**Response to Reviewers’ Comments**

**Manuscript Number: RTXG-2017-0161.R2**

I would like to thank the reviewers for careful and thorough reading of this manuscript and for the thoughtful comments and constructive suggestions, which help to improve the quality of this manuscript. Please, find below the referees’ comments repeated in italics in left column and my responses inserted in right column. To facilitate the work of the reviewers, in some instances I refer to the former manuscript indicating the page and the line (page-line).

Looking forward hearing from you soon.

**Reviewer1**

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| **Comment** | **Response** |
| *1. Please provide some detailed and interesting findings. The current ones, such as “a majority of Chinese tourists come from East China”, are kind of common sense.*  | More detailed comparative analysis for group package tourist flow and free independent tourist flow has been added. The results and discussions are presented from three levels:**Node structure:**Most nodes in FIT network have higher degree centrality than the nodes in GPT network .The node Tokyo, Kyoto, and Osaka are the most important destinations for both the GPTs and FITs. However, the destination Fujisan is not ranked within the most important destinations for FITs. In addition, regional key cities and the cities with small international airports are more important to FITs.**Distribution of tourist flow:** Spatial distribution of FIT flows is more extensive, FITs visit more regions including Tohoku region, Chugoku region and Shikoku region and have more inter regional movement.**Network pattern of tourist flow:**FIT network has larger size, longer diameter and lower density, showing a looser structure compared to GPT network. FIT network comprises five sub regions while GPT network comprises three. The connections between sub regions within FIT network are stronger than GPT network. |
| *You should write about some unique insights of Chinese-Japan tourism that you draw from your social network analysis.* | The practical implications based on the results from social network analysis have been added in the article. |
| *2. The quantitative methods you adopted are not very clear. The formula should be included in Table 2 to make this analysis scientific and repeatable.* | The formulas have been added in the table 2. |

**Reviewer2**

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| **Comment** | **Response** |
| *In order to obtain FIT itinerary, the authors use trip dairies from two websites, Ctrip and Mafengwo as the data source. However, within the context and scope of this research, it is impossible to obtain important information, such as the demographic information and the quality and reliability of information posted on their online dairies may**very to be traced or examined.*  | The online diaries contained detailed and accurate information about travel purposes, trip arrangement, daily movements, attractions visited, activities at each destination, transport mode among destinations, which enable the author to acquire the information about FIT flows. Moreover, the basic information of the sample has been presented in table 1.Profile of the sample. |
| *This is not saying that online information is not qualified for all research purpose, but considering the context and aim of this paper, questionnaires, rather than online dairies/blogs, would be a better way to collecting FIT data.* | At the very beginning the GPT data was about the tourists who traveled to Japan in 2016. For a comparative analysis, the author need to collect the data about free independent tourists who travel to Japan in the same year (2016) so it is very difficult to find these tourists for questionnaire survey now. However, the online diaries provided a good source. |
| *Besides, the author did not provide and explain principles and standard for selecting qualified online dairies.* | The data is based on some principles:Firstly, the diaries were posted by mainland Chinese tourists who traveled to Japan in 2016.Secondly, tourists who wrote diaries on these websites were independent tourists, as a result their movements in Japan were of their free will. Thirdly, the tourist visited more than one destination so that their trip itineraries are multi destination itineraries.Finally, the diaries contain detailed and accurate information about tourists’ movement.Of course it may neglect the tourists who do not like to express their views on internet and it is indeed the limitation of the data source in this research. |
| *It should be highly expected that there are significant differences and similarities between FIT and GPT, however, base on the updated research conclusion in the current paper after adding FIT data, there seems no substantial or notable “new conclusions” provided.* | More detailed comparative analysis for group package tourist flow and free independent tourist flow has been added. The results and discussions are presented from three levels:**Node structure:**Most nodes in FIT network have higher degree centrality than the nodes in GPT network .The node Tokyo, Kyoto, and Osaka are the most important destinations for both the GPTs and FITs. However, the destination Fujisan is not ranked within the most important destinations for FITs. In addition, regional key cities and the cities with small international airports are more important to FITs.**Distribution of tourist flow:** Spatial distribution of FIT flows is more extensive, FITs visit more regions including Tohoku region, Chugoku region and Shikoku region and have more inter regional movement.**Network pattern of tourist flow:**FIT network has larger size, longer diameter and lower density, showing a looser structure compared to GPT network. FIT network comprises five sub regions while GPT network comprises three. The connections between sub regions within FIT network are stronger than GPT network. |

**Reviewer: 3**

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| **Comment** | **Response** |
| *I read through the manuscript and check all the revised contents and responses to the comments from three reviewers. The author did answer all of the questions. Besides the study samples have been enlarged and the samples from independent tourists were also been included. Due to that, the study result are also rewritten. I think this manuscript is ready to be published.* | Thanks for your comments. |