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Comparing levels of resident empowerment among two culturally diverse resident populations in Oizumi, Gunma, Japan

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ABSTRACT

While resident empowerment has been a central aspect of the sustainable tourism literature, difficulties of putting the concept into practice have been noted given the heterogeneous nature of communities. “Community” is often divided by kinship, age, gender and ethnicity, and such division may influence the perceptions of empowerment. The goal of this study was to better understand heterogeneous perceptions of empowerment by administering the Resident Empowerment through Tourism Scale within the community of Oizumi, Japan. Oizumi has the highest concentration of Brazilian immigrants in Japan, and the town has embraced “ethnic neighborhood tourism” centered on Brazilian culture as a strategy for economic development. Oizumi’s demographic makeup allowed for testing differences in perceived empowerment between members of the dominant ethnic group (Japanese) and members of the ethnic minority group (Japanese Brazilians). Analysis of 650 completed questionnaires revealed that Brazilians felt more psychologically and socially empowered than Japanese residents, indicating a shift in the balance of power between the ethnic groups. Results also revealed that the political dimension of empowerment was rated relatively low among both groups, suggesting a general lack of opportunities to participate in the planning process. Implications for both practice and theory are presented.

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Introduction

In 2013, after the Japanese national soccer team qualified for the 2014 FIFA World Cup held in Brazil, media exposure of Oizumi dramatically increased because of the high concentration of Brazilians (approximately 15% of the total population) residing in the town. The increased media exposure has brought great attention to the small manufacturing town that has become known as “Little Brazil”.

Despite the high concentration of Brazilian immigrants, it is only recently that the town government began to actively promote Brazilian culture for ethnic neighborhood tourism. Pang and Rath (2007) maintain that, in cities with declining manufacturing industries, an ethnic neighborhood, where one can experience exotic food and entertainment, has become an asset in attracting tourists. Indeed, Oizumi was formerly known as a manufacturing town, estimating 55% of residents used to work to some capacity within the industry (Hamada, 2006). However, with a decline in the manufacturing industry, the town established a tourism bureau in 2007 with hopes of revitalizing the

town's economy. To attract tourists, the town identified Brazilian culture as a unique asset upon which to capitalize (Maruyama & Woosnam, 2015).

The development of tourism in Oizumi coincided with a shift in the trend of tourism development throughout Japan. Tourism development during the postwar decades in Japan largely focused on large-scale resort development until the mid-1990s. However, due to the economic downturn, decentralization, and deindustrialization, a new interest in small-scale, community-based tourism began to emerge (Thompson, 2004). The Japanese Government is now urging communities not traditionally focused on tourism (including Oizumi), to use local assets or resources (i.e. historic buildings, agricultural products, or ethnic neighborhoods) to attract tourists and revitalize their economy (Oie, 2010).

For community-based tourism to be sustainable, the distribution of power to local residents, or "empowerment", is identified as a critical aspect (Cole, 2006a; Ryan, 2002). Empowerment broadly refers to gaining the "mastery over one's affairs" (Rappaport, 1987). Cole (2006a) describes it as the top-end of the community participation ladder. In fact, the prevalence of tourism research concerning the community-based approach speaks to the importance and difficulties of involving the local community in tourism planning and empowering them through the tourism development process (Byrd, 2007; Jamal & Getz, 1995; Ryan, 2002). In Japan, the importance of community involvement has only recently been recognized by the government, having taken place minimally (e.g. Suzuki, 2010; Thompson, 2004). Hiwasaki (2006) illustrates that the management in three Japanese national parks uses a "top-down" style of governance, leaving no room for community participation. Roemer (2007) also shows those who were involved in the planning process for Kyoto's Gion Festival, a major Japanese festival, were exclusively men, and the leaders often inherited their positions from their fathers.

While several barriers for the implementation of community participation in tourism have been identified, including a lack of business knowledge among local residents and scarce financial assistance (Li, 2004; Okazaki, 2008; Scheyvens, 2002), the heterogeneous nature of communities is considered a major barrier to the equal distribution of power (Cole, 2006b; Gallardo & Stein, 2007; Van der Duim, Peters, & Akama, 2006). A "community" is often fractured along lines of kinship, gender, age and ethnicity (Crehan, 1997). Such division, then, may influence who participates in the tourism development process as well as those who are empowered versus those who are not.

The goal of this study is to explore differences in levels of resident empowerment between members of the dominant ethnic group and members of the ethnic minority group; namely Japanese and Brazilian residents in Oizumi Town. Past studies illustrate that minorities are often excluded from the planning process of representing their own culture, while some cases have shown that minority populations gain power through tourism development (e.g. Drew, 2010; Henderson, 2000; Yang & Wall, 2009). However, few studies quantitatively compare the levels of perceived empowerment between different ethnic groups within the same community. Therefore, this study examines whether Japanese and Brazilian residents differ in the levels of perceived empowerment through tourism development centered on Brazilian culture by employing the Resident Empowerment through Tourism Scale (RETS) (Boley & McGehee, 2014). This study has two purposes: (1) to validate the factor structure of the RETS among Japanese and Brazilian residents, and (2) to examine whether confirmed factors from the RETS significantly differ between Japanese and Brazilian residents. If the RETS factors are found to differ among the two ethnic groups, it would provide further credence to view communities as heterogeneous entities in need of tailored tourism development plans that strive to empower all stakeholder groups.

Literature review

Tourism and resident empowerment

The discussion of resident empowerment has long been at the philosophical core of the sustainable tourism literature (Cole, 2006a; Farrelly, 2011; Ramos & Prideaux, 2014; Scheyvens, 1999, 2000). Cole

(2006a) describes the rhetoric associated with resident empowerment as a “mantra” within sustainable tourism, and Sofield (2003) acknowledges that without resident empowerment, sustainable tourism is difficult to obtain. This focus on resident empowerment stems from the recognition by some who maintain that empowerment is the highest rung of the community participation ladder (Arnstein, 1969; Choguill, 1996). Cole (2006a, p. 631) describes empowerment as the “top end of the participation ladder where members of a community are active agents of change and they have the ability to find solutions to their problems, make decisions, implement actions and evaluate their solutions”. Cole’s (2006a) interpretation of empowerment parallels Arnstein’s (1969, p. 216), which places empowerment as the top rung of the citizen participation ladder as she writes that “participation without redistribution of power is an empty and frustrating process for the powerless”.

The resident empowerment literature can be traced back to the broader literature on empowerment found in the disciplines of education (Freire, 1973), development and planning (Friedmann, 1992), and psychology (Perkins & Zimmerman, 1995; Rappaport, 1987). Empowerment’s widespread application across multiple disciplines is noted by Sofield (2003, p. 79) who writes that empowerment has become part of the “popular vernacular” and by authors such as Perkins and Zimmerman (1995) who acknowledge that empowerment has become “a vital construct for understanding the development of individuals, organization and communities”.

While empowerment is well-researched across many disciplines, definitional problems exist (Cattaneo & Chapman, 2010; Hur, 2006). Rappaport (1985, p. 17) writes that “empowerment is a little bit like obscurity; you have trouble defining it but you know it when you see it” and that empowerment is “easy to define in its absences: powerlessness, real or imagined; learned helplessness; alienation; loss of a sense of control over one’s own life. It is more difficult to define positively only because it takes on a different form in different people and contexts” (Rappaport, 1984, p. 3). Despite the recognition of the challenges with defining empowerment, Rappaport (1987, p. 122) goes on to define empowerment in a later article as the ability of “people, organizations, and communities to gain mastery over their affairs”.

Dimensions of empowerment

Although empowerment, in its broadest sense, refers to gaining this “mastery over one’s affairs” (Rappaport, 1987), the concept is considered multidimensional by many (Friedmann, 1992; Ramos & Prideaux, 2014; Scheyvens, 1999, 2002). Within the sustainable tourism literature, this concept has been broken down into dimensions of psychological, social, economic, political and recently, environmental empowerment (Boley & McGehee, 2014; Ramos & Prideaux, 2014; Scheyvens, 1999). When considering the empirical measurement of residents’ perceptions of empowerment, most of the attention has focused on tourism development’s influence on residents’ psychological, social and political empowerment because according to Boley & McGehee (2014, p. 86), economic empowerment “does not lend itself to the application at the individual level” as easily as the other dimensions. The authors add that “economic empowerment can also be fairly easily determined and tracked through existing secondary data”. Ramos and Prideaux’s (2014) environmental dimension of empowerment falls under the same logic because it is more focused on a community’s environmental quality rather than an individual’s personal perception of environmental empowerment.

Psychological empowerment, within a tourism context, is concerned with tourism’s impact on resident pride and self-esteem. This increased pride, self-esteem and general confidence stems from residents feeling special because of outsiders traveling to their community to specifically experience their natural and cultural resources (Scheyvens, 1999). This renewed sense of pride is believed to be a guiding force behind communities re-evaluating the universal value of their culture and environment (Di Castri, 2004). While not explicitly labeled psychological empowerment, the phenomenon of psychological empowerment is clearly evident across the sustainable tourism literature. For example, Besculides, Lee, and McCormick’s (2002) finding of “greater pride in my community” was one of the top ranking benefits of tourism development in San Luis, Colorado and hints at the community being

psychologically empowered. Medina's (2003) research within Belize also demonstrates the power behind the enhanced pride and self-esteem associated with psychological empowerment. Boley, McGehee, Perdue, and Long (2014), using the RETS, have also found psychological empowerment to be a significant predictor of resident support for tourism.

Social empowerment, within a tourism context, ensues when the community's equilibrium is maintained or enhanced from tourism development (Boley & McGehee, 2014; Scheyvens, 1999). Social empowerment is specifically focused on the increased cohesion and collaboration that sustainable tourism development is theoretically supposed to bring to communities. Its antithesis is the alienation that some residents feel from tourism development that has gone wrong and the deterioration of community bonds from tourism development that drives a wedge between community groups. Boley et al. (2014), in their operationalization of social empowerment within the long established Perdue, Long, and Allen (1990) model of resident attitudes, found social empowerment to be a significant predictor of resident attitudes towards both the positive and negative impacts of tourism. They also elude to the potential positive and direct relationship between social empowerment and support for tourism when the positive and negative impacts of tourism are not included as mediators within the model.

Political empowerment is the dimension of empowerment with the closest ties to Rappaport's (1987, p. 122) general definition of empowerment focused on "gaining mastery over one's affairs". It is also the dimension of empowerment that is often written about in sustainable tourism studies that are qualitative and have not embraced the multi-dimensional perspective of empowerment introduced above (Cole, 2006a; Farrelly, 2011). Within a tourism context, political empowerment moves beyond the mere inclusion of residents (e.g. community participation) to a focus on real power through forums aimed at providing residents with the opportunity to raise questions about tourism development, share their concerns and ultimately influence the direction of tourism development (Scheyvens, 1999). Political empowerment is emulated in the highest rung of Arnstein's (1969) community participation ladder where stakeholders are real agents of change. As with the other dimensions of empowerment, Boley et al.'s (2014) research found residents' perceptions of political empowerment to also have a significant and positive influence on their perceptions of the positive impacts of tourism and a significant and negative influence on their perceptions of the negative impacts of tourism. The concept of political empowerment is also widely acknowledged as a prerequisite for tourism to be considered sustainable (Cole, 2006a). While not explicitly referring to this dimension of empowerment, Choi and Murray (2010, p. 589) acknowledge the importance of political empowerment in that, "If the government fails to empower residents, the success of tourism development and sustainability cannot be guaranteed".

Empowerment and heterogeneity of community

In addition to the definitional difficulties of "empowerment" (Cattaneo & Chapman, 2010; Hur, 2006), scholars have also pointed out difficulties of putting the concept into practice, considering the heterogeneous nature of communities (Cole, 2006b; Gallardo & Stein, 2007; Van der Duim et al., 2006). It is argued that communities are divided by various social groups, and each social group has its own set of interests and needs in tourism development as well as different levels of access to resources. Such divisions may influence who participates in tourism development as well as those who are empowered versus those who are not.

In fact, the definition of "community" has been a subject of much debate (Blackstock, 2005; Cole, 2006b; Liepins, 2000a). Liepins (2000b) points out that, in the early literature, "community" was often described as a natural, homogeneous and discrete object characterized by a particular locality. Williams (1985, p.76) also maintains that community is a "warmly persuasive word" to explain a set of relationships. However, Blackstock (2005) maintains that viewing communities as homogeneous and harmonious entities ignores marginalization and unequal distribution of power within a community. Van der Duim et al. (2006) also argue that overlooking existing division within a community leads to

a lack of understanding of power structures, and greatly impacts the success of community participation and the empowerment process.

In tourism studies, research has illustrated that tourism brings a new form of social values and power into a community, and depending on social position, individuals have different opportunities to participate in various aspects of tourism development (Cole, 2006b; Van der Duim et al., 2006; Wearing & McDonald, 2002). For example, Mitchell and Reid (2001) illustrate that, in Taquile Island, Peru, women are less vocalized than men at community tourism meetings but are acknowledged by their husbands as very influential in decision-making for their family and community. Gender inequality is also reported by other scholars, including Van Der Duim et al. (2006), Cornwall (2003) and Pilcher (2001). Although much of these studies illustrate women's disempowered positions in tourism, Ishii (2012) revealed that women and younger people were more economically empowered than older men in one particular Thai indigenous group, suggesting disruption of a patriarchal social system through tourism. Elite domination of power is also identified especially in developing countries (Dogra & Gupta, 2012; Li, 2004; Van der Duim et al., 2006).

Ethnicity has also been a dimension that influences opportunities of participation and empowerment through tourism (Buzinde, Santos, & Smith, 2006; Gallardo & Stein, 2007). When powerful majorities (or minorities) keep minority (or majority) populations in a position of oppression, participation and empowerment of an oppressed group may become difficult (Timothy, Church, & Coles, 2007). Research has shown that dominant groups' view of "ethnic culture" is often represented to tourists while local minorities' perception of their own culture is often ignored (see Hoffman, 2003; Wang, Chang, Yen, Chang, & Li, 2010; Yang & Wall, 2009). Particularly, scholars (Pang & Rath, 2007; Shaw, Bagwell, & Karmowska, 2004) have illustrated that development of ethnic neighborhood tourism is often led by the state or regional government as a part of a larger urban revitalization plan, and local minorities are often excluded from the planning. For example, Henderson (2000) illustrates that, in the effort to revitalize Chinatown in Singapore, local Chinese residents were not involved in the process. As a result, traditional retailers declined to participate and the town became an artificial creation separated from the local Chinese perspective. In addition, Chang (2000) maintains that the residents of an ethnic neighborhood may become more isolated due to tourism because, to attract tourists, the ethnic neighborhood needs to emphasize the differences, rather than commonalities, of the neighborhood from surrounding areas.

On the contrary, some studies have shown that members of minority groups actively take advantage of the uniqueness of their culture, and control what to represent and how to represent their culture to tourists (Harrison & Schipani, 2007; Santos & Yan, 2008). Drew (2010) illustrates that local tour guides in several urban ethnic neighborhoods in Chicago represent histories and problems of the neighborhood from the standpoint of the marginalized population. By doing so, they control forms of information to share with tourists and ways in which to share it, bringing about a shift in the balance of power. The potential for ethnic enclave tourism to either empower or disempower minority groups supports the further investigation of perceived psychological, social and political empowerment between the majority Japanese and minority Brazilians within Oizumi.

Context: Brazilians in Oizumi

Immigration of Brazilians to Oizumi began in the late 1980s. To solve the serious labor deficiency caused by the booming economy at the time, the Japanese Government amended the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act in 1989. The law granted long-term residence visas to all Japanese emigrants, their descendants and family members up to the third generation (Tsuda & Cornelius, 2004). The former mayor of Oizumi took initiative and actively recruited Brazilians for the factories in town. By 1995, the number of registered Brazilians in Oizumi rose to 3848 (9.36% of the town's population), which was the highest concentration of Brazilians throughout Japan. As the number of Brazilian immigrants increased, a number of Brazilian restaurants, grocery stores and other shops to serve the ethnic market also prospered in Oizumi.

Although the Brazilian immigrants and Japanese residents share an ancestry, a clear social boundary exists between the two groups within the town of Oizumi, much like other parts of Japan (Roth, 2002). This social boundary is partly due to the strong pride that “ex-patriate” Brazilian residents have for Brazil as their home country. The social boundary is also a function of jobs Brazilians held when they first immigrated to Oizumi. Because many of the Brazilian immigrants accepted positions as unskilled factory workers, some Japanese residents have formed negative stereotypes of Brazilian immigrants as uneducated people of low social class, despite the fact that these immigrants were generally well-educated and had white-collar jobs back in Brazil (Roth, 2002; Tsuda, 2003).

In spite of these negative stereotypes, collaborations between the two groups over the past decade have increased. Such collaborations began as the tourism bureau was created by the chamber of commerce in Oizumi in 2007 with the intent to revitalize the town’s economy. From its onset, the bureau identified Brazilian culture as a primary resource for tourism. All the while, the tourism bureau had intentionally hired some Japanese Brazilians as staff members, and a community magazine was created in an effort to introduce Brazilian shops to Japanese residents and visitors. To attract tourists, several events regarding Brazilian culture were organized by the tourism bureau, and both Brazilian and Japanese businesses began to participate. For example, “Gourmet Yokocho” was created as a monthly, street food festival held every fourth Sunday, where a number of vendors set their booths alongside the main street of the town. Also, the “Oizumi Samba Festival” was created as a major event to celebrate Brazilian culture. This one-day festival is held every September where several samba teams compete for prizes as visitors listen to live music and enjoy Brazilian cuisine prepared by food vendors. Occasional walking tours and bus tours are also organized by the tourism bureau. During walking tours, participants visit Brazilian shopping malls and smaller snack and souvenir shops. Beyond this, bus tours also bring tourists from Tokyo so they can visit Brazilian shopping malls and restaurants.

In summary, Oizumi provides an interesting case study for examining the perceptions of empowerment between two heterogeneous ethnic groups. While ethnic Japanese have traditionally held the upper hand in the power hierarchy, the minority-focused ethnic enclave tourism product of Oizumi may invert the power hierarchy and provide Brazilian residents with increased levels psychological, social and political empowerment.

Methods

As noted previously, two populations of residents living in Oizumi were considered for this study. Heads of households or their spouses residing in Oizumi were sampled from November 2013 to June 2014. An on-site, self-administered survey instrument was distributed door-to-door to residents between the hours of 11:00 am and 4:00 pm. To collect data, a multi-stage cluster sampling method was utilized (Babbie, 2011), whereby Oizumi was reduced to 30 administrative areas designated by the town office of Oizumi, and 28 of them were visited. The research teams visited every second household, starting in randomly selected locations within each area. The research teams asked heads of household or their spouses to participate in the survey, and if the resident agreed, a questionnaire was left with the participant and picked up later that day by the research team (Boley & McGehee, 2014; Woosnam, 2011, 2012). If no one answered the door, the next immediate house was visited and the second-house sequence was restarted. Occasionally, a prepaid envelope was used to return the survey.

Survey instruments were prepared both in Japanese and in Portuguese. Each research team carried both versions and provided one of them according to the ethnicity of the respondents. Research teams were composed of two student assistants from a local university. Although research team members did not speak Portuguese, they carried an explanatory note written in Portuguese to explain the nature of the survey and ask those who did not speak Japanese to participate. In total, 5566 households were visited by the research team. At approximately 72% ($n = 4,012$) of the homes, no-one answered the door. At the remaining 1554 homes, 854 declined and 700 surveys were

distributed (an acceptance rate of 45%). In total, 662 surveys were completed by the residents (a completion rate of 94%). The overall response rate (662 completed survey instruments from the 1554 individuals contacted) was 42%¹. Of the 662 surveys completed, 12 were less than half completed and were discarded, resulting in 650 usable instruments (i.e. 467 completed by Japanese residents and 183 completed by Brazilian residents).

Measures and data analysis

The main focus of this study was to examine the differences in Japanese and Brazilian residents' levels of empowerment as it pertains to tourism. The authors adopted 11 items from the *Resident Empowerment through Tourism Scale* (RETS) developed by Boley and McGehee (2014). These items comprised three factors including psychological empowerment (five items), social empowerment (three items) and political empowerment² (three items). All items were translated initially from English to Japanese, and then, from Japanese back to English by different translators (back translation) to ensure translational/linguistic equivalence (Brislin, 1970; Malhotra, Kgarwal, & Peterson, 1996). Similarly, to form a survey instrument for Brazilian residents, all items were translated from English to Portuguese, and then, from Portuguese back to English. Respondents were asked to rate their perception of empowerment by using a 7-point scale, where 1 = strongly disagree and 7 = strongly agree on each continuum. In addition to the RETS, residents were asked questions concerning socio-demographic information (e.g. gender, age, marital status, education, annual household income and length of residency).

To validate the factor structure of the RETS among Japanese and Brazilian residents, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was performed with each population. In addition, to examine the differences in confirmed factors from the RETS across the two resident populations, a MANOVA with Wilks's Λ was performed. As a follow-up to the MANOVA, ANOVAs for each factor were also requested to control for Type I errors. Both MANOVA and ANOVA analyses were conducted using the SPSS v.21 statistical software package.

Results

Oizumi resident profile

A description of each resident sample can be found in Table 1. While composition of gender and marital status was fairly similar across both samples, age was not. For Japanese residents ($M = 53.7$ years of age), nearly two-thirds of the respondents were at least 50 years of age whereas for Brazilians ($M = 41.7$ years of age), the same percentage of individuals fell between the ages of 18 and 49. In terms of education, approximately one-in-three individuals in each sample had a minimum of a technical or vocational degree. Closely related to education is income. For both samples, the median range of annual household income was consistent with working class salaries, ¥2,000,000–3,999,999 (the equivalent of \$18,500–37,000 USD annually). While participants were not asked whether they were employed within the tourism industry, they were asked what percentage of their income was derived from tourist spending in Oizumi. Nearly 90% of Japanese residents indicated none of their income was a result of such spending, while over 50% of Brazilians claimed their incomes came from tourist spending.

Respondents were also asked questions concerning their residential status. As expected, nearly all of the Japanese and Brazilian residents were born in their native home countries. Interestingly enough however, the largest percentage of Japanese residents were born outside of Gunma Prefecture. Likely a function of the age of respondents, Japanese residents indicated a significantly longer residential tenure in Oizumi ($M = 31.6$ years) than Brazilian residents ($M = 8.8$ years).

Table 1. Descriptive summary of Oizumi resident participants.

Variable	Japanese residents (%)	Brazilian residents (%)
<i>Socio-demographic and -economic</i>		
Gender ($n_{\text{Japanese}} = 444$; $n_{\text{Brazilians}} = 174$)		
Female	49.3	54.6
Male	50.7	45.4
Age ^a ($n_{\text{Japanese}} = 424$; $n_{\text{Brazilians}} = 167$)		
18–29	7.5	18.2
30–39	12.5	27.9
40–49	14.9	24.8
50–59	21.2	17.6
≥60	43.9	11.5
Education level ($n_{\text{Japanese}} = 436$; $n_{\text{Brazilians}} = 169$)		
Junior high school	5.7	9.5
Some high school	47.5	16.6
High school graduate	14.2	40.2
Technical or vocational school	11.7	7.7
Junior college	17.9	7.7
Four-year college	3.0	17.8
Professional degree	0.0	0.6
Marital status ($n_{\text{Japanese}} = 439$; $n_{\text{Brazilians}} = 172$)		
Single, never married	18.5	26.2
Married	74.3	71.5
Divorced	1.8	1.2
Widowed	5.5	1.2
Annual household income ^{b,c} ($n_{\text{Japanese}} = 429$; $n_{\text{Brazilians}} = 161$)		
Less than ¥2,000,000	21.7	37.3
¥2,000,000–3,999,999	42.9	50.3
¥4,000,000–5,999,999	18.9	11.2
¥6,000,000–7,999,999	6.8	0.6
¥8,000,000 or more	9.8	0.6
Percentage income derived from tourist spending ^d ($n_{\text{Japanese}} = 272$; $n_{\text{Brazilians}} = 117$)		
0	87.5	36.8
1–9	7.7	9.4
10–24	3.7	27.4
More than 25	1.1	26.5
<i>Residency</i>		
Place of birth ($n_{\text{Japanese}} = 444$; $n_{\text{Brazilians}} = 175$)		
Oizumi	26.8	0.6
Outside Oizumi but within Gunma Prefecture	26.6	0.6
Outside Gunma Prefecture but within Japan	43.0	1.7
Brazil	1.1	82.9
Other country	2.5	14.3
Length of residence ^e ($n_{\text{Japanese}} = 442$; $n_{\text{Brazilians}} = 170$)		
Less than 10 years	17.2	58.8
10–19 years	11.5	30.6
More than 20 years	71.3	10.6

^a $M_{\text{Japanese}} = 53.7$ years; $M_{\text{Brazilians}} = 41.7$ years.^b $\text{Median}_{\text{Japanese}} = ¥2,000,000–3,999,999$; $\text{Median}_{\text{Brazilians}} = ¥2,000,000–3,999,999$.^cAt the time this study was conducted, 1 Japanese ¥ was equivalent to \$0.0095USD.^d $M_{\text{Japanese}} = 1.1\%$; $M_{\text{Brazilians}} = 17.1\%$.^e $M_{\text{Japanese}} = 31.6$ years; $M_{\text{Brazilians}} = 8.8$ years.

CFA for RETS among Japanese and Brazilian residents

Prior to examining differences in perceptions of empowerment between the residents, each sample data-set was independently subjected to CFA (Tables 2, 3 and 4). Knowing that three factors have resulted from analysis concerning the RETS (Boley & McGehee, 2014; Boley et al., 2014), a three-factor solution was examined for each sample by adding each factor to the model incrementally using LaGrange Multiplier (LM) tests as suggested by Kline (2011). Ultimately, after five iterations of LM tests, 14 error parameters (i.e. 10 error covariances and four cross-loading items) were identified and added to the “ideal model” (i.e. perfect absolute and incremental model fit indices) for both samples.

The “ideal model”, though it provides us with each error parameter that must be addressed, is not interpretable (Woosnam, 2011). To then address each error term, Wald tests were requested to trim the model by not affecting the $\Delta\chi^2/df$ standard critical-value of 3.84 established by Tabachnick and Fidell (2013). As such, each of the 14 error parameters (after four Wald test iterations) was safely

Table 2. Confirmatory factor analysis of RETS items for both resident groups.

Factor and corresponding item	Japanese residents ^a				Brazilian residents ^b			
	Mean ^c	Std. factor loading (t value ^d)	Reliabilities		Mean ^c	Std. factor loading (t value ^d)	Reliabilities	
			Composite reliability	MWA ^e			Composite reliability	MWA ^e
<i>Psychological empowerment</i>	3.91		.89	.90	5.50		.94	.94
<i>Tourism in Oizumi...</i>								
Makes me want to tell others about what we have to offer in Oizumi	3.73	.85 (20.48)			5.58	.87 (13.00)		
Reminds me that I have a unique culture to share with visitors	3.47	.82 (19.42)			5.43	.86 (15.57)		
Makes me want to keep Oizumi special	4.03	.77 (14.77)			5.55	.85 (14.03)		
Makes me proud to be an Oizumi resident	4.33	.75 (16.46)			5.52	.86 (13.60)		
Makes me feel special because people travel to see my city's unique features	3.47	.74 (17.46)			5.44	.86 (14.65)		
<i>Social empowerment</i>	4.05		.93	.94	5.43		.92	.98
<i>Tourism in Oizumi...</i>								
Fosters a sense of “community spirit” within me	4.03	.93 (24.02)			5.46	.90 (12.68)		
Makes me feel more connected to my community	3.95	.90 (22.69)			5.41	.80 (10.96)		
Provides ways for me to get involved in my community	4.17	.88 (20.65)			5.41	.95 (16.07)		
<i>Political empowerment</i>	3.43		.91	.92	3.49		.91	.91
<i>I feel like...</i>								
I have a voice in Oizumi tourism development decisions	3.41	.92 (28.97)			3.33	.83 (15.17)		
I have the opportunity to participate in the tourism planning process in Oizumi	3.40	.88 (30.27)			3.52	.91 (17.45)		
I have an outlet to share my concerns about tourism development in Oizumi	3.48	.84 (21.34)			3.62	.89 (19.08)		

^aSatorra–Bentler χ^2 (42, $N = 451$) = 123.38, $p < 0.001$, CFI = 0.97, RMSEA = 0.07.
^bSatorra–Bentler χ^2 (42, $N = 183$) = 71.96, $p < 0.001$, CFI = 0.98, RMSEA = 0.07.
^cItems were rated on a 7-point scale, where 1 = *strongly disagree* and 7 = *strongly agree*.
^dAll t tests were significant at $p < 0.001$.
^eMaximal weighted alpha as reported in EQS 6.2.

Table 3. Discriminant and nomological validity analysis from RETS CFA for Japanese residents.

Factors	1	2	3
1. Psychological empowerment	.62 ^a	.64 ^c	.20
2. Social empowerment	.80 ^{b,d}	.83	.18
3. Political empowerment	.45	.43	.78

^aThe bold diagonal elements are the measures of average variance explained (AVE) for each factor.

^bBelow diagonal elements are the correlations between factors.

^cAbove diagonal elements are the squared correlations between factors.

^dAll correlations were significant at $p < 0.001$.

removed so as to not exceed the threshold. For the Japanese residents and the Brazilian residents, the same three-factor structure (i.e. psychological, social and political empowerment) of the RETS resulted as had been presented in the literature by Boley and McGehee (2014) and Boley et al. (2014) with only slight nuances existing in standardized factor loadings between the two groups. See Table 2 for resulting factor structure, factor and item mean scores, standardized factor loadings and reliability coefficients.

Psychometric properties of RETS among Japanese and Brazilian residents

Standards exist for acceptable critical values of fit indices of resulting factor structures when using CFA. Absolute model fit indices such as RMSEA and RMR that fall between a range of 0.05 and 0.08 are considered to exhibit “fair” fit (Browne & Cudeck, 1992). For incremental fit indices (e.g. CFI, NFI, GFI and NNFI), Kaplan (2009) suggests coefficients should exceed a critical value of 0.95 to be considered “acceptable”. The model fit statistics for the Japanese sample (Satorra-Bentler $\chi^2(42, N = 183) = 71.96, p < 0.001$, CFI = 0.98, RMSEA = 0.07) and the Brazilian sample all fell within these suggested bounds (Satorra-Bentler $\chi^2(42, N = 183) = 71.96, p < 0.001$, CFI = 0.98, RMSEA = 0.07).

Standards also exist for standardized factor loadings. According to Fornell and Larcker (1981), such loadings should surpass a threshold of 0.70. For the Japanese residents CFA, loadings ranged from 0.74 to 0.93. Comparatively speaking, standardized factor loadings were slightly higher among the Brazilian residents’ as all exceeded the critical value of 0.70 but ranged from 0.80 to 0.90.

Various forms of reliability and validity were also examined for each CFA. As shown in Table 2, composite reliabilities (as calculated following the work of Hatcher, 1994) and maximal weighted alphas (as reported in EQS 6.2) were exceptionally high (i.e. 0.89 to 0.94), indicating sound internal consistency for each factor across the two samples. In considering construct validity, convergent, discriminant and nomological forms were examined. Each of the t values associated with standardized factor loadings was found to be significant ($p < 0.001$), exceeding the threshold of 3.29 as suggested by Tabachnick and Fidell (2013). Such findings coalesce to demonstrate convergent validity. Discriminant validity was also demonstrated by comparing squared correlations between factors with the

Table 4. Discriminant and nomological validity analysis from RETS CFA for Brazilian residents.

Factors	1	2	3
1. Psychological empowerment	.74 ^a	.71 ^c	.12
2. Social empowerment	.84 ^{b,d}	.78	.10
3. Political empowerment	.35	.31	.77

^aThe bold diagonal elements are the measures of average variance explained (AVE) for each factor.

^bBelow diagonal elements are the correlations between factors.

^cAbove diagonal elements are the squared correlations between factors.

^dAll correlations were significant at $p < 0.001$.

average variance extracted (AVE) for each factor (Tables 3 and 4). In only one instance (i.e. the squared correlation between *psychological empowerment* and *social empowerment*) within the Japanese sample did such value exceed AVEs. While the squared correlation between *psychological empowerment* and *social empowerment* was higher than *psychological empowerment's* AVE (.64% vs. 62%), the high AVE for *social empowerment* (83%) confirms the factors' distinctness from one another. Factor correlations were also found to be highly significant ($p < 0.001$) as shown in Table 3, which demonstrates nomological validity (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2010). Results for convergent, discriminant and nomological validity all provide evidence of sound construct validity for the RETS among the Japanese residents in Oizumi.

RETS differences across resident populations

Based on CFA results for each sample, factor composite means were calculated. Given factor loadings are weighted equally within CFA, each item mean was summed (within corresponding factors) and divided by the total number of items comprising the factor (Woosnam, 2012). To determine if perceived empowerment (as measured by factor means) differed across the resident groups, a MANOVA with Wilks's Λ was undertaken. This statistical test was considered appropriate given the RETS factors were correlated (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013) as is displayed from Tables 3 and 4 for each sample.

Significant differences were found among resident populations on two of the three RETS factors, Wilks's $\Lambda = 0.61$, $F(11,615) = 35.59$, $p < 0.001$. The multivariate η^2 based on Wilks's Λ was moderate, 0.39, indicating that 39% of the multivariate variance of the three RETS factors is associated with either being a Japanese or Brazilian resident. As Green and Salkind (2011) have claimed, "It is unclear what should be considered a small, medium and large effect size for this [η^2] statistic" (p. 224). As a follow-up to the MANOVA, ANOVAs and post-hoc tests were undertaken on each factor. In an effort to control for Type 1 errors, and following Green and Salkind suggestions, each ANOVA (using the Bonferroni method) was tested at the .017 alpha level based on three dependent variables. Table 5 provides output for the MANOVA model and its ANOVA results for each RETS factor and corresponding items.

Table 5. Differences in RETS factors and items^a between Oizumi resident participants.

Factor and Item	Japanese residents		Brazilians residents	
	Mean ^b	Mean ^b	F	p
<i>Psychological empowerment</i>	3.91	5.50	237.54	0.00
<i>Tourism in Oizumi...</i>				
Makes me want to tell others about what we have to offer in Oizumi	3.73	5.58	238.62	0.00
Reminds me that I have a unique culture to share with visitors	3.47	5.43	127.09	0.00
Makes me want to keep Oizumi special	4.03	5.55	166.13	0.00
Makes me proud to be an Oizumi resident	4.33	5.52	94.00	0.00
Makes me feel special because people travel to see my city's unique features	3.47	5.44	265.80	0.00
<i>Social empowerment</i>	4.04	5.43	158.77	0.00
<i>Tourism in Oizumi...</i>				
Fosters a sense of 'community spirit' within me	4.03	5.46	154.57	0.00
Makes me feel more connected to my community	3.95	5.41	148.71	0.00
Provides ways for me to get involved in my community	4.17	5.41	112.89	0.00
<i>Political empowerment</i>	3.43	3.49	0.20	0.66
<i>I feel like...</i>				
I have a voice in Oizumi tourism development decisions	3.41	3.33	0.25	0.62
I have the opportunity to participate in the tourism planning process in Oizumi	3.40	3.52	0.68	0.41
I have an outlet to share my concerns about tourism development in Oizumi	3.48	3.62	0.86	0.35

^aMANOVA model Wilks's $\Lambda = 0.61$, $F(11,615) = 35.59$, $p < 0.001$, $\eta^2 = 0.39$.
^bItems were rated on a 7-point scale, where 1 = *strongly disagree* and 7 = *strongly agree*.

Overall, Brazilian residents reported a higher level of agreement with 10 of the 11 empowerment items (as seen from means in Table 5). As indicated above, significant differences were found across resident populations on two of the three RETS factors. The ANOVA for the *psychological empowerment* factor was significant, $F(1,625) = 237.54, p < 0.001$, revealing that Brazilian residents ($M = 5.50$) indicated a significantly higher degree of perceived psychological empowerment than their Japanese resident ($M = 3.91$) counterparts. The ANOVA for the *social empowerment* factor was also significant, $F(1,625) = 158.77, p < 0.001$, again showing that Brazilian residents ($M = 5.43$) claimed a significantly higher degree of perceived social empowerment than Japanese residents ($M = 4.04$). The final ANOVA concerning *political empowerment* was not significant, $F(1,625) = 0.20, p = 0.66$ as can be shown in nearly identical mean scores for Brazilian ($M = 3.49$) and Japanese ($M = 3.43$) residents.

Discussion and conclusions

This study examined the differences in levels of resident empowerment between Japanese and Brazilian residents in Oizumi Town, where ethnic neighborhood tourism centered on Brazilian culture has been developed. The importance of resident empowerment has been well documented throughout the literature on sustainable tourism development (Cole, 2006a, 2006b; Farrelly, 2011; Ramos & Prideaux 2014; Scheyvens 1999, 2000). At the same time, research also has pointed out that gender, kinship, social class and ethnicities influence the ways in which people participate (or do not participate) in the process of planning for tourism development and feel empowered within their community. To the authors' knowledge, it was the first study to quantitatively compare levels of perceived empowerment between members of a dominant ethnic group and minority ethnic group living within the same community.

The first important finding from the study is concerned with validating the factor structure of the RETS among Japanese and Brazilian residents. CFA indicated that the factor structures among the two populations were nearly identical to what Boley and McGehee (2014) and Boley et al. (2014) had previously found. Similarly, tests of reliability and validity indicated that psychometric properties of each were sound among both groups. This finding provides further credence for the robust reliability and validity of the RETS and its appropriateness for using across international samples.

The second important finding pertains to whether or not dimensions of empowerment within the RETS significantly differed between the two resident populations. Findings indicated that Brazilians perceived themselves to be more psychologically and socially empowered than did Japanese residents. This indicates that, parallel to previous studies (see Crehan, 2003; Timothy et al., 2007), the town of Oizumi is fractured by the residents' ethnicity in terms of resident empowerment through tourism. In addition, the fact that Brazilians scored higher than Japanese on two factors contradicts Gallardo and Stein (2007) and several other studies (see Hoffman, 2003; Wang et al., 2010; Yang & Wall, 2009) that illustrate ethnic minorities' disempowered position, while lending support to Drew's (2010) finding that maintains ethnic neighborhood tourism can become a tool for ethnic minorities to resist the dominant cultural structure and marginalization. In the current case, this is likely the situation. Despite the fact that the decision was made primarily by Japanese residents to represent Brazilian culture to tourists, such representation provides the opportunity for residents of the latter group to feel empowered.

In particular, Brazilian residents in Oizumi scored higher on the psychological factor than Japanese residents. According to Scheyvens (1999), psychological empowerment within a tourism context is concerned with building resident pride and self-esteem through tourism development centered on the unique natural and cultural resources of the destination. Presumably, although the Brazilian identity among Brazilian immigrants was initially developed as a form of resistance to negative ethnic experiences in Japan (Tsuda, 2003), through tourism, Brazilians may now positively identify themselves with such cultural background. By being identified as a resource (instead of a burden) of the town for economic revitalization, Brazilian residents have likely re-evaluated their identity and gained a greater sense of confidence. An additional explanation for the high level of perceived

empowerment on this factor might be the fact that a major renovation of the town for tourism did not take place in Oizumi. Instead, the town mainly relies on existing Brazilian establishments (e.g. grocery stores, restaurants and snack shops) to attract tourists. The only noticeable changes made for tourism have been the addition of the information booth in the nearby train station and the town map outside the station. This contrasts previous studies (Chang, 2000; Henderson, 2000; Shaw et al., 2004) that illustrate major restorations of ethnic neighborhoods for tourism tend to exclude local minorities. In addition, the walking tour in Oizumi is led by Brazilian Japanese tour guides. Therefore, Brazilians in Oizumi may perceive tourism as an opportunity to showcase their lives from their own perspectives (Drew 2010). In essence, it appears that Brazilian residents perceive this type of endogenous ethnic enclave tourism to be more “authentic” than other types of top-down ethnic enclave tourism, where the culture is manicured to fit within what the tourism bureau thinks tourists want to see. The results from Oizumi illustrate that the minority group, in this case, is very proud to share its culture with visitors.

Brazilian residents in Oizumi also scored higher on the social factor of empowerment than Japanese residents. Social empowerment is strongly related to community cohesion and collaboration (Scheyvens, 1999; Boley & McGehee, 2014). Presumably, this is the case in Oizumi because Brazilian residents now have increased exposure to each other and have the need to collaborate in order for their tourism businesses to be successful.

In addition, past studies (Jamison, 1999; Santos & Yan, 2008) illustrate that cultural tourism can unify members of an ethnic minority group to fight against common threats or work together towards common goals. For example, Santos and Yan (2008) argue that in an ethnic enclave, where many employees have limited professional and language skills and thus few economic alternatives, promoting tourism to improve the economic conditions of their community can be a common goal, and it smooths over any internal class conflict that may be present. This might be true in Oizumi. That is to say, having a common goal of being successful in tourism may strengthen the connection within the Brazilian community in Oizumi, and thus, explain the higher levels of perceived social empowerment among the Brazilian residents. Subsequent studies which seek to address potential precursors to or antecedents of empowerment would have to be undertaken to determine if such an explanation is true.

On the contrary, Japanese residents do not feel an increased sense of pride through tourism. Tsuda (2003) illustrates that Japanese residents do not have positive perceptions toward Brazilian residents. If so, relying on Brazilian culture as an “icon” of their town may not heighten a sense of pride in their town among Japanese residents. Furthermore, Japanese residents in Oizumi may have not yet accepted a shift of the town’s identity from a manufacturing town to an ethnic tourism destination. Haukeland (1984) argues that those who engage in more traditional occupations tend to have negative perceptions toward tourism as an alternative economic activity. Considering the fact that Oizumi has long been a manufacturing town and over 50% of the residents work to some capacity within the industry, it can be argued that Japanese residents may not fully support the notion of the town’s emerging identity as a “Little Brazil”.

In addition, Japanese residents scored lower on the social factor than Brazilian residents. It indicates that Japanese residents may feel an erosion of cohesiveness within the town because of ethnic enclave tourism. Previous studies (Cole, 2006b; Van der Duim et al., 2006; Wearing & McDonald, 2002) indicate that tourism may create tension between those who are actively involved in tourism development and those who are not. Similarly, in the town of Oizumi, there might be tension between those who support tourism focusing on Brazilian culture and those who do not.

No significant differences on the political factor of the RETS were found between the two groups. The scores on this factor are relatively low in both groups (i.e. $M = 3.43$ and 3.49), indicating a lack of perceived political empowerment across both groups. In addition to a possible lack of language and cultural skills to express their concern among Brazilian residents (Tsuda, 2000), this finding may be explained by a general lack of opportunities to participate in tourism planning processes among all residents in Oizumi. As previous studies (Suzuki, 2010; Thompson, 2004) indicate, in Japan, the

importance of community participation has only recently been recognized. Therefore, it can be argued that both Brazilian and Japanese residents in Oizumi may feel a scarcity of outlets to express their concerns regarding tourism development issues. With knowledge that destination marketing organizations for local tourism are relatively new in Oizumi, local tourism officials need to concentrate on providing avenues for all Oizumi residents to share their concerns regarding planning and managing for tourism and its accompanying development.

Implications

Findings from the current study have both theoretical implications for the sustainable tourism literature and practical implications for those involved with developing ethnic neighborhood tourism (Byrd, 2007; Jamal & Getz, 1995; Ryan, 2002). The importance of resident empowerment has been well documented in the sustainable tourism literature (Cole, 2006a; Cole, 2006b; Farrelly, 2011; Ramos & Prideaux, 2014; Scheyvens, 1999, 2000), but has only been recently empirically evaluated using the RETS. Mixed findings within the literature exist as to who is empowered and who is disempowered through ethnic tourism development. For example, a majority of the literature illustrates ethnic minorities' disempowered status, while other studies (Drew, 2010; Santos & Yan, 2008) indicate that minority populations can gain power through tourism development. Absent from this literature is empirical research to measure and compare perceived levels of empowerment between dominant ethnic groups and ethnic minority groups within the same community. Arguably, the current study fills these gaps while also diving further into the topic by including a multi-dimensional interpretation of empowerment.

Results of this study confirmed the three dimensions of the empowerment. In addition, the results indicate that Brazilian residents perceive themselves to be more empowered than Japanese residents on two out of three empowerment factors. Future studies regarding resident empowerment in ethnic neighborhood tourism should take into consideration the needs of members within the dominant ethnic group in addition to the minority group, so that the long-term sustainability of ethnic tourism development is not jeopardized by frustrated voices from ostracized majority groups. Depending on the type and form of tourism under consideration and the extent of development, a group that has traditionally held more power may indeed feel disempowered from the restructuring of power endemic to ethnic enclave tourism. Subsequent research should be undertaken to determine if such a finding is not unique to Oizumi.

The study has practical implications for empowering residents and making ethnic neighborhood tourism more sustainable in Oizumi as well as in other similar communities who find themselves with mixed ethnicities. First, findings from this study indicated that Japanese residents' perceived levels of empowerment on the psychological and social dimensions were lower than Brazilians'. To solve this imbalanced psychological and social empowerment, individuals responsible for planning and managing tourism in Oizumi need to communicate more effectively with Japanese residents regarding the unique asset that the Brazilian culture offers to Oizumi. One possible solution is to invite local Japanese residents to participate in walking tours that visit various sites throughout Oizumi focused on Brazilian culture. An increase in positive interaction between the two groups can provide the opportunity for residents of the dominant ethnic group to learn what is represented to tourists all the while potentially serving to increase a sense of pride in their town and foster greater collaboration with residents of the minority ethnic group.

In addition, this study indicated that both Japanese and Brazilians are not politically empowered, indicating a lack of opportunity to express their concerns about tourism development in Oizumi. Tourism officials in Oizumi (as well as in communities similar to Oizumi with their heterogeneous cultural composition) should consider conducting community meetings in both Japanese and Portuguese languages so that no one involved in the process is marginalized. Such meetings would simply require the presence of an interpreter. These community meetings should also be held at different times of the day or the week. For example, those who work in a factory or in the tourism sector, many of whom are Brazilian residents (as in the case of Oizumi) may want to have meetings early in

the afternoon of weekdays because they work night or weekend shifts, while others may not be able to attend meetings on weekdays. Having meetings at various times not only encourages more residents to attend meetings but also allows residents to meet with others with similar social positions. This may allow participants to express their opinions more freely while being less concerned about offending others within different social positions who may work at different times of the day or week. To make these multiple meetings effective, the community needs to identify a leader who has the ability to conduct meetings “without being seen to side with particular groups or pursue a personal agenda” (Garrod, 2003). These strategies may help tourism planners embrace opinions from different ethnic groups.

Limitations and areas for future research

This study was conducted to compare perceived levels of resident empowerment between members of an ethnic minority group and members of a dominant ethnic group within a community. Future research should examine the differences in resident empowerment across various social groups defined by age, gender and educational levels to better understand ways in which a community becomes fractured through ethnic neighborhood tourism, as well as through tourism development in general. Such studies should be conducted both within Japan and in other countries. In addition, ethnic neighborhood tourism is still at a developing stage in the town of Oizumi. Therefore, comparing the levels of resident empowerment in other contexts where this type of tourism is successful may help us learn more about changes in power structure in destinations of various developmental stages across Butler’s (1980) life-cycle. In addition, this study focused solely on one ethnic neighborhood tourism destination. To deepen our understanding regarding resident empowerment and tourism, comparative studies should be conducted in subfields of tourism such as heritage tourism, whereby various destinations are considered that are (Woosnam & Lee, 2011) potentially marked by multiple ethnic groups with an extensive history of coexistence or recently occurring diasporic travel involving individuals “returning home”.

While Japanese residents in this study rated lower on two out of three empowerment factors, the reasons for this remain unknown. Similarly, the reasons behind the high levels of empowerment among Brazilian residents were not explored. Perhaps, these high levels of psychological and social empowerment among Brazilians are a function of individuals romanticizing and having nostalgia for their past lives in Brazil. With these uncertainties regarding why Brazilians felt more empowered than the Japanese, it would be appropriate to use qualitative methods, such as interviews with Japanese and Brazilian residents, to investigate why each ethnic group feels the way they do regarding their perceived level of empowerment. Such an exploration would provide a much needed rich, thick description of how empowerment develops within communities where tourism development is readily occurring.

To conclude, the current study indicated that Brazilians perceived more psychological and social empowerment than Japanese residents, suggesting that ethnic neighborhood tourism has the potential to flip the dominant power hierarchy within the community to favor the minority ethnic group. Results also illustrated a general lack of opportunities to participate in the planning process for both ethnic groups. With empowerment’s important status as a prerequisite for tourism to be considered sustainable (Cole, 2006a; Scheyvens 1999, 2000), more studies are needed to investigate resident perceptions of empowerment within heterogeneous communities like Oizumi. Findings from these types of studies will help unearth empowerment success stories and empowerment disparities from a variety of contexts. This will in turn will help create a body of literature on the best practices of empowerment in tourism that other fractured communities can embrace as they work towards making tourism more sustainable in their own communities.

Notes

1. Although collecting data door-to-door often results in a better response rate than other methods (Andereck and Nickerson 1997), the response rate of this study is somewhat below the 60%–70% commonly associated with

door-to-door data collection. A possible explanation is the housing conditions in Oizumi. Miwa (2008) found that that surveying single family houses resulted in a higher refusal rate than visiting apartment complexes when he conducted surveys in Japan. This could be the case in Oizumi, since a majority of Japanese residents live in single family houses.

2. With the political empowerment dimension of the RETS being applied within a Japanese context, it came to the attention of the authors that the second and third items pertaining to having “access” and being able to “vote” had no functional equivalents within the community of Oizumi. Furthermore, for the third item, a referendum by locals for a community issue rarely takes place in Japan. As a remedy, the two items were removed and replaced with a new item that reads “I feel like I have the opportunity to participate in the tourism planning process in Oizumi”. The new item’s validity within the scale is tested in the proceeding confirmatory factor analysis (CFA).

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