collected, 186 had no missing data and were included in the analysis. Statistical analyses were conducted using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) for Windows Version 23.0.

Hypothesis 1 stated that push factors will be considered more important than pull factors among tourists in a site with gastronomy attractions. The mean and standard deviation for the sum of all the push factor and the sum of all the pull factors appears in
Table 1. A paired t-test was employed to test this hypothesis and found significant difference between the push and pull factors’ means ($t = -2.223, df = 185, p = 0.027$). However, the difference suggests that pull factors were considered more important than push factors as motivators to visit Amish Country. This finding suggested that hypothesis 1 was not supported.

Table 1

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</tbody>
</table>

Hypothesis 2 stated that visitors who are motivated by push factors will visit more gastronomy attractions compared with visitors who are not motivated by push factors. To test this hypothesis, a push-pull index was developed by using the sum of all the ten questions from the survey that included five push and five pull questions. All the push factors used the original Likert scale numbers and for the pull factors the number were changed to negative values. In this way, the extreme push case was when a participant marked 7 (strongly disagree) for all five push items which resulted in a score of 35 and also marked -1 (strongly disagree) for all five pull factors which resulted in a score of -5. Added together 35-5 resulted in a score of 30 for the extreme case of push motivations. Similarly, the extreme pull case was when a participant marked -7 (strongly disagree) for
all five pull items which resulted in a score of -35 and also marked 1 (strongly disagree) for all five push factors which resulted in a score of 5. In this case, adding -35+5 resulted in a score of -30 for the extreme case of pull motivations.

The researchers found that pull factors had a higher mean than push factors (Table 1), and the push-pull index was slightly skewed to the negative side with a mean of -0.56 and a standard deviation of 3.431. Testing H2 was done by evaluating the Pearson correlation between the push-pull index and the intention to visit each of the gastronomy attractions in the destination. In Amish Country the gastronomy attractions included: local cheese factories, local chocolate factories, local cafes and bakeries, and local Amish restaurants.

The Pearson Correlation tests are provided in Table 2. All the correlations were not significant for $p < 0.05$ suggesting that there is no statistically significant relationship between increased push motivation to visit Amish Country and the decision to visit gastronomy attractions in the destination. Therefore, hypothesis 2 was not supported.

Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pearson Correlation</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local cheese factories</td>
<td>-0.086</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local chocolate factories</td>
<td>0.050</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local cafes and bakeries</td>
<td>0.056</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Amish restaurants</td>
<td>0.022</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>186</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Hypothesis 3 stated that the preference to visit attractions at a destination would be grouped according to gastronomy preferences such that the gastronomy attractions were grouped together and non-gastronomy attractions were grouped together. A Principle Component Analysis (PCA) was used as the exploratory factor analysis technique. Table 3 provides the attraction grouping. Three factors were observed: The first factor included only non-gastronomic attractions including stores, lodging, outdoor activities and cultural events. The factor accounted for 27.98% of the variance. The second factor included gastronomy dine-in attractions (bakeries and restaurants) and an attraction that may include consumption of food or food products (flea market). The second factor accounted for 17.68% of the variance. The third factor included attractions with a primary focus on learning and observing. These include two gastronomy attractions (chocolate and cheese factories) and one which may have some gastronomy content offered for observation (area museums). The last factor accounted for 17.54% of the variance.

Taken as a whole, the Principle Component Analysis model was able to explain 63.20% of the variance. The findings provide general support to Hypothesis 3 suggesting that that the preference to visit attractions at Amish Country can be grouped according to gastronomy preferences. Gastronomy attractions were grouped together into two separate factors and non-gastronomy attractions are grouped together and separately from gastronomy attractions.
Table 3

*Principle Component Analysis, Rotated Component Matrix, for Visitors Intentions to Visit Attractions in Amish Country*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Component 1</th>
<th>Component 2</th>
<th>Component 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Museums in the area</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td><strong>0.79</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local cheese factories</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td><strong>0.83</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local chocolate factories</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td><strong>0.76</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local furniture stores</td>
<td><strong>0.69</strong></td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>0.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local hardware stores</td>
<td><strong>0.75</strong></td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>0.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local artisan stores</td>
<td><strong>0.63</strong></td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>0.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The flea market</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td><strong>0.85</strong></td>
<td>-0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local cafes and bakeries</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td><strong>0.80</strong></td>
<td>0.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Amish restaurants</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td><strong>0.71</strong></td>
<td>0.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farms in this area</td>
<td><strong>0.65</strong></td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nature and wildlife</td>
<td><strong>0.75</strong></td>
<td>-0.08</td>
<td>0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local bed and breakfast</td>
<td><strong>0.73</strong></td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theatre and cultural events</td>
<td><strong>0.74</strong></td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>0.05</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CHAPTER IV
CONCLUSIONS

The literature review, which provided the concepts and constructs for this study suggested to the researcher that push factors would be more indicative of gastronomic intentions. Hence, Hypothesis 1 stated that Push factors would be considered more important than pull factors among tourist in a site with gastronomy attractions. The data analysis found that Hypothesis 1 was not supported.

Hypothesis 2 stated that visitors who are motivated by push factors would visit more gastronomy attractions compared with visitors who are not motivated by push factors. This hypothesis was not supported as well and the analysis found that there was no statistically significant relationship between increased push motivation to visit Amish Country and the decision to visit gastronomy attractions in the destination.

Both the hypotheses 1 and 2 were not supported. This finding deserves interpretation. A possible explanation is that the destination itself was the cause for these results. The study was based in Amish country in Ohio. This region is one of the most popular and well known tourist destination in the state of Ohio. It is heavily marketed and this massive marketing includes a variety of attractions including the theatre, various hardware stores, furniture stores, the flea market, museums and gastronomic attractions.

Pull factors are the ones related to the destination itself. In this case, it may be that because of the extensive marketing efforts and a history of repeat visitors, the pull factors were more influential. Push factors were not found to be more motivating owing to the reason that the visitors at this destination do not visit just to experience the unique
gastronomic attractions in this region but they happen to experience it those as a part of their visit to this destination.

Hypothesis 3 stated that the preference to visit attractions at a destination could be grouped according to gastronomy preferences such that the gastronomy attractions are grouped together and non-gastronomy attractions are grouped together. The analysis in this case supported the hypothesis but only partly. The exploratory factor analysis found that while attractions were grouped into gastronomy and non-gastronomy attractions, the gastronomic attractions themselves were divided between two separate factors. The difference between the two factors could be explained as attractions that offer gastronomic products for consumption (restaurant or cafes) and the second factor could be the attractions that offer the gastronomic product but only for learning or observational purpose (Museum or the chocolate factory).

Factors 2 and 3 provide an interesting insight on gastronomy tourism. Fields (2002) wrote that culinary tourism focuses on how food from a place represents its unique culture. He suggested that visitors not only consume the local cuisine at a destination, they also purchase recipes and cultural baggage that make gastronomy an ideal product for tourist consumption (Fields, 2002). Hypothesis 3 and the factor analysis provide evidence that gastronomy attractions offer visitors a multi-dimensional experience. One group of attractions includes cafes and restaurants which serve ready to consume products but provide very limited knowledge about the products’ cultural and historical origins. Another group of gastronomy attractions includes the cheese and
chocolate factories, which provide the visitor with all the knowledge about the history, culture, and the process of producing the destination specific food and drinks.

The results of the factor analysis done for the third hypotheses can also be interpreted in another sense. The second and third group while include all of the gastronomy attractions they are divided by the relationship of the product to the Amish heritage. The second group included cheese factory, chocolate factories and the museum in the region. Not all three attractions are part of the Amish cuisine historically; these attractions are popular because of the high quality of the product, which is sold. The other group of attraction included restaurants, cafes and flea market. All of these attractions are serving authentic and historical Amish cuisine, which is a part of the heritage of the Amish culture. This establishes the value of inculcating culture and heritage into the cuisine and the survey inputs also prove that the visitors were able to appreciate the difference between the two groups.

**Recommendations and Suggestions for Future Research**

The findings of this study shed a light on the visitor motivations to visit gastronomic attractions at Amish country in Ohio. There can be some take away for destination marketers in Amish Country. The results here show that the marketing efforts are successful in generating strong pull factors which motivate visitors to visit the destination. Marketers can further focus their marketing and advertising efforts on trying to trigger the push or internal motivating factors, which can potentially attract more visitors. They need to market themselves to potential visitors in a way that the unique gastronomy of this destination becomes a motivating factor for them. In order to achieve
this, marketers need to pay more attention on portraying the compelling history of the region. This can motivate visitors who are interested in history to visit the destination, learn more about it, and experience its gastronomy attractions first-hand. To attract more tourists, marketers can focus on the historical dimensions of Amish food products and on the unique cuisine offered here.

This study also gave an important differentiating element among gastronomic attractions at the same destination by focusing on attractions offering a consumable gastronomic product, and attractions that offer a gastronomic product for observation or learning. Marketers can take this into notice and should try to engage in niche marketing strategies that would focus on the individual segments of visitors.

**Summary**

The aim of this paper was to contribute to the existing body of literature on gastronomy tourism. It opens up avenues for future research. While it was suggested by the findings that the visitors were motivated more by the pull factors, it does not guarantee that the results would be same in other destinations. Future research can be conducted at the other destinations, which are also known for unique cuisine and culture to see if the results of this study can be generalized for such destinations. The demographic differences can also be studied to understand the visitor intentions on a deeper and detailed level.
APPENDIX A

GASTRONOMIC TOURISM QUESTIONNAIRE
Appendix A

Gastronomic Tourism Questionnaire

Please select a number on the scale from (1) Strongly Disagree to (7) Strongly Agree in reference to the following statements:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Visiting this destination and consuming local food is a refreshing experience</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can experience and appreciate the Amish culture by consuming the local cuisine</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can break my daily routine and dine at a restaurant in the area</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visiting this destination is a relaxing experience</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I can socially interact with different people</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I like the recreational activities offered in the region</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I like the Amish traditions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>The cuisine options are in my budget</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I like the menu options</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I like the region and the scenery</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please select a number on the scale from (1) Strongly Disagree to (7) Strongly Agree to indicate the intentions to visit the specific place during your current visit:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Museums in the area</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local cheese factories</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local chocolate factories</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local furniture stores</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local hardware stores</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local artisan stores</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The flea market</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local cafes and bakeries</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Amish restaurants</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farms in this area</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nature and wildlife</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Bed and Breakfast</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theatre and cultural events</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Gender you identify with: [ ] Male [ ] Female
Age: __________ Marital status: [ ] Single [ ] Married
How many people have joined you on this trip? __________

Highest degree earned:
[ ] High school diploma [ ] Associate degree
[ ] College degree (BA) [ ] College degree (MA or above)
REFERENCES


