

Antecedents and Outcomes of Resident Empowerment through Tourism

ABSTRACT

Even though empowerment is a frequently mentioned keyword in resident attitude studies, the relationship network of this concept is rather vague. It is critical to understand the factors that influence empowerment, and factors that empowerment influences in return. ~~In~~ ~~clarifying~~ ~~Therefore~~, the current study modeled ~~the residents'~~ data from ~~the top tourism destination in the U.S.—Orlando, Florida. residents, of a highly touristic destination in North America~~ ~~United States~~. Data from 415 residents were analyzed using Partial Least Squares - Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) on SmartPLS to test the effects of residents' involvement and economic benefits from tourism on their psychological, social and political empowerment, and thus quality of life and ultimately, place attachment. ~~in the end~~. Findings revealed that psychological empowerment is the most significant dimension of resident empowerment influencing both place ~~attachment-dependence~~ and place identity, suggesting that residents hold special values for their place. ~~Results are discussed for m~~ ~~Managerial and~~ theoretical implications, ~~along with and potential~~ limitations ~~(in light of the project occurring pre-COVID-19) and future research opportunities of the study are discussed as being conducted pre-Covid-19.~~

Keywords: Resident attitudes, empowerment, place attachment, quality of life, PLS

INTRODUCTION

Tourism area Residents' perceptions, and attitudes of tourism, and behavior are some of are one of "the most systematic and well-studied areas of tourism" (McGehee & Andreck, 2004, p.232), where many studies have revealed numerous aspects that contribute to residents' what makes or breaks residents, and thus their support for tourism development within their community (e.g., Gursoy, Chiarelli & Nunkoo, 2017; Maruyama & Woosnam, 2015; Nunkoo, 2017; Nunkoo & Ramkissoon, 2010; Park, Nunkoo, & Yoon, 2015; Styliadis, Biran, Sit & Szivas, 2014). Resident empowerment, one of these aspects, related to resident attitudes, is a multi-dimensional social process that advocates community-based initiatives as a tool for sustainable development (Ahmad & Talib, 2015; Page & Czuba, 1999), whereby. It is a process by which people identify their interests and access to intangible decision-making (Strzelecka, Boley, & Woosnam, 2017). (Strzelecka et.al, 2017). Empowerment can be thought of as is a multi-dimensional a social process whereby individuals people seek to gain control over their own lives and gain power (i.e., the capacity to implement); for personal use in their own lives, their communities, and in their society, by acting on issues that they define as important (Page & Czuba, 1999). Empowerment, a well-established tenet of sustainable tourism development (Robinson & Picard, 2006), is considered a multi-level, interdependent phenomenon functional at individual, organizational, and community levels (Rodrigues, Menezes, & Ferreira, 2017). Aghazamani and Hunt (2017) highlight that research on empowerment undertaken in political science (Friedman, 1992), psychology (Rappaport, 1987), education (Kreisberg, 1988), health studies (Gibson, 1995), and women's studies (Longwe, 2002) has greatly influenced the work in tourism.

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3 The importance of resident empowerment to sustainable tourism research (Aghazamani
4 & Hunt, 2017) cannot be understated. This is because empowerment revolves around community
5 members making a conscious effort to discover and analyze problems, seek and implement
6 solutions, and evaluate resultant impacts of tourism (Cole, 2018). Manzo and Perkins (2006)
7 advanced the notion that empowerment is potentially the factor connecting place attachment,
8 social capital, and action. Strzelecka et.al. (2017) asserted that the two most salient non-
9 economic constructs used independently to explain resident attitudes about tourism are
10 place attachment and empowerment, but the relationship between them has are yet to be
11 investigated are is not well understood. Resident's' emotional connections to and meanings of
12 places cannot be overemphasized. Place attachment entails all the positive emotional connections
13 that develop between individuals and their socio-physical environment (Hidalgo & Hernandez,
14 2001). The emotional connection to places and meanings of places can, in no small measure,
15 influence residents' perceptions about tourism development and their empowerment through
16 tourism. Understanding the relationship between place attachment and residents' perception of
17 empowerment through tourism will contribute immensely into gaining a better understanding of
18 how residents' bonding with local places is empowerings them. Empowerment in tourism hasve
19 the tendency to impact the quality of life of residents in the community. Tourism activities
20 affects the lives of residents in the community (Jurovski, Uysal, & Williams, 1997), but having a
21 voice to drive impactful and positive changes will improve the dynamics.

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Despite this importance, empowerment remains a relatively under-researched concept within the context of resident attitudes concerning tourism (Boley & McGehee, 2014). A majority of studies have focused mainly on tourism's economic benefits to the local residents and community including equitable distribution of economic benefits (Boley & Gaither, 2015);

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3 [Boley, Johnson, & Gaither, 2016](#); Coria & Calfucura, 2012), employment generation
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5 opportunities, community control of financial benefits and retaining leakage of tourism earnings
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7 within the community (Ramos & Prideaux, 2014). Thus, Joo, Woosnam, Strzelecka and Boley
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9 (2020) opined that a key research gap in the emerging resident empowerment literature is how
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11 empowerment occurs among individuals and communities (antecedents) and the potential
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13 outcomes of empowered residents.
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17 Understanding different dimensions of empowerment along with their antecedents and
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19 outcomes would enable practitioners to focus their efforts on fostering greater resident
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21 empowerment and thus, expected outcomes such as support for tourism, quality of life, and place
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23 attachment. Resident empowerment in tourism is ~~the~~^a reoccurring theme in development goals
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25 set to bridge the divide between gender, power, and economic inequalities throughout society,
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27 which are germane to the tenets of sustainable tourism development. Therefore, this study
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29 examined the antecedents and outcomes of empowerment, more specifically, the effects of
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31 residents' involvement and economic benefits from tourism on individuals' psychological, social
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33 and political empowerment, and thus quality of life and ultimately, place attachment. A
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35 discussion of these concepts and the proposed relationships tested in the current study are
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37 discussed below.
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LITERATURE REVIEW

Empowerment through tourism

Notions of perceived empowerment originate from the community psychology literature. Considered one of the first seminal works on empowerment, Rappaport (1987) conceived of the construct as systematically securing authority over ones' life and engaging in community life through democratic participation. Shortly thereafter, the Cornell Empowerment Group (1989) defined the construct as, "an intentional ongoing process centered in the local community, involving mutual respect, critical reflection, caring, and group participation, through which people lacking an equal share of valued resources gain greater access to and control over those resources" (p. 2). Zimmerman (1995) further offered that empowerment involves, "efforts to gain control, access to resources, and a critical understanding of one's sociopolitical context" (p. 583). Empowerment is defined as the ability of people, organizations, and communities to gain control over their destiny or determine their own affairs by exerting control over factors that affect their lives (Cole, 2011; Scheyvens, 1999; Strzelecka et.al, 2017; Rappaport, 2002). More recently, Aghazamani and Hunt (2017) offered a more comprehensive definition of empowerment reflecting its antecedents and outcomes as well, stating the concept is "a multidimensional, context-dependent, and dynamic process that provides humans, individually or collectively, with greater agency, freedom, and capacity to improve their quality of life as a function of engagement with the phenomenon of tourism" (p. 335). Some researchers also created typologies of empowerment with as few as two, and as many as six, categories (Moswete & Lacey, 2015).

Since its origination, researchers have discussed the various dimensions of empowerment. As Moswete and Lacey (2015) highlight, empowerment has been measured

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3 [through as few as two, and as many as six, dimensions.](#) The four most-commonly used
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5 empowerment dimensions are economic, social, political and psychological (Zimmerman, 1995)
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7 [which have been employed not only in the community psychology literature but also within](#)
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9 [tourism research.](#) Economic empowerment is related to poverty alleviation through freedom
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11 enhancement at the individual level with a visible improvement in quality of life (Sen, 2000;
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13 Scheyvens, 1999). Social empowerment refers to a situation in which a community's sense of
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15 cohesion and integrity has been confirmed or strengthened by a collective activity (Scheyvens,
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17 1999). Psychological empowerment has been commonly described as the psychological aspect of
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19 dynamic, ongoing, and participatory processes by which individuals gain greater mastery and
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21 control over their lives and affairs, and engage more in democratic participation in their
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23 communities [enhancing their pride and self-esteem](#) (Rappaport, 1981, 1987; Zimmerman, 1995;
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25 Zimmerman & Rappaport, 1988). Lastly, political empowerment concerns a community's
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27 collective and conscious effort in controlling the direction, level, and type of tourism
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29 development in their area (Boley, Maruyama, & Woosnam, 2015; Scheyvens, 1999).
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35 ~~These different definitions and typologies of empowerment reflect dimensions,~~
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37 ~~antecedents, and outcomes of empowerment; however, the literature lacks a comprehensive~~
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39 ~~definition of empowerment through tourism.~~ ~~Though~~ ~~In tourism studies,~~ researchers [have](#)
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41 [typically offered](#) different interpretations of empowerment to suit the context in question (Boley
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43 & McGehee, 2014), [the current work adopts the robust definition advanced by Aghazamani and](#)
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45 [Hunt \(2017\) which best reflects how empowerment has evolved within the tourism literature.](#)
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47 [The authors state that, "empowerment is a multidimensional, context-dependent, and dynamic](#)
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49 [process that provides humans, individually or collectively, with greater agency, freedom, and](#)
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51 [capacity to improve their quality of life as a function of engagement with the phenomenon of](#)
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4 tourism” (p. 343). Such a definition, building on initial work in community psychology (and
5 focusing on empowerment as a ‘process’), speaks to the notion that: 1) various antecedents exist
6 that may explain empowerment and that 2) empowerment is not always an outcome, but that it
7 can serve to explain other constructs such as residents’ quality of life (Aghazamani and Hunt
8 2017). ~~Thus, a comprehensive definition of empowerment is tailored to guide this study and~~
9 ~~potentially others in the future. Tourism area community empowerment is the perception of a~~
10 ~~positive change in economic, social, political, and psychological aspects of the self/community~~
11 ~~life; factors such as community involvement in tourism, positive perception of tourism, and~~
12 ~~positive impacts of tourism initiate this positive change, which then may result in positive~~
13 ~~community outcomes such as emotional solidarity towards tourists, satisfaction with life, quality~~
14 ~~of life, place attachment, and support for tourism. Thus, e the current study will focus on resident~~
15 ~~involvement in tourism and perceived economic benefits from tourism as the drivers of~~
16 ~~economic, social, political, and psychological empowerment aspects of the self/community life,~~
17 ~~which in turn explain residents’ quality of life (Aghazamani and Hunt 2017) and ultimately, their~~
18 ~~place attachment (Lee, Yang and Koo 2019). then results in positive influence on place~~
19 ~~attachment and quality of life.~~

Involvement in tourism influences empowerment through tourism

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The general consensus among tourism scholars is that residents are important destination stakeholders (Megheiri, Woosnam, Ribeiro, Ramkissoon, & Denley, 2020; Ramkissoon & Sowamber, in press). Their voice must be heard and justified to be empowered in tourism planning and development in order to approve and control the impacts of tourism activities in their domain (Boley, McGehee, Perdue, & Long, 2014; Cole, 2006; Garrod, Fyall, Leask, &

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3 Ried, 2012; Lawton, & Weaver, 2015; Segota, Mihalic, & Kuscer, 2017). Consent of residents is
4 nearly impossible when they are not involved in tourism-related issues in their community. In
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6 other words, when residents feel excluded on issues affecting their collective well-being, they
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8 may seem unaware, uninterested, and withhold their support in advancing tourism development.
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10 Segota et. al. (2017) opined that several terms have been used interchangeably for resident
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12 engagement activities such as involvement (Ko & Stewart, 2002; Lee, 2013; Palmer, Koenig-
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14 Lewis, & Jones, 2013), participation (Li, 2006; Simmons, 1994; Tosun, 2006), knowledge and
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16 information (Cole, 2006b; Joo et.al., 2020), and the power to influence the decision making
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18 process (Boley et.al., 2014; Nunkoo & Ramkissoon, 2011, 2012; Nunkoo, Ramkissoon, &
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20 Gursoy, 2012). ~~In studying these different terms, such studies identify residents' commitment to
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22 participating in tourism activities, support for research on sustainable tourism, and being
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24 informed and involved in planning, management and decision making (Segota et. al., 2017). This
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26 commitment for such activities regarding tourism can be grouped under the umbrella term of
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28 involvement despite the semantic differences among the distinct different terminologies utilized by
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30 various different researchers (i.e., participation, the power to influence decision-making, etc.).~~

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38 In a study involving Slovenian residents, Segota et. al. (2017) segmented locals into four
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40 groups based on the degree of how informed they were about tourism development and
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42 involvement in tourism planning (i.e., responsible citizens, passive observers, unaware residents,
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44 and uninformed activists). Since all community members cannot respond in the same manner to
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46 tourism activities in their community, the approach helped identify groups in need of either
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48 enhancing their knowledge base or gaining assurance for their participation in decision-making.
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50 The vast majority of the respondents were observed as not feeling involved in the tourism
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52 planning process (Segota et al., 2017). Cole (2006) asserted that community participation is a
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3 necessary tool for community support and acceptance of tourism development projects in
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5 ensuring that benefits relate to needs of the local community. In a similar study, Joo et. al.,
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7 (2020) demonstrated that rural Texas residents' perceived knowledge of tourism was positively
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9 related to their perceptions of psychological, social, and political empowerment through tourism,
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11 giving credence to the fact that residents' knowledge of tourism is one of the avenues to nurture
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13 their empowerment, since involvement in tourism can be constrained by an individual or a
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15 community's lack of information and knowledge. Based on these theoretical underpinnings, we
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17 propose the following hypotheses:
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22 H1a, 1b, 1c: Residents' involvement in tourism has a positive influence on their (a)
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24 psychological (b) social (c) political empowerment through tourism.
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28 **Economic benefits from tourism influences empowerment through tourism**

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31 Support for tourism is highly dependent on residents' favorable and welcoming attitudes
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33 (Ribeiro, Pinto, Silva, & Woosnam, 2017) since destinations will struggle to attract tourists if the
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35 residents are hostile or do not embrace visitors. It is commonly known that ~~that~~ residents'
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37 support is tied to the economic benefits ~~that~~ they receive from tourism and vice versa (Boley,
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39 Strzelecka, & Woosnam, 2018). By the same token, resident empowerment is also positively
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41 associated with economic benefits from tourism. Nonetheless, few studies have investigated this
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43 relationship. Boley et al. (2014) treated both empowerment and personal economic benefit as
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45 drivers of resident support and found that personal economic benefit and psychological
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47 empowerment have a direct positive effect on support for tourism. In another study of rural
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49 residents of Choczewo, Poland, both psychological empowerment and economic benefits from
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51 tourism were treated as drivers of resident support; it was found that only psychological
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3 empowerment predicted support for tourism (Strzelecka et.al, 2017). Panta and Thapa (2018)
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5 found that Nepalese women's involvement in tourism entrepreneurship offers opportunities for
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7 self-empowerment, especially enhancing their self-confidence, providing income-generating
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9 opportunities, and facilitating their role in household decision-making. In another related study
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11 of women's empowerment through self-help groups, economic independence and sense of self-
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13 realization (i.e., psychological empowerment) were found to be the common motives for
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15 participation in tourism entrepreneurship among Serbian women (Vujko, Tretiakova, Petrovic,
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17 Radovanovic, Gaju, & Vukovic, 2018). An additional study by Knight and Cottrell (2016),
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19 involving a rural community of Peru, revealed that increased confidence, happiness, and respect
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21 for women representing forms of psychological empowerment supersedes economic aspects. [In](#)
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23 [essence, residents' degree of empowerment through tourism is predicated on a realization of](#)
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25 [economic benefits derived from tourism, whether potential or actual.](#) Therefore, based on this
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27 logic, it is proposed that:

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33 H2a, 2b, 2c: Residents' economic benefit from tourism has a positive influence on their (a)
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35 psychological (b) social (c) political empowerment through tourism.
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40 **Empowerment through tourism influences place attachment**

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42 Place attachment has ~~ve~~ been operationalized in various ways, all pointing to the
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44 relationship between individuals and their environment. The ~~concept~~ depicts a positive
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46 connection or bond between a person and a particular place (Williams & Patterson, 1999), or the
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48 relationship between people and places. Low (1992) defined it as, "an individual's cognitive or
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50 emotional connection to a particular setting" (p. 165). [Given its complex nature, D](#)
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52 [distinct](#)
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54 dimensions of place attachment ~~have been~~ identified in past research. Kyle, Graefe, and
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3 Manning, (2005) identified three dimensions ~~of place attachment~~ as place identity, place
4 dependence, and social bonding. The work of Ramkissoon, Smith, and Weiler (2013) revealed a
5 four-dimensional structure including place dependence, place identity, place affect, and place
6 social bonding. [Landon, Woosnam, Kyle, and Keith \(2020\) also acknowledged this newer](#)
7 [dimension of place affect in their recent work.](#) Hammitt, Backlund, and Bixler (2006) went so far
8 as to identify five dimensions of place attachment (i.e., place familiarity, belongingness, identity,
9 dependence, and rootedness).

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The disparate operationalization of place attachment within the literature pose difficulties for tourism researchers (Ramkissoon & Mavondo, 2015; 2017). That said, the common thread running through all of these operationalizations is the inclusion of place identity and place dependence that Williams and Vaske (2003) advanced. Place identity is defined as the bonds and feelings individuals have with place settings (Ramkissoon et al., 2013). Place dependence reflects how well a setting facilitates users' particular activities, as well as the importance of a place in meeting the functional goals of individuals (Aleshinloye, Fu, Ribeiro, Woosnam, & Tasci, 2019).

Place attachment, with its two most widely used dimensions of place dependence and place identity, reflects the positive emotional bonds that develop between individuals and their socio-physical environment (Hwang, Lee, and Chen, 2006; Gross & Brown, 2008; Strzelecka, Boley, & Woosnam, 2017). The concept serves as an indication of how people care about or value the tangible (physical) and the intangible (social) aspects of their environment. It is used to explain the rationale for peoples' preferences of a setting or destination (Ramkissoon, Weiler, and Smith, 2012). Tourism researchers argued a reversed relationship between place attachment and empowerment, that residents who are more attached within their communities would be

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3 willing to work for the benefit of tourism when their local identity and personal goals are met,
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5 giving them a sense of empowerment (Strzelecka, Boley, & [StrzeleckaWoodsnam](#), 2017).
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7 Strzelecka et.al. (2017) considered the effect of place attachment on residents' perception of
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9 psychological, social and political empowerment. Results indicated that place identity and place
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11 dependence directly influenced residents' perceptions of psychological and social empowerment,
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13 while only place dependence influenced political empowerment through tourism.
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17 However, ~~it has also been shown logic deems that the contrary is more likely, that~~
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19 ~~empowerment can indeed explain place attachment. From work in organizational psychology,~~
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21 ~~Spreitzer and Mishra (2002) demonstrated that various forms of empowerment each uniquely~~
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23 ~~predicted employees' attachment to the organization. A similar finding was demonstrated in the~~
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25 ~~context of employees and organization culture by Kim (2014). Most recently within the context~~
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27 ~~of tourism, Lee et al. (2019) revealed that residents' empowerment significantly predicted their~~
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29 ~~attachment to using Airbnb as their hosting platform. Given these findings, it stands to reason~~
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31 ~~that those residents who feel empowered that residents who are empowered within their~~
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33 communities, would feel more attached to their communities and place. ~~Nonetheless, studies that~~
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35 ~~explore the influence of empowerment on place attachment, the two most prominent non-~~
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37 ~~economic constructs used in resident attitudes studies, are a void in literature thus far.~~
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39 ~~Understanding how empowerment through tourism influence residents' place attachment will~~
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41 ~~immensely contribute to knowledge on how empowerment enables bonding with local places.~~
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43 ~~Despite the singular work by Strzelecka et al. (2017) revealing attachment as an antecedent of~~
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45 ~~empowerment (albeit with limited effect sizes), greater support from the literature provides~~
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47 ~~evidence of empowerment serving as a precursor to place attachment. -Therefore, Thus, it is~~
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H_{3a, 3b, 3c}: Residents' (a) psychological (b) social (c) political empowerment through
tourism will positively impact their place identity.

H_{4a, 4b, 4c}: Residents' (a) psychological (b) social (c) political empowerment through
tourism will positively impact their place dependence.

Empowerment through tourism influences quality of life

Undoubtedly, tourism impacts have a great potential to affect locals' quality of life (QoL) (Andereck & Nyaupane, 2011; Khizindar, 2012; Woo, Uysal, & Sirgy, 2018). Defining and operationalizing QoL has been somewhat contentious in the literature given its subjective nature based on subjective perceptions (Ramkissoon, Mavondo, & Uysal, 2018). Andereck and Nyaupane (2011) defined QoL as "one's satisfaction with life and feelings of contentment or fulfilment with one's experience in the world" (p. 248). Generally speaking, the more empowered residents feel in a community, the greater their standard of living, and invariably their QoL will be. Undoubtedly, tourism influences residents' QoL in a community but its extent in each individual is highly subjective. Woo, Uysal, and Sirgy (2018) asserted that residents' perception of impacts involves economic, social, cultural, political, and environmental outcomes of tourism development which in turn play a substantial part in residents' overall judgement about the living conditions of the community.

A majority of tourism impact/attitudes studies on residents' QoL focuses largely on individual and community perceptions as it influences their environment positively or negatively (Andereck & Nyaupane, 2011; Ridderstaat, Croes, & Nijkamp, 2014). Moreover, studies investigating the influence of empowerment through tourism on residents' QoL, are scarce within the literature, although a few studies have identified or implied this relationship. For

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3 [example, Baniya, Shrestha and Karn \(2018\)](#) A-recently concluded a study on community-based
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[example, Baniya, Shrestha and Karn \(2018\)](#) A-recently concluded a study on community-based tourism (CBT) in Nepal [finding indicated that](#) a relationship between residents' psychological empowerment and well-being, satisfaction with life, and community attachment. [\(Baniya, Shrestha, & Karn, 2018\)](#).

[In the same vein](#), Roehl (1999) asserted that economic empowerment of residents through casino development was associated with high QoL, while their perceived social costs are associated with low QoL. Woo et.al. (2018) in their study of community residents, affiliated or not affiliated with the tourism sector, reported that the former is more satisfied with their perceptions of tourism impacts and QoL than the latter. More specifically, the group affiliated with the tourism sector, in other words, the empowered group (e.g., residents working in hotels, tourist attractions, restaurants) are likely to perceive tourism impacts on community economic well-being positively which translates to a higher personal QoL. In the same vein, the empowered residents are more likely to support development of tourism in their community, thereby giving political support for such ventures. Thus, the following hypotheses are formulated:

H_{5a, 5b, 5c}: Residents' (a) psychological (b) social (c) political empowerment through tourism will positively impact their quality of life.

Quality of life influences place attachment

Just as empowerment is expected to influence place attachment, QoL is also expected to influence both dimensions of place attachment. Joaquim, Joao, and Pereeira (2013) demonstrated a significant relationship between QoL attributes (e.g., basic needs, walkability, tourism attractions, infrastructures, commerce, and leisure) and place attachment among Portugal

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3 residents. Even though few studies have investigated this relationship, it is logical to expect that
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5 residents who have a good QoL would feel more attached to their living environments. Thus, the
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7 following hypotheses are proposed:
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10 H_{6a, 6b}: Residents' quality of life will positively impact their sense of (a) place identity (b)
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For Peer Review

METHODS

Study context

Over the last few years, the State of Florida has experienced a huge upsurge in visitor numbers. In fact, in 2018 the state set a tourism record for attracting 126.1 million out-of-state visitors (Visit Florida, 2019), marking the eighth consecutive year of [steadyexponential](#) growth in tourist numbers. Orlando happens to be the preferred destination not only in Florida but also throughout the U.S., ranking as the top destination in the country (WTTC, Economic impact report, 2019). A total of 75 million visitors (68.55 million domestic and 6.48 million international) visited Orlando in 2018, breaking the previous record of 72 million (Visit Orlando, 2019). Undoubtedly, tourism has been the major driver of Orlando's economy having been home to the nation's second largest convention center, seven of the World's top theme and entertainment parks, and a host of lodging options unrivaled in any other destination. Tourism annually generates approximately \$71 billion in economic impact, supporting roughly 449,000 jobs (41% of Orlando's workforce), with visitor spending in the neighborhood of \$45 billion, providing more than \$2 billion in state taxes and \$3 billion in local taxes (Visit Orlando, 2018).

The Orlando metropolitan area, commonly referred to as Central Florida consists of four counties namely, Lake, Orange (including Orlando), Osceola, and Seminole. This area boasts a population of 2,509,831 individuals (U.S. Census Bureau, 2017), making it the 23rd-largest metropolitan area in the U.S., the fourth-largest in the State of Florida, and the State's largest inland city. Yearly tourists' arrivals to these counties (excluding Lake), make up the visitors' statistics figures to the area (Visit Orlando, 2017). Orlando, the hub city of central Florida, is located in Orange county, nicknamed the 'Theme Park Capital of the World.'

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These enormous visitor arrivals and spending figures however do not translate into a state of wealth for Orlando residents. According to the U.S. Census Bureau (2015), over 350,000 Central Floridians are living in poverty — more than ever before, as the overall poverty rate (16.2%) for this region — Orange, Osceola, Lake and Seminole counties — was above the nation as a whole (15.6%), and significantly higher than the 11.7% average in the region just five years ago. According to the latest figures from the American Community Survey (ACS, 2017), the poverty rate in Orlando is 19.1% which is meaningfully higher in comparison across the State of Florida, which reported that 15.5% of residents are living in poverty. The reoccurring trends necessitated the need to investigate Orlando residents' attitudes to tourism and tourism development as reflected by the level of their empowerment.

Study instrument

Previously validated scales were used within the questionnaire. To measure involvement in tourism, a 3-item scale was borrowed from well-established studies (Palmer, Lewis & Jones, 2013; Zhang, 2008) ~~was utilized~~ (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.82$) and adapted to the context of our study. Economic benefits from tourism was measured using Boley et.al.'s (2017) 4-item scale (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.94$). Empowerment was measured employing Boley and McGehee's (2014) 12-item Residents' Empowerment through Tourism scale (Cronbach's α for psychological, social, and political empowerment = 0.95, 0.91, and 0.95, respectively). Economic empowerment dimension was excluded in order to avoid redundancy in the model since economic involvement in tourism, hypothesized as an antecedent of empowerment, has high resemblance to economic empowerment. Quality of life was measured by using a 4-item scale from Suess, Baloglu, and Busser (2018) and Yu (2011) (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.90$). Place attachment was measured using

Williams and Vaske's (2003) 12-item scale (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.95$). Each of these five scales was presented using a 7-point Likert scale of agreement (1 = strongly disagree; 7 = strongly agree).

To avoid Common Method Variance (CMV) or potential spurious variance due to the measurement method, a one-shot cross-sectional survey in this case, rather than to the measured constructs (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003), -a first measure was taken in the survey development stage; attention was paid to achieve clear and simple scale items to assure easy comprehension by respondents (Tehseen, Ramayah, & Sajilan, 2017). Besides sociodemographic questions, additional questions were designed to understand respondents' experience with tourism in the local context.

Sampling and data collection

Data were collected from permanent resident heads of households (or their spouses) living in or adjacent to the tourist district of central Orlando (within Orange, Seminole, and Osceola Counties). Data were collected using a self-administered, pen and paper questionnaire using census-guided systematic random sampling. This type of sampling scheme was used because of its ability to garner a representative sample of community residents, increase response rates, and include minority groups that may be left out from other sampling methods (Woosnam & Norman, 2010). The census-guided systematic sampling procedure began by identifying the various census tracts and block groups within Orange, Seminole, and Osceola Counties.

Secondly, the number of households within the census tracts and block groups was divided by the county's overall number of households to calculate what percentage of the county's total households were located in each jurisdiction. This allows for calculating how many

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3 questionnaires were needed within each census tract and block group to accurately represent the
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5 county's household population distribution.
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8 Following these calculations, every 3rd household on the right side of the road was chosen
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10 to be surveyed until the block group was fully represented. Researchers visited the randomly
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12 selected homes between March and August of 2018, asked heads of households (or their
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14 spouses) if they were willing to participate, and dropped off a questionnaire to be completed and
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16 collected that day or the following. [As a second measure to avoid CMV in the data collection
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18 procedure, surveys did not include any identifiers and respondents were assured anonymity to
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20 limit evaluation apprehension \(Tehseen, Ramayah, & Sajilan, 2017\).](#) A total of 732 households
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22 were contacted across the three counties, with 650 individuals agreeing to participate (an
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24 acceptance rate of 88.8%). From those, 415 individuals completed a questionnaire (a 63.9%
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26 completion rate), thus resulting in an overall response rate of 56.7%. The breakdown of the
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28 completed surveys among the three counties were Orange (216), Osceola (137), and Seminole
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30 (62).
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38 **Data analysis**

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40 IBM SPSS v.24 was used to analyze the data. Initially, descriptives and frequencies were
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42 requested to examine response distributions. [As a third measure to check CMV, Harman's
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44 Single-Factor Test was conducted by loading all of the variables into a single factor in EFA. The
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46 results showed that the variables explained 42.91% of the single factor, which is less than the
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48 accepted 50% threshold \(Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003\); thus, CMV ~~is~~ was not
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50 ~~founde~~ considered to exist in the study. Additionally, Common Method Bias \(CMB\) was
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52 ~~detected~~ assessed through a full collinearity assessment approach \(Kock, 2015\). Since all VIF
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3 [values were lower than the 3.3 threshold \(Kock, 2015\), the data are assumed to be free from](#)
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6 [common method bias.](#)
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8 Following this, Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) was used
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10 to test the reliability and validity of measures and associated relationships among variables.

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12 ~~Finally~~, SmartPLS 3.0 was used in a two-step process to assess the outer model (reflecting the
13 measurement model) followed by the inner model (reflecting the structure path model) in the
14 assessment of hypothesized model relationships (Hair et al., 2013). Construct reliability and
15 convergent validity were evaluated by several measures (Hair et al., 2013) including factor
16 loadings, Cronbach's α , composite reliability (CR), and average variance extracted (AVE)
17 estimates. Discriminant validity of the reflective PLS model was checked by comparing the
18 square root of the AVE of the factors to the inter-correlations.
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28 Before utilizing PLS-SEM, G*POWER 3.1.9.3 software (Faul, Erdfelder, Buchner, &
29 Lang, 2009) was used to check whether the sample size ($N = 415$) reflected an adequate
30 statistical power for the model, following recommendations of Lu, Heslop, Thomas, and Kwan
31 (2016). For a two-tailed test with a moderate effect size (0.30) and an error probability of 0.05,
32 the power (1-B err prob) was 0.999, which was well above the recommended threshold of 0.80.
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RESULTS

Sample characteristics

As demonstrated in Table 1, sample respondents were approximately 30 years of age, on average, with slightly more than half (54.7%) self-reporting as women. A preponderance (52%) of the participants resided in Orange County (the home county of Orlando city, proper). Almost half of the respondents had a college/university degree (48.9%), and more than half (60.2%) of the respondents were white/Caucasian. A little more than one in four residents (28%) claimed to have a Hispanic origin. Respondents, on average, lived in Orlando for about 10 years. A slight majority (53%) were currently employed within the tourism and hospitality sector. Finally, the mean percentage of annual individual household salaries derived directly or indirectly from Orlando visitor spending was 37%.

<Table 1. Here>

Descriptive analysis of major constructs

The widest range of responses to any of the five scales pertained to resident involvement in tourism items ($M = 3.40$ to 4.89) (see Table 2). The highest rated item of this scale reflects individuals' involvement as a domestic tourist of Orlando. Responses to items within the economic benefits of tourism scale ($M = 3.97$ to 4.47) were similar to those concerning involvement in tourism.

<Table 2. Here>

An interesting finding surfaced in the ratings of items within the empowerment scale. While the items reflecting the psychological empowerment were rated as 'slightly agree' ($M = 4.85$ to 5.10), items rating social empowerment ($M = 4.68$ to 4.81) and political empowerment ($M = 3.62$ to 3.93) were rated lower. This third form of empowerment was, in essence, rated

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3 negatively (i.e., 'slightly disagree'). Despite the lack of political empowerment, residents
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5 indicated that they 'slightly agreed' with perceived QoL items ($M = 5.19$ to 5.40). Nonetheless,
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7 this modestly reported QoL perception does not mirror residents' attachment to Orlando (i.e.,
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9 $M_{\text{place identity}} = 4.42$ to 4.75 ; $M_{\text{place dependence}} = 4.04$ to 4.39) which was significantly lower.
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14 15 **Results of PLS-SEM**

16 17 *Measurement model (outer model)*

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20 To establish a measurement model involving the eight factors, PLS-SEM was utilized.
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22 Table 3 shows factor loadings and cross-loadings for all items within their respective constructs.
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24 Following the suggested cutoff value of 0.70, (Hair et al., 2013), one item was deleted due to low
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26 factor loadings as specified in Table 2. Following this, all items loaded on their respective factor
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28 with coefficients between 0.84 and 0.95, and with larger loadings on their respective factors than
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30 on any other. All factors revealed Cronbach's α in excess of 0.70. Bootstrap validation to test the
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32 item loadings' significance using 500 samples revealed confidence intervals of the loadings at a
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34 95% level, with both lower and upper percentiles being positive. These values confirmed the
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36 scale's convergent validity for measuring the 8-Factor model. Furthermore, all AVEs were
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38 greater than 0.50, revealing more evidence of convergent validity. As displayed in Table 4, the
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40 square roots of the AVE, shown on the diagonals, were greater than the correlations between the
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42 factors, shown as the off-diagonal elements, confirming the discriminate validity of the model.
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48 <Table 3. Here>

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50 <Table 4. Here>

Structural model (inner model)

The proposed structural model (inner model) was assessed using 5000 bootstrap resamples and the confidence intervals at 95%. Table 5 displays the structural estimations of the model and Figure 2 shows the path coefficients along with R^2 values. To evaluate the model fit, the significance of the path coefficients between the exogenous and endogenous variables and R^2 values were examined.

<Figure 2. Here>

<Table 5. Here>

Of the 17 paths tested, 14 all but three were supported ($p < 0.05$). As for the influence of resident involvement in tourism on empowerment, it was significant for all dimensions; psychological empowerment ($\beta = 0.169, t = 2.893, p < 0.01$), social empowerment ($\beta = 0.312, t = 5.508, p < 0.01$), and political empowerment ($\beta = 0.511, t = 10.588, p < 0.01$). Regarding the expected influence of perceived economic benefits from tourism on residents' empowerment, the influence was significant on psychological empowerment ($\beta = 0.269, t = 4.415, p < 0.01$), and social empowerment ($\beta = 0.149, t = 2.405, p < 0.05$), but not political empowerment. Despite the non-significant relationship between economic benefits and political empowerment, involvement in tourism explained 32% of the variance in the empowerment factor.

Considering the influences of empowerment on QoL and place attachment, all but two paths were significant ($p < 0.05$). Psychological empowerment influenced place dependence ($\beta = 0.191, t = 2.699, p < 0.01$), place identity ($\beta = 0.395, t = 5.522, p < 0.01$), and QoL ($\beta = 0.370, t = 5.580, p < 0.01$). Social empowerment significantly explained place dependence ($\beta = 0.154, t = 2.207, p < 0.05$) and QoL ($\beta = 0.216, t = 3.211, p < 0.01$), but not place identity. Similarly, the influence of political empowerment was significant on place dependence ($\beta = 0.229, t = 4.798, p$

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3 < 0.01) and QoL ($\beta = -0.104, t = 2.445, p < 0.05$), but not place identity. Interestingly, the
4 influence of political empowerment on QoL was negative while all other influences in the model
5 were positive. An important learning that emerges from this finding is that residents who
6 generally are politically empowered may feel that no change is needed through more active
7 engagement in tourism development decision making for a better quality of life. QoL, on the other
8 hand, significantly influenced both dimensions of place attachment; place dependence ($\beta =$
9 $0.264, t = 5.689, p < 0.01$) and place identity ($\beta = 0.316, t = 6.412, p < 0.01$). As can be seen in
10 Table 5, beta values of involvement in tourism are higher than those of economic benefits from
11 tourism.
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24 An examination of the R^2 values for all endogenous variables revealed that involvement
25 in tourism and economic benefits from tourism were better predictors of political empowerment
26 ($R^2 = 0.320$) than psychological ($R^2 = .159$) or social empowerment ($R^2 = .178$). Each of the
27 empowerment dimensions, as well as involvement in tourism and economic benefits from
28 tourism, explained 26% of the variance in QoL, all of which then explained 47% of the variance
29 in place identity, and 41% of the variance in place dependence.
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DISCUSSION

This study endeavored to test a model of the antecedents and outcomes of resident empowerment. Specifically, the research focused on the effects of Orlando residents' involvement in and economic benefits from tourism on their empowerment, quality of life, and place attachment. The results showed that Orlando residents had relatively low perceptions of involvement in and economic benefits from tourism. They also showed relatively lower social and political empowerment compared to their psychological empowerment. This could be a result of their low level of knowledge ~~in~~ about tourism issues, which may be due to lack of interest or being neglected by those in positions of power within the community. These findings give credence to Joo et. al (2020) who asserted that the more residents are knowledgeable about tourism, the more psychological, social and political empowered they will be. As opined by Weng and Peng (2014), the major hindrance to resident participation or involvement in tourism decision-making process is the lack of proper knowledge. Having the correct information about possibilities for entrepreneurial activities through tourism could give rise to an entrepreneurial culture (Rodrik, 2002; Strolb & Peters, 2013) and thus facilitate residents' empowerment. Research has shown that people who grow up in an environment and social group where they have the required resources and knowledge about entrepreneurial activities and governmental support for tourism (Nunkoo, Smith & Ramkissoon, 2013), may be more likely to become more empowered and attached to their community (Hallak, Brown & Lindsay, 2012). The public sector may need to play an active role in facilitating new developments with opportunities for the residents to be involved in tourism activities (Boley et al., 2015; Koh & Hatten, 2002; Nunkoo & Ramkissoon, 2012).

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3 On the other hand, residents' perceived QoL was the highest rated concept in the study.
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5 A plausible explanation is that although most residents may not be directly employed by the
6 tourism sector, they do recognize that tourism is a significant indirect contributor enhancing their
7 quality of life. With the large number of tourists visiting, residents benefit from the indirect and
8 induced spending from tourism as well as the large tax receipts that the counties bring in from
9 tourism. Despite the high perception of QoL, residents' place attachment is more aligned with
10 their involvement in and economic benefits from tourism in terms of the way in which residents
11 responded to these items. ~~This is not outlandish given the more residents get involved in tourism~~
12 ~~matters and benefit economically from the industry, the higher their attachment to place will be,~~
13 ~~thus, invariably improving their living conditions and most likely their perceived QoL.~~ Tourism
14 development can provide direct and indirect benefits to the residents whether they are affiliated
15 or not with tourism as it provides employment opportunities, generates foreign exchange,
16 provides increased tax income generation for the community, thereby improving residents' QoL
17 (Ramkissoon et al., 2018; Uysal, Woo & Singal, 2012; Woo et.al. 2018). Residents' perceptions
18 of tourism impacts (i.e., economic, social, cultural, and environment) play a significant role in
19 predicting satisfaction with life domains (i.e., material well-being, community well-being, health
20 and safety) and ultimately QoL (Andereck & Nyaupane, 2011; Kim, Uysal & Sirgy, 2012; Su,
21 Huang, & Huang, 2018). Similarly, Woo, et.al. (2018) asserted that community residents'
22 perceptions of impacts involve economic, social, cultural, political, and environmental outcomes
23 of tourism development which in turn play a substantial part in residents' overall judgement
24 about the living conditions within the community.
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51 Residents' place attachment is crucial in tourism planning development as it changes the
52 appearance and meaning of local places, their connection with others and nature within places
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3 frequented by the tourists (Strzelecka et.al. 2017). Even though only economic benefits from
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5 tourism influenced political empowerment, this influence explained almost one-third of the
6
7 variance in political empowerment. PLS test results reflected that involvement in tourism had a
8
9 much higher influence on residents' empowerment than perceived economic benefits. Findings
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11 also revealed that psychological empowerment is the most significant dimension of resident
12
13 empowerment influencing both place attachment and place identity, suggesting that residents
14
15 hold special values for their place. Strzelecka et. al. (2017) asserted that psychological
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17 empowerment is the best predictor of resident support for tourism since the more the residents
18
19 identify with their local community and depend on their local environment for their lifestyle, the
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21 greater the potential for them to psychologically benefit from tourism which enhances
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23 confidence (Townsend et al., 2018). These findings are in parity with Maruyama, Woosnam, and
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25 Boley (2016) in their ethnic neighborhood tourism study of Japanese residents who have found
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27 increasing pride and self-esteem associated with psychological empowerment to be a great
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29 predictor of residents' support for tourism. The other two dimensions, social and political
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31 empowerment, did not have any influence on place identity. Another interesting finding from the
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33 study indicated that place dependence is predicted by residents' political, social, and
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35 psychological empowerment from tourism. This result indicates the circular relationships among
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37 between empowerment and place dependence. -Strzelecka et. al. (2017) asserted that residents
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39 will be politically motivated to engage in tourism (Megheiri et al., 2020) as long as local places
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41 continue to serve their personal goals. It is also asserted that residents who identify with their
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43 area and its tourism resources are more likely to support tourism (Nunkoo & Gursoy, 2012). The
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45 findings of the current study indicates that this empowerment and support may solidify place
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47 dependence in continued involvement in tourism.
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3 Even though the explanatory power of our model was rather low for QoL perception, it
4 was rather robust for both dimensions of place attachment. This study further provides empirical
5 evidence for the application of place attachment and tourism phenomena most especially in the
6 assessment of residents' attitudes and behavioral intentions towards tourism. There have been
7 contradictory findings regarding the influence of place attachment in residents' support or
8 attitudes toward tourism and tourism development. While this study showed great relationship
9 between residents' empowerment and their level of place attachment, some previous studies
10 indicated otherwise. Um and Crompton (1987) stressed that the more residents are attached to a
11 community in terms of length of residency, birthplace, and ethnic heritage, the less they ~~perceive~~
12 value the tourism development ~~where they reside in their domain~~. Most communities are
13 heterogeneous in composition with varying groups having different dispositions to tourism
14 development as it impacts them individually and collectively based on their level of
15 empowerment and disempowerment.
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Conclusion

Theoretical implications

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39 The findings from this study are of interest to both tourism scholars and practitioners.
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41 Our work is novel in its exploration of antecedents and outcomes of resident empowerment
42 through tourism in a single integrative framework. -We develop and propose a conceptual
43 framework and tested the linkages between involvement in tourism, economic benefits from
44 tourism, psychological empowerment, social empowerment, political empowerment, place
45 attachment and quality of life in a pre-COVID--19 context. Our study addressed an important gap
46 in place attachment studies which is especially more relevant in the immediate and post--COVID
47 -19 context. The pandemic has clearly reinforced the need for residents to be recognized as an
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3 important stakeholder in tourism (Ramkissoon, 2020a; 2020b); this further demands that we
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5 investigate how residents' empowerment influences their place attachment to better prepare for
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7 the post-pandemic context. An understanding of how residents need to be recognized as an
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9 important stakeholder (Ramkissoon, in press) and how empowerment through tourism influences
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11 place attachment is timely as we prepare for the post-pandemic context. Researchers can build on
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13 our framework to further explore associations between resident empowerment through tourism
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15 and other dimensions of place attachment. Another exciting aspect of our conceptual model is its
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17 contribution to quality of life studies in tourism, an area continuing to attract significant attention
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19 with researchers calling for more empirical research (Uysal, Berbekova, & Kim, 2020). We hope
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21 that our model will encourage future research in promoting residents' quality of life which
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23 should have enhanced focus in a post-pandemic era.

24 25 26 27 28 29 ***Practical implications***

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31 ~~The findings from this study are of interest to both tourism scholars and practitioners.~~
32 ~~Practical implications also exist for this work.~~ Firstly, ~~Given the results revealed that there is a~~
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34 ~~positive correlation between resident involvement in tourism and empowerment.~~ This should be
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36 ~~an indication for tourism planners and policy makers~~ should ; a medium should be
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38 ~~created~~ create a medium for residents in the community so that their voice can be heard.
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43 Residents need to be part of the decision-making process in their locality. They could be invited
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45 to participate in town hall meetings with policy makers, and regular meetings with community
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47 leaders, youth organizations, and other special interest groups. Our results suggest that those
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49 residents who are more involved in tourism may be more empowered. As our results indicate, the
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51 greater residents feel involved in tourism, the more empowered they perceive themselves to be.
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3 In essence, tourism planners and managers would be better served by incorporating residents
4 within the process so as to have greater ‘buy in’ from members of the local community.
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7 Our findings also have practical implications for outcomes of empowerment.
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9 Specifically, empowerment through tourism not only fosters a greater quality of life but also
10 attachment to the destination among residents. Destination marketing organizations (DMOs)
11 should establish a promotional campaign that demonstrates how feeling empowered through
12 tourism has a strong bearing on residents’ quality of life and attachment to Orlando; that Orlando
13 belongs to the residents just as much, if not more, than to the tourists who visit. In fact, efforts
14 should be made to not only convey the fact that Orlando will remain the residents long after
15 tourists leave but that DMOs care about residents in the long run. Secondly, residents’ perception
16 about tourism and tourism development is premised solely on the impacts associated with it. An
17 empowered resident feels equipped in dealing with the benefits and consequences of the tourism
18 entities in their environment. Perceptions of impacts whether positive or negative cut across
19 economic, social, cultural, political and environmental domains which play a dominate role in
20 residents’ overall assessment about their QoL (Woo, 2018). Destination and policy planners may
21 need to devise means by which resident empowerment initiatives will maximize the positive
22 impacts and minimize the negatives. This may reduce the tension among groups directly
23 benefiting from tourism and those that do not, as both will benefit directly and indirectly from
24 tourism activities.
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46 Lastly, tourism planners should incorporate community leaders, NGOs, and other interest
47 groups in their planning and policy making processes, as this will help foster understanding in
48 the short and long term.
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Limitations and future research

Apart from the theoretical and managerial implications, study limitations must be acknowledged. First, our study was conducted in three counties (i.e., Orange, Osceola and Seminole) comprising Orlando and the increasing number of tourists to the area (Visit Orlando, 2017), but the majority of respondents (52%) were from Orange County. Though efforts were made to secure a sizable and equitable distribution of participants from across the three counties, individuals from Orange County were most willing to participate. As such, the skewed percentages may have contributed to results of the study.

Despite our model highlighting the significant role empowerment plays in explaining residents' quality of life and place attachment, we neglected to consider how empowerment may also contribute to individuals' level of support for tourism in general. Given space limitations on the questionnaire and difficult decisions concerning what to include (to reduce the burden of time participants had to respond), we did not include the construct. That said, future work should consider empowerment as an antecedent to residents' support for tourism, as others have done in previous work (Khalid, Ahmad, Ramayah, Hwang, and Kim 2019; Strzelecka et al. 2017). Secondly, Additionally, only involvement in tourism and economic benefits from tourism were included as the antecedents of empowerment. Considering that their combined explanation power on empowerment was between 16% and 32%, other potential antecedents need to be considered in future research.

Additionally, data for the study were collected during both peak and off-peak seasons which could have created bias from some of the respondents. Perhaps arriving at individuals' homes during the peak season (considering that more than half of the sample currently worked in the hospitality and tourism industry) could have impacted the way in which individuals

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3 responded. [Though it was outside the scope of this research, we implore others to investigate](#)
4 [whether peak and off-peak responses potentially impact comparable models to ours. In fact, such](#)
5 [a measure could be considered a potential moderator as others have utilized similar approaches](#)
6 [\(see Park et al. 2015\).](#) Additionally, though our sample comprised a fairly robust percentage of
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8 residents with Hispanic lineage, the response rates were very low among this group of residents.
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10 Given time constraints, we were unable to provide a bilingual questionnaire prepared in Spanish
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12 which would have potentially increased our sample size and been more inclusive.
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Future research should consider the residents' sociodemographic factors such as age, educational level, length of residency, and affiliation to the tourism and hospitality industry in gauging individuals' level of empowerment, place attachment and QoL. Our study was conducted in Orlando, which is a global destination known for its theme parks and attractions. Subsequent research could be replicated in destinations with far less tourism development, perhaps one beginning to experience an uptick in visitors, so as to provide a basis for comparing residents' perceived empowerment in established and establishing tourism destinations.

Finally, all phases of the study, from instrument design to manuscript writing were conducted pre ~~Covid~~COVID-19. As the final version [of this manuscript](#) was being edited, the pandemic crippled the world and worldwide efforts to limit the human fatality resulted in bringing the tourism and hospitality industry to its knees. The most popular destinations as well as emerging ones became empty when even local residents stopped going out, which resulted in irreparable economic damages for highly tourism-dependent destinations. With the ample recent media coverage of all economic sectors pleading for recovery strategies, residents may be more aware of the critical role of tourism and hospitality more than ever. Therefore, if the study was repeated post-~~Covid~~COVID-19, the results may be even stronger than those of the current study.

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It is imperative that comparative studies are conducted in order to gauge the influence of this pandemic on resident attitudes and behaviors regarding tourism.

For Peer Review

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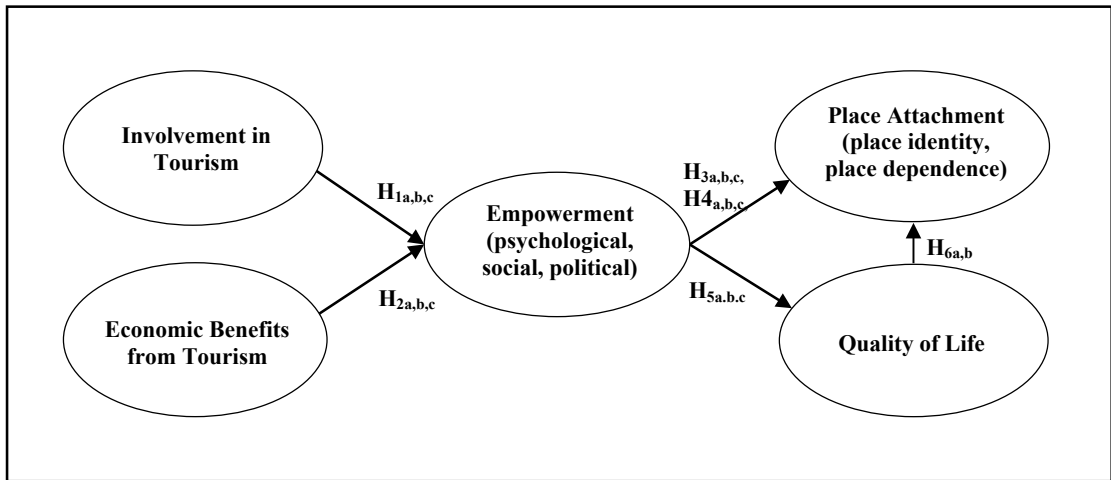


Figure 1. Conceptual model and study hypotheses

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For Peer Review

Table 1. Sociodemographic profile and destination experience of sample (N=415)

| Variables | % or Mean |
|--|------------------|
| Age (Years, mean) | 30.56 |
| Gender (%) | |
| Male | 45.3 |
| Female | 54.7 |
| Residence County (%) | |
| Orange | 52 |
| Osceola | 33 |
| Seminole | 15 |
| Level of Education (%) | |
| Primary/elementary | 0.2 |
| Secondary/High School Diploma | 29.6 |
| Technical/Vocational/Trade School | 10.4 |
| College/University Degree | 48.9 |
| Master's or PhD | 10.9 |
| Race/Ethnicity (%) | |
| American Indian/Alaska Native | 1.4 |
| White/Caucasian | 60.2 |
| Black/African American | 17.8 |
| Asian | 9.9 |
| Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander | 1.2 |
| Others | 9.4 |
| Hispanic (Yes %) | 28.4 |
| Years lived in Orlando (mean) | 10.53 |
| Currently employed in tourism and hospitality industry (Yes %) | 53 |
| Percentage of annual household salary derived directly or indirectly from Orlando visitor spending (mean) | 36.91 |

Table 2. Descriptive statistics of the scales (N=415)

| Variables (1 = Strongly Disagree, 7 = Strongly Agree) | Min. | Max. | Mean | Std. Dev. |
|--|------|------|------|-----------|
| Involvement in Tourism | | | | |
| I visit local tourist sites on a regular basis (Deleted in PLS;- for low factor loading) | 1 | 7 | 4.89 | 1.560 |
| I often offer my assistance to tourism promotional events/activities | 1 | 7 | 4.13 | 1.729 |
| I often attend local community meetings planning for tourism | 1 | 7 | 3.40 | 1.908 |
| Economic benefits from tourism | | | | |
| Tourism in Orlando helps me pay my bills | 1 | 7 | 4.32 | 1.908 |
| A portion of my income is tied to tourism in Orlando | 1 | 7 | 4.42 | 1.880 |
| I would economically benefit from more tourism in Orlando | 1 | 7 | 4.47 | 1.858 |
| My family's economic future depends on tourism in Orlando | 1 | 7 | 3.97 | 1.982 |
| Empowerment | | | | |
| Psychological Empowerment | | | | |
| It makes me proud to be an Orlando resident | 1 | 7 | 4.85 | 1.447 |
| It makes me feel special because people travel to see my city's unique features | 1 | 7 | 4.94 | 1.449 |
| It makes me want to tell others about what we have to offer | 1 | 7 | 5.04 | 1.395 |
| It reminds me that I have unique culture to share | 1 | 7 | 5.01 | 1.385 |
| It makes me want to keep Orlando special | 1 | 7 | 5.10 | 1.371 |
| Social Empowerment | | | | |
| It makes me feel more connected to my community | 1 | 7 | 4.71 | 1.354 |
| Orlando fosters the sense of community spirit within me | 1 | 7 | 4.68 | 1.376 |
| Orlando provides ways for me to get involved | 1 | 7 | 4.81 | 1.403 |
| Political Empowerment | | | | |
| I have a voice in Orlando tourism decisions | 1 | 7 | 3.67 | 1.650 |
| I have access to the decision-making process when it comes to tourism | 1 | 7 | 3.62 | 1.727 |
| My vote makes a difference in how tourism is developed | 1 | 7 | 3.93 | 1.682 |
| I have an outlet to share my concerns about tourism development | 1 | 7 | 3.86 | 1.734 |
| Quality of Life | | | | |
| Orlando is a desirable place to live | 1 | 7 | 5.25 | 1.351 |
| Orlando is an enjoyable place to live | 1 | 7 | 5.38 | 1.265 |
| My life improved in Orlando over time | 1 | 7 | 5.19 | 1.361 |
| I am satisfied with my quality of life | 1 | 7 | 5.40 | 1.220 |
| Place Attachment | | | | |
| Place Identity | | | | |
| Orlando is part of me | 1 | 7 | 4.73 | 1.652 |
| I identify strongly with Orlando | 1 | 7 | 4.59 | 1.618 |
| Orlando is special to me | 1 | 7 | 4.75 | 1.528 |
| I am attached to Orlando | 1 | 7 | 4.50 | 1.598 |
| Visiting Orlando says a lot about | 1 | 7 | 4.42 | 1.663 |
| Orlando means a lot to me | 1 | 7 | 4.52 | 1.659 |
| Place Dependence | | | | |
| No place compares to Orlando | 1 | 7 | 4.04 | 1.733 |
| Doing what I do at Orlando is more important | 1 | 7 | 4.14 | 1.692 |
| There is no substitute for what I do in Orlando | 1 | 7 | 4.06 | 1.748 |
| I enjoy what I do at Orlando at other similar site | 1 | 7 | 4.07 | 1.810 |
| Orlando is the best place for what I like | 1 | 7 | 4.39 | 1.686 |
| I get more satisfaction visiting Orlando than others | 1 | 7 | 4.22 | 1.738 |

Table 3. PLS Factor loadings (bolded) and cross loadings (N=415)

| Items and Factors | Economic Benefits from Tourism | Involvement in Tourism | Place Dependence | Place Identity | Quality of Life | Psychological Empowerment | Social Empowerment | Political Empowerment |
|--|--------------------------------|------------------------|------------------|----------------|-----------------|---------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|
| Economic Benefits from Tourism | | | | | | | | |
| Cronbach's Alpha = 0.94; CR = 0.96; AVE = 0.841 | | | | | | | | |
| Tourism in Orlando helps me pay my bills | 0.917 | 0.548 | 0.223 | 0.184 | 0.131 | 0.331 | 0.304 | 0.315 |
| A portion of my income is tied to tourism in Orlando | 0.926 | 0.561 | 0.200 | 0.141 | 0.109 | 0.333 | 0.263 | 0.324 |
| I would economically benefit from more tourism in Orlando | 0.938 | 0.552 | 0.219 | 0.199 | 0.157 | 0.357 | 0.329 | 0.369 |
| My family's economic future depends on tourism in Orlando | 0.886 | 0.639 | 0.319 | 0.226 | 0.075 | 0.352 | 0.356 | 0.451 |
| Involvement in Tourism | | | | | | | | |
| Cronbach's Alpha = 0.82; CR = 0.92; AVE = 0.845 | | | | | | | | |
| I often offer my assistance to tourism promotional events/activities | 0.617 | 0.911 | 0.346 | 0.275 | 0.144 | 0.331 | 0.386 | 0.447 |
| I often attend local community meetings planning for tourism | 0.547 | 0.927 | 0.415 | 0.258 | 0.063 | 0.295 | 0.361 | 0.580 |
| Place Dependence | | | | | | | | |
| Cronbach's Alpha = 0.95; CR = 0.96; AVE = 0.799 | | | | | | | | |
| No place compares to Orlando | 0.246 | 0.390 | 0.861 | 0.673 | 0.359 | 0.479 | 0.474 | 0.399 |
| Doing what I do at Orlando is more important | 0.208 | 0.363 | 0.886 | 0.660 | 0.395 | 0.484 | 0.479 | 0.395 |
| There is no substitute for what I do in Orlando | 0.212 | 0.376 | 0.918 | 0.619 | 0.406 | 0.485 | 0.452 | 0.394 |
| I enjoy what I do at Orlando at other similar sites | 0.265 | 0.379 | 0.910 | 0.586 | 0.373 | 0.453 | 0.493 | 0.424 |
| Orlando is the best place for what I like | 0.259 | 0.354 | 0.874 | 0.558 | 0.473 | 0.499 | 0.499 | 0.351 |
| I get more satisfaction visiting Orlando than others | 0.239 | 0.369 | 0.912 | 0.628 | 0.472 | 0.454 | 0.478 | 0.380 |
| Place Identity | | | | | | | | |
| Cronbach's Alpha = 0.95; CR = 0.96; AVE = 0.803 | | | | | | | | |
| Orlando is part of me | 0.117 | 0.143 | 0.512 | 0.889 | 0.489 | 0.525 | 0.438 | 0.203 |
| I identify strongly with Orlando | 0.168 | 0.249 | 0.562 | 0.911 | 0.483 | 0.561 | 0.466 | 0.241 |
| Orlando is special to me | 0.180 | 0.209 | 0.598 | 0.921 | 0.491 | 0.582 | 0.482 | 0.278 |
| I am attached to Orlando | 0.215 | 0.317 | 0.663 | 0.924 | 0.483 | 0.577 | 0.502 | 0.341 |
| Visiting Orlando says a lot about | 0.212 | 0.317 | 0.693 | 0.863 | 0.493 | 0.547 | 0.490 | 0.347 |
| Orlando means a lot to me | 0.221 | 0.317 | 0.698 | 0.867 | 0.484 | 0.538 | 0.457 | 0.332 |
| Quality of Life | | | | | | | | |
| Cronbach's Alpha = 0.90; CR = 0.93; AVE = 0.771 | | | | | | | | |
| Orlando is a desirable place to live | 0.091 | 0.050 | 0.347 | 0.431 | 0.873 | 0.406 | 0.333 | 0.066 |
| Orlando is an enjoyable place to live | 0.101 | 0.034 | 0.399 | 0.482 | 0.904 | 0.442 | 0.374 | 0.113 |

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Table 4. Discriminant validity (intercorrelations) of constructs ($N=415$)

| | Economic Benefits from Tourism | Involvement in Tourism | Place Dependence | Place Identity | Political Empowerment | Psychological Empowerment | Quality of Life | Social Empowerment |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------|------------------|----------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| Economic Benefits from Tourism | 0.917 | | | | | | | |
| Involvement in Tourism | 0.631 | 0.919 | | | | | | |
| Place Dependence | 0.267 | 0.416 | 0.894 | | | | | |
| Place Identity | 0.208 | 0.290 | 0.694 | 0.896 | | | | |
| Political Empowerment | 0.404 | 0.562 | 0.437 | 0.325 | 0.929 | | | |
| Psychological Empowerment | 0.376 | 0.339 | 0.532 | 0.620 | 0.421 | 0.919 | | |
| Quality of Life | 0.127 | 0.110 | 0.463 | 0.544 | 0.168 | 0.488 | 0.878 | |
| Social Empowerment | 0.345 | 0.406 | 0.537 | 0.528 | 0.538 | 0.752 | 0.438 | 0.921 |

Bolded figures are square root of average variance extracted (AVE).

Figures below the AVE line are the correlations between the constructs.

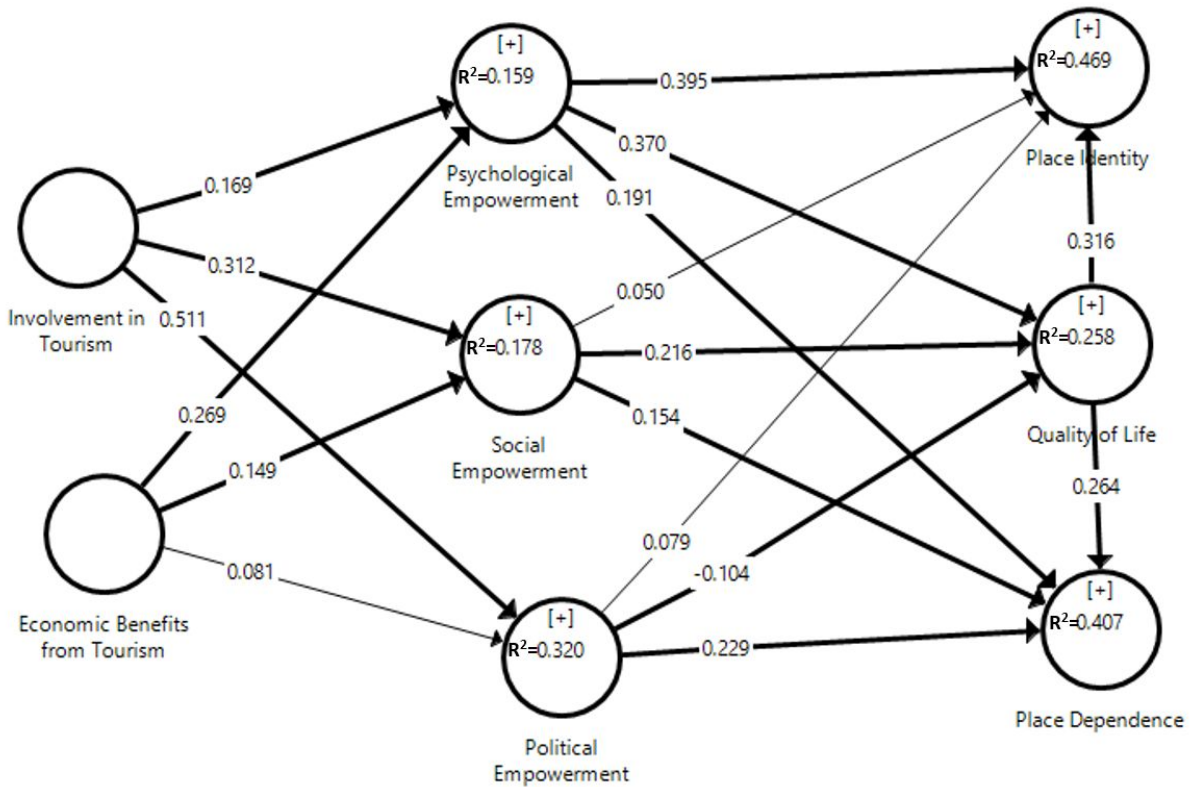


Figure 2. PLS regression paths and R² values (bold paths are statistically significant)

Table 5. Structural estimations (hypotheses testing) (N=415)

| | Original Sample (O) | Sample Mean (M) | Standard Deviation (STDEV) | t Statistics (O/STDEV) | p Values | |
|----|--|--------------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|-----------------|-------|
| 8 | Involvement in Tourism → Psychological Empowerment | 0.169 | 0.170 | 0.059 | 2.893 | 0.004 |
| 9 | Involvement in Tourism → Social Empowerment | 0.312 | 0.313 | 0.057 | 5.508 | 0.000 |
| 10 | Involvement in Tourism → Political Empowerment | 0.511 | 0.510 | 0.048 | 10.588 | 0.000 |
| 11 | Economic Benefits from Tourism → Psychological Empowerment | 0.269 | 0.271 | 0.061 | 4.415 | 0.000 |
| 12 | Economic Benefits from Tourism → Social Empowerment | 0.149 | 0.150 | 0.062 | 2.405 | 0.016 |
| 13 | Economic Benefits from Tourism → Political Empowerment | 0.081 | 0.082 | 0.055 | 1.480 | 0.139 |
| 14 | Psychological Empowerment → Place Dependence | 0.191 | 0.189 | 0.071 | 2.699 | 0.007 |
| 15 | Psychological Empowerment → Quality of Life | 0.395 | 0.394 | 0.071 | 5.522 | 0.000 |
| 16 | Social Empowerment → Place Dependence | 0.370 | 0.369 | 0.066 | 5.580 | 0.000 |
| 17 | Social Empowerment → Quality of Life | 0.154 | 0.157 | 0.070 | 2.207 | 0.027 |
| 18 | Social Empowerment → Place Identity | 0.050 | 0.051 | 0.068 | 0.737 | 0.461 |
| 19 | Social Empowerment → Quality of Life | 0.216 | 0.218 | 0.067 | 3.211 | 0.001 |
| 20 | Political Empowerment → Place Dependence | 0.229 | 0.229 | 0.048 | 4.798 | 0.000 |
| 21 | Political Empowerment → Place Identity | 0.079 | 0.080 | 0.046 | 1.715 | 0.086 |
| 22 | Political Empowerment → Quality of Life | -0.104 | -0.104 | 0.043 | 2.445 | 0.015 |
| 23 | Quality of Life → Place Dependence | 0.264 | 0.264 | 0.046 | 5.689 | 0.000 |
| 24 | Quality of Life → Place Identity | 0.316 | 0.316 | 0.049 | 6.412 | 0.000 |

**Comments and actions taken for the revision and resubmission of manuscript
JTR-25-05-18. R2, “Antecedents and outcomes of resident empowerment through tourism”**

Reviewer 1

| Comments (verbatim) | Actions taken |
|---|---|
| <p>1. As I mentioned in my first review, I really like the research gap the authors are attempting to fill and totally agree with them that the antecedents and outcomes of empowerment are understudied within the tourism literature. However, I feel like the paper is a little stale and does not provide any cutting-edge results. In fact, the more I think about it, the manuscript kind of cobbles the results of a few other studies together (Joo et al., 2020; Strzelecka et al., 2017) and retests them within one under-theorized model. This is a modest contribution in my perspective.</p> | <p>We strongly believe that our findings contribute immensely to the literature because this study is one of the few that investigates the social impacts of a highly touristic destination—Orlando, FL (the most visited destination within the U.S.)—where tourism impacts can be expected to be drastic. It is our hope that building on the works of Joo et al. (2020) and Strzelecka et al. (2017), our work will continue to contribute to theory development as it relates to the tested constructs.</p> |
| <p>2. I am particularly bothered by how the construct of involvement is measured and portrayed within the paper. The items measuring involvement are solely focused on volunteering within the tourism industry and attending tourism-related meetings (table 2). To me this is a measure of resident participation/action, not a measure of how a resident perceives they are involved or how a resident perceives they are granted the ability to be involved. However, the authors are loose with this interpretation and I find them blending the concepts of involvement and political empowerment throughout the paper. For example, in the discussion section the authors write:</p> <p>“Firstly, the results revealed that there is a positive correlation between resident involvement in tourism and empowerment.</p> | <p>Thank you for your comments. We have now mentioned in the manuscript that the measurement scale for involvement was borrowed from well-established studies and adapted to the context of our study.</p> |

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| <p>This should be an indication for tourism planners and policymakers; a medium should be created for residents in the community so that their voice could be heard. Residents need to be part of the decision-making process in their locality. They could be invited to participate in town hall meetings with policymakers, and regular meetings with community leaders, youth organizations, and other special interest groups.” Pg 28 lines 16-35.</p> | |
| <p>3. This makes it sound like to increase involvement/participation, those in the tourism industry need to create more avenues to participate. This would make sense if the direction of the relationship being tested was political empowerment’s influence on involvement (or action) as hypothesized by Joo et al. (2020). However, the authors’ model has it reversed. I think this is problematic because the literature shows involvement and behavior to be contingent on empowerment, not empowerment contingent on one’s own behavior. They also have the relationship between place attachment and empowerment reversed from the work of Strzelecka et al. (2017). I am not sure these limitations are deal-breakers, but they are concerns I still have after reviewing the revised manuscript.</p> | <p>The authors accept the tri-component attitude model, in other words, the bidirectional relationships among cognition, affect, and behavior. Besides, the authors accept the continuous and circular nature of these influences. Even though cognition is typically believed to be the beginning point influencing affect, which then influence behavior, this behavior can be the beginning point on the next cycle, influencing future cognition and affect and thus future behavior. Therefore, any of these components can be the independent variable in a model. Hence, we assumed that past action or behavior (involvement) influences empowerment (cognition), which then influences quality of life (cognition), and place attachment (a combination of cognition and affect). Therefore, this approach to assessing these relationships should not be considered as deal breakers.</p> |
| <p>4. Abstract o I think the abstract could use some attention. It does not really grab the reader’s attention as to why this study is important. I would consider changing “in clarifying” to ‘therefore,’ and mentioning Orlando, FL as the highly touristic destination to provide more</p> | <p>Thanks for bringing our attention to this, we have reworded the abstract to reflect your constructive observations.</p> |

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| context. Also, the last sentence of the abstract is a little confusing as it is currently written. | |
| 5. In the future, the strikethrough feature is distracting to reviewers. It is fine to have changes highlighted or a different font, but all the strikethroughs were distracting. | We have utilized 'track changes' as the Journal of Travel Research encourages this approach for conveying modifications to the manuscript. |
| 6. Pg. 3 line 19: rather than say this has yet to be investigated, I would say something more along the lines of it being 'not well understood.' This is because Strzelecka et al., 2017 helped fill this gap. | Thanks for drawing our attention to this, we have corrected it as suggested. |
| 7. Pg 3 line 35: change 'in' to 'to' | We have replaced the word accordingly. |
| 8. Pg 4 line 24: change 'the' to 'a' | We have changed this, thanks for your observation. |
| 9. Literature Review o Pg 5 line 10: change work to works | Corrected as directed, thank you. |
| 10. Pg 5 line 52: is the word origination more appropriate? | We totally agree with you, corrected as advised. Thanks |
| 11. Pg 6 lines 17-20: This description of psychological empowerment does not mention resident pride and self-esteem. I would add this to the description. | Thank you. We have now included the following '...enhancing residents' pride and their self-esteem. |
| 12. Pg 7 lines 26-35: I would start this with "Thus" and insert 'resident' before 'involvement' and 'perceived' before 'economic benefits.' I would also add 'resident' before 'quality' and 'their' before 'place attachment.' | Thank you for highlighting this and bringing it to our attention. We have followed your suggestion and inserted the words accordingly. |
| 13. Pg 8 lines 21-26: I am not sure these sentences fit the context | Thank you for bringing this to our attention. We have deleted lines 21-26 (p. 8). |

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| <p>14. Pg 8 lines 26-34: This does not convince me that there is a difference between involvement and political empowerment. It basically implies that they are one and the same.</p> | <p>Thank you for your comment. We have now deleted these sentences and the preceding sentence.</p> |
| <p>15. Pg 10 line 24: Rather than just listing a bunch of studies and their finds and then saying 'based on this logic,' I would summarize this logic. The empirical results supporting the relationships does not speak to logic. It just speaks to results. I think it would be nice to have a summary statement in your own words here that speaks to the theory/logic and the past findings and how they work together to support your hypotheses. This same comment applies to Hypotheses 3abc and 4abc where you write "stands to reason." I think you need to boil these findings down into some type of summative declarative statement as to why this relationship should exist.</p> | <p>Thank you for bringing this to our attention. In heeding your advice, we have provided a statement in each location that serves as a more "summative declarative statement as to why these relationships should exist." We feel this will provide further justification of the proposed relationships.</p> |
| <p>16. Pg 13 line 40: I would add "For example," here</p> | <p>Thank you. We have made the correction.</p> |
| <p>17. Pg 13 line 49: Why the new paragraph here? There does not appear to be a logical transition.</p> | <p>Thanks for this observation, we have made the transition more smoother and connecting.</p> |
| <p>18. Data analysis Pg 18 line 47: I would change 'detected' to 'assessed'. Detected makes it sound like you found CMB when you really tested for it.</p> | <p>Thanks, we totally agreed with you and the correction was done as directed.</p> |
| <p>19. Results Pg 20 line 18: Could you compare these to the census statistics on race, education, and age to see if your sample is close to matching the census' estimates?</p> | <p>This is not necessary because the purpose of the study is not to describe a tourism phenomenon related to the entire population in Orlando; the purpose is to test relationships among constructs within the framework of social impacts of tourism. Therefore, what is more important than having a representative sample is to have a sample who has</p> |

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| | some level of involvement in tourism, which is a little more than 50% in the current study. |
| 20. Pg 23 lines 28-29: You have the R2 value for political empowerment but not psychological or social empowerment. I would provide it for all of them. | Thank you we provided these R squares as well. |
| 21. Discussion Pg 24 line 20: change 'in' to 'of' | Thanks, corrected as directed. |
| 22. Pg 25 lines 25-30: A couple of times you bring up resident perceptions of the impacts of tourism. While this is important and the bedrock of Social Exchange Theory, these are not included in your model, so I don't think it is appropriate to include them in your practical implications from the study because you are in essence speculating since you did not empirical test their influence within the model. | Thank you for your comment. We have not included this in the practical implications emanating from the current study. |
| 23. Pg 26 lines 35-41: You write that place dependence predicts political empowerment here, but that is not in your model and you do not test it. You did find that political empowerment predicts place dependence, but not the reverse. | Sorry for this typo, it is corrected as below: Another interesting finding from the study indicated that place dependence is predicted by residents' political, social, and psychological empowerment from tourism. This result indicates the circular relationships among between empowerment and place dependence. Strzelecka et al. (2017) asserted that residents will be politically motivated to engage in tourism (Megheiri et al., 2020) as long as local places continue to serve their personal goals. It is also asserted that residents who identify with their area and its tourism resources are more likely to support tourism (Nunkoo & Gursoy, 2012). The findings of the current study indicates that this empowerment and support may solidify place dependence in continued involvement in tourism. |
| 24. Pg 27 lines 15-17: What do you mean by "less they perceive tourism development where they | Thanks for bringing our attention to this. The more the residents are attached to the community, the |

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| <p>reside?" Do you mean they don't recognize it or that they are less aware of the negative impacts?</p> | <p>less they value tourism development because they feel there are losing their place to others. We have reworded the sentence to reflect the above.</p> |
| <p>25. Pg 27 lines 43-50: This sentence is hard to understand.</p> | <p>Thank you. The sentence has now been reworded as follows.</p> <p>The pandemic has clearly reinforced the need for residents to be recognized as an important stakeholder in tourism (Ramkissoon, 2020a; 2020b); this further demands that we investigate how residents' empowerment influences their place attachment to better prepare for the post-pandemic context.</p> |
| <p>26. Pg 28 lines 18-21: This sentence is awkward and hard to understand</p> | <p>Thanks for this clarification. We have reworded the sentence to reflect your observation.</p> |
| <p>27. Pg 28 line 29-30: This is one of my biggest problems with the paper. Language like this makes it sounds like your measured perceptions of feeling involved. However, when you look at your survey items, they measure behaviors and actions. The paper inaccurately conflates these things.</p> | <p>Thank you for your comments. We have reworded as follows:</p> <p>Our results suggest that those residents who are more involved in tourism may be more empowered.</p> |