Reviewer's report

Title: Cross-Sectional Survey to Develop a Scale of Community Commitment for Preventing Social Isolation in Older People

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Reviewer: Hiroshi Murayama

Reviewer's report:

This study tried to develop a scale of community commitment for preventing social isolation in older people. This is an important topic in a rapid-aging country, Japan. However, there are several points to address before publication.

Major Compulsory Revisions

Purpose of the study:

I could not clearly understand for who this scale was. You intended that this scale was used by volunteers? Or by local residents (general population)? In the text, you described local volunteers as target subject and general residents as control group. Thus, I thought this scale was for volunteers, although you did not clearly mention so. If this scale is for volunteers, why did you test the scale reliability and validity among the general population? Volunteers generally have high-conscious for helping elderly and high sense of community. Therefore, they are quite biased population, I thought. In page 7 (line 157), you assessed the response difficulty by using the volunteer sample, but the general respondents (general population) who felt the items difficult to understand might be more than the volunteers. Moreover, you showed the comparison of the item distribution between volunteers and general samples in Table 3 in appendix (page 11, line 245 in the main text). Q1 and Q2 were excluded by the ceiling effect and its skewness. However, in the general sample, there seems not to be ceiling effect and skewed distribution. You should add the explanation about this point.

Minor Essential Revisions

Title:

“Cross-sectional survey to develop a scale of community commitment for preventing social isolation in older people”...this study is about scale development of community commitment (CC). Is there any need to add “for preventing social isolation in older people”? Was the CC in this study specific only for preventing social isolation in older people? If not, this phrase might delete from the title. In addition, you had better to indicate study setting in the title (eg, Japan).

Introduction:

Page 5. You reviewed the similar concept with CC; sense of community (SOC) and the Japanese scale of “the attitude toward community”. However, I could not
well-understand the difference between the concept of CC and SOC and between CCS and the attitude toward community scale. You should mention more clearly the difference and the similarity among these and the reason why CCS must be developed in this study (why did not you try to develop the Japanese SOC scale?).

Methods:
Page 8, line 168. How did you treat the response of “I cannot understand” in factor analysis.

Page 8, line 174. In page 6, line 134, you mentioned “pilot test”, so you had better to mention “main survey or main study” here.

Page 8, line 183. You included all of the local volunteers in the main survey conducted in Osaka. However, I thought that there were a lot of types of volunteer activities. Did you include the volunteers engaged in the activities which were not related to health and welfare field or which were not for elder people? You should add the explanation about the types of the volunteer activities and criteria for the study.

Page 9, line 207. Was BSCS translated only for this study? Did this scale really have enough validity and reliability? You had better to indicate the brief information on these of BSCS.

Result:
Page 12, line 262. You excluded Q5 and Q6 by the result of factor analysis including 10-item of CCS, and made the scale of 8-item. I wondered if there is no need to perform factor analysis by new 8-item in order to confirm the validity of final version of the scale.

Table 2 and Table 4 in appendix. You showed the item statements of the scale. There are two types of nominative (starting with “I” and other nominatives). The statements starting with “I” would measure the consciousness of the respondents themselves. However, the statements starting with other words (eg., my neighbors..., socializing in my community…) would measure the impression or opinion of the respondents for their neighborhood or community with some objectivity. In each two subscale, these two types were mixed. Which types of cognitions did the scale intend to measure? And was the mixture valid to measure the CC? Please explain.

Table 3. You showed the total score, range, skewness, kurtosis and alpha of the scale. In addition, you indicated the alpha of the two subscales. Which did you intend to used the scale, by total score or subscale score? If this scale should be used by subscales, please show the score, range, skewness and kurtosis of the two subscales. In addition, I would like to know the correlation of subscales with BSCS and two types of self-efficacy (If you intended the scale to be used in subscales, please show in the table).

Page 12, line 274. You confirmed the concurrent validity by examining the
associations of CCS with BSCS and two types of self-efficacy for helping elderly. Was the confirmation of this validity enough? This is related to my comment for the title (see above), but was this scale to measure the CC for preventing social isolation among the elderly? Or to measure the general CC?

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests.