

Wonhyeoung (Won) Choe with Advising from Dr. Chin-Hsun (Ken) Tsai

Investigating Sport Event Attendees' Perceptions: An Application of the ZMET

Introduction

- The sport event tourism is one of the fast-developing industry in the U.S. Each local sport event actively utilizes the regional resources to develop the unique characteristics.
- In previous studies were limited to focus on attendee's loyalty in sport events by using survey questionnaires. There are no prior studies examined to elicit attendee's unconscious thoughts.
- This study is to explore the relation between the sport event brand and the attendee's perceptions.
- The Register's Annual Great Bicycle Ride Across Iowa (RAGBRAI) is one of the biggest events in Iowa and has more than 8,500 participants. Each year, cyclists from around the globe arrive in Iowa for a seven-day journey across the state and a celebration of biking, music, food, and warm hospitality.

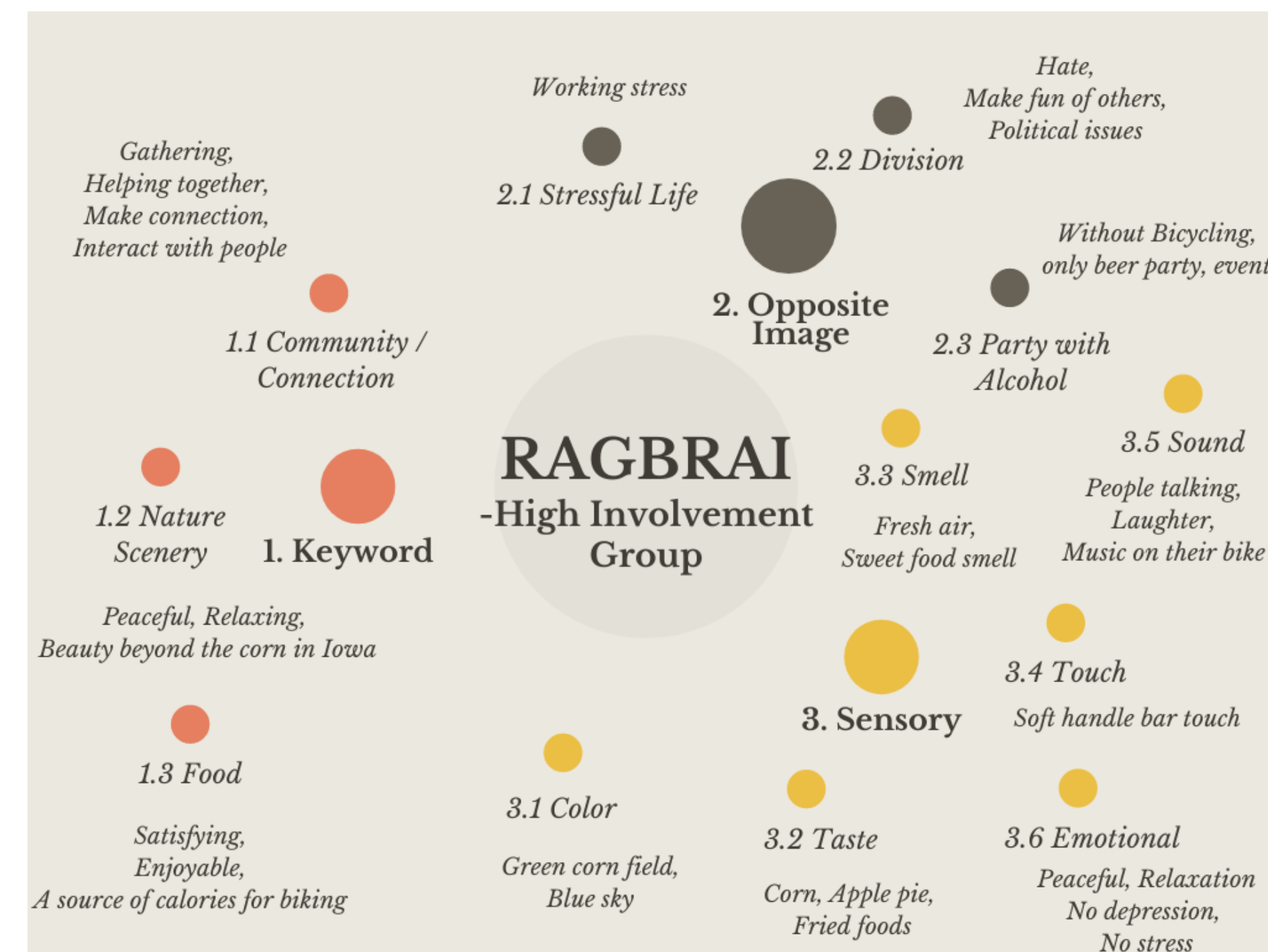
Objectives

- Explore High involvement and Low involvement group of RAGBRAI bicycle event.
- Elicit unconscious thoughts and perceptions about RAGBRAI bicycle event from two groups.

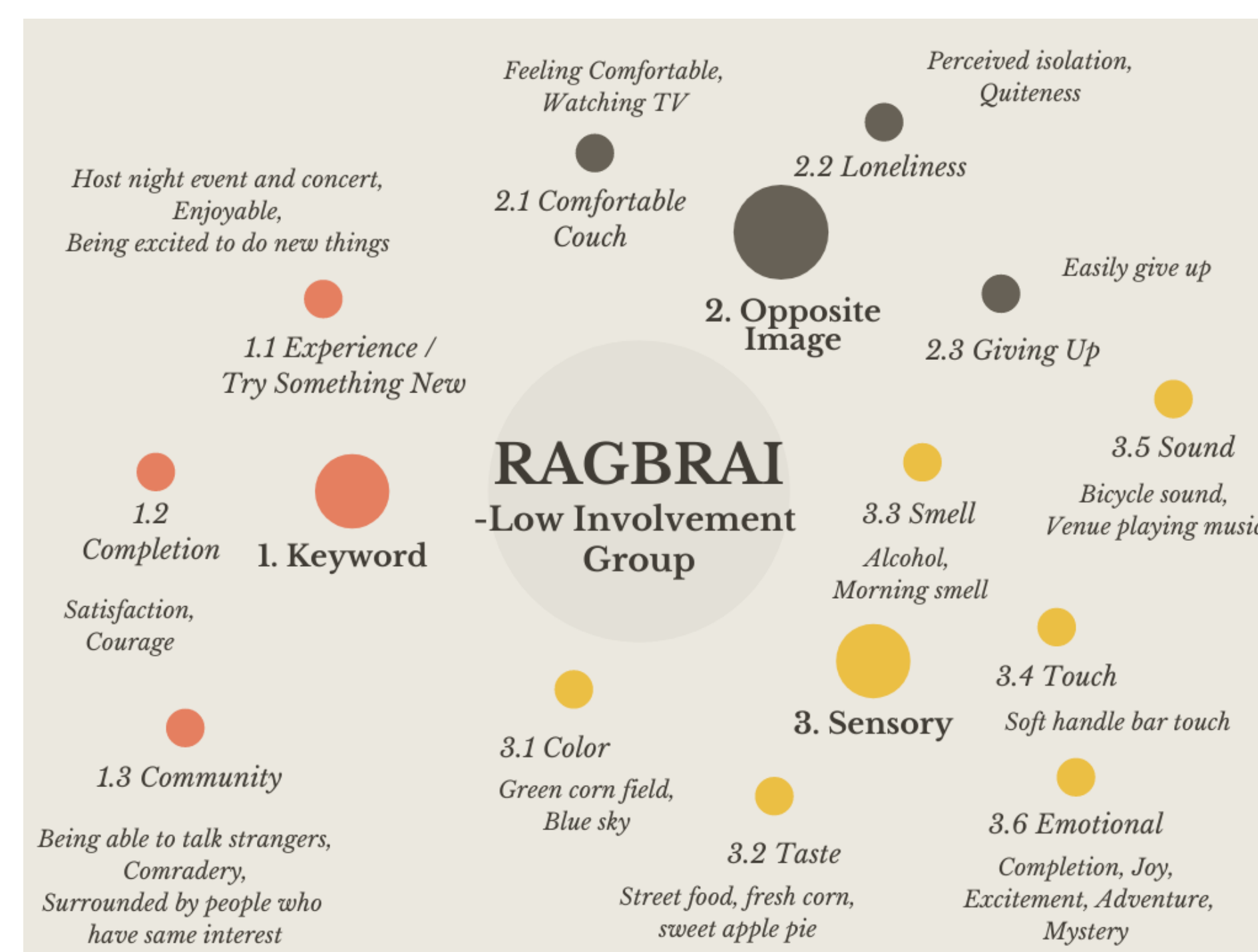
Methodology

- 6 interviews – however, focused to elicit participants' unconscious thoughts. Viewed through a phenomenological lens, personal construct theory served as the theoretical framework which used the Zaltman Metaphor Elicitation Technique (ZMET) for data collection and analysis.
- Zoom Video – was used to conduct interviews, recording an audio and video file. Files were stored on a password-protected computer.
- Participants designated a number – to ensure that personal identifiers are not revealed during the analysis and write up of findings.

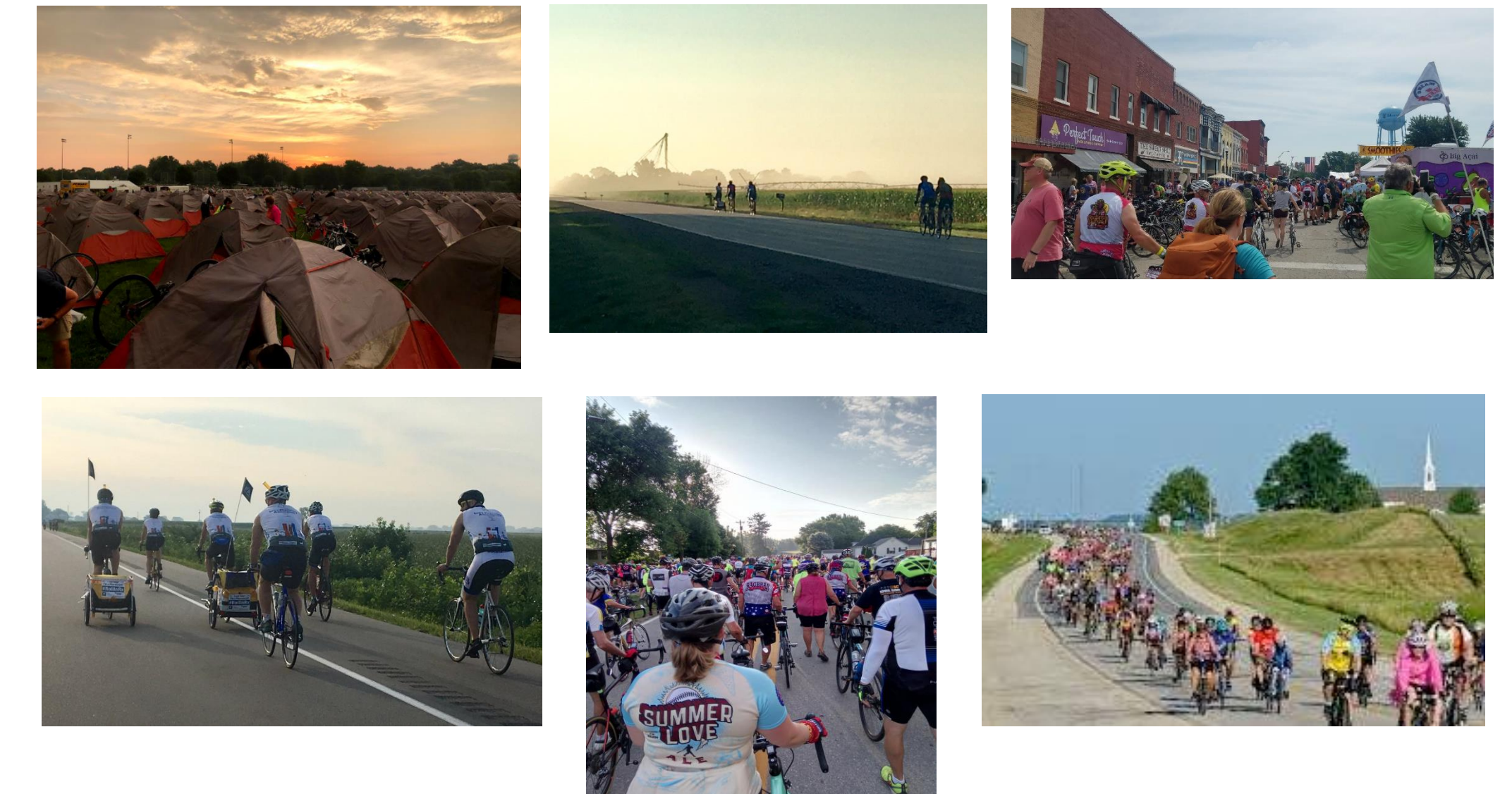
Results



< Figure 1 > Mind-map of high involvement group



< Figure 2 > Mind-map of low involvement group



< Figure 3 > RAGBRAI's most representative images from participants

Findings and Discussion

- 6 Participants: Four high involvement and two low involvement participants.
- High involvement groups - have ridden RAGBRAI more than 7 years and completed up to 5 times of seven-days of full day trip. Average age is 47.
- High involvement groups – regarded RAGBRAI bicycle event as a professional and being able to expand network and knowledge by getting know each others and talk.
- Low involvement groups - have ridden RAGBRAI just one time of seven-days of full day trip. Average age is 22.
- Low involvement groups – Domestic emotional feelings of RAGBRAI sport brand is completion, adventure, curiosity. They more enjoyed each venue host night event than high involvement group.

Conclusions

- Both groups recognized RAGBRAI, bicycle sport event brand has a community feature and enables to expand network and interact with people.
- A significant difference between two group is that high involvement group did not like to be thought just party and the loyalty towards event was more higher than low involvement group.
- However, low involvement group's curiosity towards RAGBRAI was higher and tended to respond RAGBRAI has an adventure and a challengeable characteristic.