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국제학석사학위논문

**The “Positive” Commercialization of Disaster
after the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake**

2011 일본 동북부대지진의 재해 마케팅 사례 연구

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권 신 애

**The “Positive” Commercialization of Disaster
after the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake**

A thesis presented

by

Shinai Kwon

to

Graduate Program in International Cooperation
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
For the Degree of Master of International Studies

**Graduate School of International Studies
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Abstract

The “Positive” Commercialization of Disaster after the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake

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The 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake and its accompanied tsunami resulted in a devastating loss of lives and property, and crippled the industry in the region especially the locally-owned, small-to-medium sized businesses. While there is growing skepticism among consumers worldwide, two unique types of cause-related marketing have been observed to gain great success in Japan amongst the various efforts for the reconstruction and revival of the Tohoku region. The two “positive” commercialization of disaster – “buy to support Tohoku” and “visit to support Tohoku” campaigns – exhibit a new type of strategic collaborative partnership framework that brings together the government, the private sector, and civic, non-profit organizations to assist the revitalization of the local businesses, and thus, of the local communities in disaster-affected areas. The paper locates the distinctive characteristic of the two cause-related marketing initiatives in the involvement of local businesses in disaster-affected areas, by illustrating how the recipients of the benefits derived from these cause-related marketing campaigns – the local businesses – are not passive agents but also active actors that work on business

rationale within the private sector. The reasons behind the success of these cause-related marketing initiatives are given: the matching of positive customer response variables to the characteristics of the campaigns which originate from the unique partnership framework; the situational difficulties for local businesses which have been widely and continuously publicized in Japan; and the creation and reconstruction of social capital during the disaster relief stage. This background paved the way for a “positive” commercialization of disaster that the Japanese public welcomed and continue to respond to and engage in, reinforcing existing social capital, and shedding a brighter ray of hope in the revitalization of local business in the disaster-affected areas.

Keywords: Great East Japan Earthquake, cause-related marketing, disaster recovery, reconstruction after disaster, local business

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국문 초록

2011년 3월 일본 동북부지역을 강타한 일본동북부대지진은 수많은 생명과 더불어 일본 도호쿠지방의 산업, 특히 지역 주민들이 운영하는 소규모 사업 및 중소기업들에게 큰 영향을 끼쳤다. 이러한 상황에서, 일본 도호쿠지방의 산업 부흥을 위한 다양한 활동 중 재해지역이라는 특수성을 이용하는 두 가지 마케팅 전략이 특히 큰 성과를 거두고 있는데, 이는 전세계적으로 소비자들이 마케팅에 대해 냉소적인 태도를 보이는 경향이 나타나고 있는 것을 고려하였을 때 괄목할 만하다. 이 두가지 재해 마케팅 사례는 “도호쿠 지원을 위한 소비” 그리고 “도호쿠 지원을 위한 여행”으로 나타나는데, 이는 정부, 사기업, 공기업 및 NGO/NPO 가 협력하는 전략적 구조를 보여줌과 동시에, 지원의 수혜자인 지역사회와 지역산업체가 단순히 수동적 수혜자의 역할이 아닌 능동적 참여자의 위치에서 사기업과 함께 비즈니스 논리를 가지고 움직인다는 점에서 다른 공익연계마케팅과 차별점을 가지고 있다. 본 논문에서는 일본동북부대지진 이후 나타난 이 두 가지 재해 마케팅 사례의 구체적 설명과 더불어, 이를 사례가 어째서 성공적일 수 있는지에 대한 요인으로, 차별화된 협력구조를 기반으로 기존 연구에서 공익연계마케팅이 궁정적 소비자 반응을 얻을 수 있는 요건들을 가지게 된 점, 일본 내부에서 도호쿠지역 산업이 직면한 어려움들이 계속적, 심층적으로 보도되며 국민적 관심을 지속하고 있는 점, 그리고 재해 복구 과정 속에서 새롭게 구축되거나 강화된 사회적 자본을 꼽고 있다.

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I. Introduction

Japan is not unfamiliar with natural disasters, especially with its frequent experiences of earthquakes, but the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake, which occurred on 11 March 2011, was notable for its severe magnitude of 9.0 Richter scale, the third strongest earthquake recorded in history.¹ The Great East Japan Earthquake and its accompanied tsunami wiped out the Tohoku region along the Pacific coast of Japan, resulting in a devastating loss of lives and property. The preliminary reports of the destruction caused by the earthquake released a month after the event show that the earthquake affected an area of approximately 36,000 km², and resulted in a death toll of 13,392 lives and another 15,133 missing persons. The number of buildings that received damage was counted to be 59,806 buildings,² and with the destruction of homes, the peak number of displaced population reached an overwhelming 440,000.³

In addition to the tragic number of more than 28,000 people dead or missing, the Great East Japan Earthquake also caused destruction and damage to major infrastructure including roads, bridges, ports, and railroads. As a whole, the destructive force of the earthquakes and tsunami affected more than two dozen prefectures with a population estimated at over 15 million, and the estimated cost of damage covering the destructed

¹ Norio et al., 2011

² Japan National Police Agency, 2011

³ World Health Organization, 2011

houses, factories, and infrastructure are, as released by the Japanese government, between 16 trillion and 25 trillion yen, which is between 2.2 percent and 4 percent of Japan's GDP.⁴ Since the estimated cost of damage for the 1995 Kobe Earthquake was approximately 100 trillion yen, the damages incurred by the Great East Japan Earthquake are at most 2.5 times bigger than what the Kobe Earthquake caused. The information released by the Development Bank of Japan Tohoku Branch Office on April 27 gives a more detailed look at the cost of damage in the four hardest-hit prefectures – Iwate, Miyagi, Fukushima, and Ibaraki. These four prefectures experienced a total economic damage of 16,373 billion yen, with Miyagi prefecture taking up about 40 percent of the loss. Meanwhile, the losses faced by Iwate prefecture, where there was a massive wipe out of smaller cities and towns along the coast, mounts up to 47 percent of its total assets in coastal areas.⁵

One significant characteristic of the aftermath of the Great East Japan Earthquake is that the areas most affected by the Great East Japan Earthquake were rural landscapes with low population density which faced continual decline even before the earthquake. The three prefectures of Miyagi, Iwate, and Fukushima were experiencing the pressure of outmigration by the younger and able, resulting in a rapidly aging population whose main source of income were family-run farming and fishing. These areas suffered greatly from the catastrophe with the tsunami damaging large parts of their communities. As many as

⁴ Japanese Government Cabinet Office Release on March 23, 2011

⁵ Asian Disaster Reduction Center(ADRC) and the International Recovery Platform (IRP), 2011

11 municipalities had more than 50 percent of their residents whose houses were in the tsunami-struck areas, and a large number of municipalities placed under voluntary evacuation orders, deepening the force of disaster and loss felt from it by the residents in these municipalities.⁶

The outmigration of population due to evacuation is felt by the Tohoku region, a region which has already been experiencing continuous decrease in population. According to the Reconstruction Agency, the number of people evacuated from the three disaster-stricken Tohoku prefectures – Iwate, Miyagi, and Fukushima – was recorded as 59,993 for Fukushima, 8,597 for Miyagi, and 1,545 for Iwate prefecture in 15 December 2011. However, these numbers remain the same or show increase at the later report on 23 February 2012, where the number of evacuees stood at 62,674 for Fukushima, 8,548 for Miyagi, and 1,566 for Iwate prefecture.⁷ According to Higuchi et al (2012), the net emigration of population from these three prefectures shows an increase of 30,799 persons from the population in 2010 before the Great East Japan Earthquake, with Fukushima prefecture taking the blunt of the outmigration.

The outmigration from Fukushima prefecture is the direct result of the failure to contain nuclear radiation from the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant. At the event of the Great East Japan Earthquake, the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant's cooling systems flooded and failed, resulting in hydrogen explosions at units 1, 3, and 4

⁶ Okada, 2011

⁷ Higuchi et al., 2012.

and units 1, 2, and 3 experiencing full meltdown. The nuclear disaster at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant produced direct and indirect costs: directly, the shutdown of the plant led to a shutdown of economic activity in the evacuation zone of 20 km around the plant and resulted in a high cost to deal with the ramifications of radiation leakage and to relocate the evacuees; and indirectly, concerns over nuclear radiation reduced demand for products from the Tohoku region, especially agricultural and marine products, and red-flagged Japanese products to the international community. The 20 km radius from the power plant is still an evacuation zone, contributing to the outmigration of population from the prefecture. The concerns regarding nuclear radiation also means that a large portion of the emigration from the Tohoku region, especially the Fukushima prefecture, may be permanent, affecting the long-term recovery of the region by afflicting the labor force as a whole and on a local level, the vitality of the community.

At the same time, job creation is becoming one of the largest social issues emerging after the Great East Japan Earthquake, as the earthquake and tsunami wiped out the livelihood of the farmers and fishermen who constituted the bulk of the industry in the Tohoku region. Due to the years of outmigration of younger people, the average age of farmers and fishermen was 65.2 years in Miyagi prefecture, even higher in some hard-hit coastal areas.⁸ Old aged population generally finds it more difficult to change jobs and is less adaptive in incorporating new ideas and innovations into their business. Thus, the loss of a source of income amongst the older population in Tohoku's coastal areas poses a

⁸ Baron, 2012

difficult problem in finding an alternative source of income for them. The number of people who lost their jobs by the disaster reached 100,000, and this jobless population is currently supported by social employment insurance which have already started to expire and emergency employment support scheme which will end in March 2015. There is no question that local businesses must be created in order to secure employment opportunities for those out of jobs, and not only that, to lessen the population loss which the Tohoku region has already been experiencing before the Great East Japan Earthquake.

In light of the difficult situation in which the Tohoku region was left with by the Great East Japan Earthquake, it is no wonder that the Japanese government, the public and private sectors, and individuals both national and international have taken great interest and care towards helping the Tohoku region to stand up back on its feet. The Japanese government has responded to the disaster and the needs of the Tohoku region with the release and implementation of reconstruction guidelines and plans, the first of which was announced three months after the earthquake on June 25th, 2011.⁹ Aside from government plans, one major development in terms of aid for disaster recovery is the contributions made by the private sector, which show a startling growth in both volume and variety compared to that after the Kobe Earthquake. According to the newsletter “Business Perspective” published and distributed by Roland Berger Strategy Consultants in Japan, the amount of donations made after the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake is approximately three times that of the 1995 Kobe Earthquake.

⁹ See Appendix for the timeline of major reconstruction guidelines and plans released by the Japanese Central government

The newsletter also note that there has been a great expansion in the variety of contributions made by the private sector after the catastrophe: whereas companies have assisted in providing disaster relief through monetary and in-kind donations in the past, after the Great East Japan Earthquake, many corporations have also launched programs and activities to assist to long-term disaster recovery. Some examples given are reconstruction and microfinance funding programs created by Softbank Group, Yamato Group, Kirin; regular dispatch of employees as volunteers to local communities and NGOs by Fuji Xerox; sharing of knowhow and infrastructure by Roland Berger, Lawson, Google, Amazon; increasing the use of local products from disaster-stricken areas by Ion; and so on.

Private contributions to aid disaster victims have been growing over the past decades, and recent researches show that such behavior is becoming widespread globally. While often seen as self-serving and profit-driven agents, private sector companies are not an exception in being affected by the common drive shared by society to restore what has been taken away by catastrophic events. Over the past decade, the private sector, as both a stakeholder and agent in disaster prevention and recovery, has been incorporated in the dialogue on disaster management and recovery with increasing prominence. It is possible to numerate multiple reasons for the increased incorporation of the private sector in taking a more pronounced role in post-disaster situations, such as the growth in the frequency and magnitude of disasters bringing harsh aftereffects to a wider area with higher severity and increase in the general expectations about the private sector to

contribute in post-disaster situations. The private sector has risen to an astounding degree to these considerations and expectations by claiming a firm role in disaster situations. Private corporations have been known to assist communities mitigate risk and recover from disasters through various means. These means include applying risk reduction in their own operations, in-kind and monetary donation for post-disaster relief, and collaboration with other stakeholders such as local and global NGO and NPOs on disaster recovery efforts.

However, since private sector companies, as mentioned before, are self-serving and profit-driven agents who are bound by business rationale. As such, the contributions made by private corporations in assistance to the disaster-affected areas have often been tied to campaigns which are launched to raise their brand image or to promote their products, that is, as cause-related marketing campaigns.¹⁰ Many examples of such cause-related marketing in the name of disaster relief and assistance can be found, especially after the many large-scale natural disasters which have grabbed world-wide attention through the media over the past decade. For example, after Hurricane Katrina in 2005, the part of the proceedings from the sale of a music album released by Chipotle and two record labels were pledged to be donated to the Red Cross. Tide's "Loads of Hope" campaign after Hurricane Katrina where \$1 per bottle of 'yellow cap' laundry detergent

¹⁰ While cause-related marketing is defined by Kotler and Lee (2005) as when a "corporation commits to making a contribution or donating a percentage of revenues to a specific cause based on product sales," a definition which is frequently adopted, this paper will take a broader definition of cause-related marketing which is also often used to cover any type of marketing involving the cooperation between a "for profit" business and a non-profit organization or a non-profit cause for mutual benefit.

bought and registered online was donated towards disaster relief, as well as the mobile laundry service run by Tide after the 2010 Haiti earthquake under the same campaign were awarded for its ingenuity and success. Thomtoms also launched a campaign in conjunction with Save the Children for disaster relief in Haiti where 91 percent of the recommended retail price of the company's limited edition Mango Chocolate Block was donated to organization.

The reason natural disaster situations and relief efforts are often tied up in cause-related marketing by many private sector companies including multi-national and world-recognized corporations is because disaster-affected areas, especially those affected by large-scale natural disasters, receive great attention by audiences worldwide with many compelled to action out of compassion for the victims. The possibility of wide consumer publicity and engagement presents a great opportunity for companies to promote their businesses while doing good, leading many notable brands to respond with special cause-related marketing campaigns. Because cause-related marketing can be a sensitive matter, campaigns are usually created with care and careful consideration over a long term, but the opportunity presented by natural disasters makes good business sense to companies to formulate large campaigns with speed and alacrity.

Likewise, many of the private initiatives made after the Great East Japan Earthquake can be categorized as cause-related marketing initiatives, however, many of the companies that have made significant contributions to help the victims of the Great East Japan Earthquake have made their contributions known to the public through their

public releases and corporate social responsibility reports due to a refrain amongst these companies in over-publicizing these efforts by launching major ad campaigns to show their consumers just how much they are contributing towards the cause. This cautionary stance from companies are described and analyzed briefly in a Wall Street Journal article by Emily Steel, who mentions that “as consumers become increasingly skeptical of cause-related marketing, celebrities, organizations and major marketers have to walk a fine line, trying to help without appearing to exploit the tragedy for profits” especially because a crisis such as a natural disaster is a sensitive and volatile situation. Steel gives the example of the marketing strategy taken by Microsoft’s Bing to illustrate this point where Bing offered to donate \$1 each for every retweet of its message and received “a firestorm of complaints from Twitter users, who accused Bing of using the tragedy as a marketing opportunity.”¹¹

The moral questions surrounding the ethics of cause-related marketing have led consumers to be more discretionary towards consumption of goods that are marketed through impressing on their social conscientiousness to lend a hand for pertinent social issues. However, despite such increase awareness on the pitfalls of cause-related marketing, at the aftermath of the Great East Japan Earthquake there has been an interesting development observed amongst the various efforts for the reconstruction and revival of the Tohoku region. At the core of these developments is the “positive” commercialization of disaster – the marketing of the social cause, “helping the disaster-

¹¹ Steel, 2011

affected Tohoku region,” to reach to and bring in consumers for the local businesses. Two ways of such “positive” commercialization are observed in the reconstruction stage of the Great East Japan Earthquake – specialized tours to disaster affected areas and the promotion of special Tohoku products.

With these two types of “positive” commercialization of disaster at the center, this paper will highlight the ongoing cause-related marketing initiatives that arose in Japan after the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake, that are distinctive from past cause-related marketing campaigns connected to the social issue of natural disaster. Detailed observation on the two types of “positive” commercialization will be produced, followed by an analysis of how these two types of cause-related marketing are different from others cause-related marketing campaigns. Then, the paper will look at the background behind the two cause-related marketing initiatives in the hopes to show that the particular local circumstances of the Tohoku region, as well as the widespread and deep concern and commiseration felt nation-wide in Japan, paved the way for a “positive” commercialization of the event of the disaster in Tohoku as a strategy for local businesses to survive and rehabilitate after the catastrophe. Although these strategies will need more time to prove their effectiveness in the long-term reconstruction of the affected region, especially in terms of long-term economical and financial sustainability, the paper will argue that these efforts have already contributed to the rehabilitation of the region through providing self-generating income to local businesses and also by strengthening

social capital which has already been created nation-wide in Japan after the Great East Japan Earthquake.

II. Research Question

Based on the observations of the two “positive” commercialization of disaster found in Japan after the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake, this paper aims to investigate primarily the following question: what is distinctive about these two examples of cause-related marketing which arose after 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake, and what has allowed such distinctive marketing initiatives to arise in Japan after 2011?

III. Methodology

As existing literature that deals with the specific topic of cause-related marketing for disaster relief is relatively limited, and as the present paper has its goals to analyze the reasons behind the successes in the two cause-relating marketing initiatives found in Japan after the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake, the paper will review existing literature on the ethical concerns related to cause-related marketing and customer

response to cause-related marketing campaigns. The paper will then present the two different types of cause-related marketing after the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake which the author has observed in Japan and coined as “positive” commercialization of disaster, and evaluate how these two cause-related marketing initiatives differentiate themselves from previous cases of cause-related marketing, referring existing studies on cause-related marketing. In particular, the local circumstances and national movements after the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake will be analyzed to present a deeper analysis of the reason behind why such “positive” commercialization of disaster has been possible.

Two important points must be made with regards to the scope of this paper. First, although the Great East Japan Earthquake affected more than two dozen prefectures amongst which seven prefectures in the Tohoku region – Miyagi, Fukushima, Iwate, Yamagata, Ibaraki, Chiba, Akita, and Aomori – have received the majority of the damage, the present study will focus on Miyagi, Fukushima, and Iwate prefectures to which the most severely damaged coastal areas belong. The study proposes to focus on these three prefectures in order to highlight the efforts made for the local businesses which were most affected by the earthquake. Another reason for focusing on the three prefectures of Miyagi, Fukushima, and Iwate is because of the available data on the Tohoku region, since much of the research studying the effect of the Great East Japan Earthquake in the Tohoku region concentrate on these three prefectures.

Second, beyond the sheer force of the Great East Japan Earthquake itself, the event caused further alarm and concern due to the damage it caused to the Fukushima

Daiichi nuclear power plant and the difficulties in containing the damage. The issues surrounding the Fukushima plant as well as the aftermath of the leakage of nuclear radiation is still causing a heated debate within Japan, and a bulk of the literature published on the Great East Japan Earthquake focus on the consequences of the accident at the power plant. The current study deliberately avoids direct investigation into the nuclear power plant issue, other than to highlight the influence of the radiation leakage on the local industries, in order to bring the focus to local businesses in the prefectures.

With regards to references and resources, the research will primarily rely on secondary sources in investigating the current situations of the Tohoku region. Primary resources used in the research will include reconstruction plans and information on implemented projects released by the Japanese government, as well as websites of various initiatives and projects surrounding the revitalization of Tohoku's local businesses.

IV. Literature Review

Natural disasters, especially those that cause great loss in lives and a high level of destruction, are horrific events that are met with terror, sympathy and grief. Ethical and social values require us to view the aftermath of a disaster with solemnity and to empathize with the victims. At minimum, the exploitation of such devastating events is

frowned upon as unfeeling and unethical. The evidence of this shared tacit understanding can be found in the discourse on cause-related marketing, the tie-up of social issues and corporate marketing. The present section reviews existing literature on cause-related marketing, in order to illuminate the theoretical background and the practical strategies behind cause-related marketing initiatives. Cause-related marketing is used in conjunction with terms such as social marketing, which can be defined as “the design, implementation, and control of programs calculated to influence the acceptability of social ideas and involving considerations of product-planning, pricing, communication, distribution, and marketing research,”¹² and corporate social responsibility (CSR), which refers to integration of social and environmental concerns with business operations and stakeholder relations on a voluntary basis and the management of companies in a socially responsible manner.¹³

However, cause-related marketing differentiates itself from – from social marketing in that the focus of cause-related marketing is not business corporation can relate to non-profit organizations based on direct or indirect monetary return, and from corporate social responsibility in that while corporate social responsibility largely refers to the philosophy behind a company’s operations, cause-marketing is a tool. Cause-related marketing, as defined by Chaney and Dolli (2000), is a marketing strategy through which a company makes a contribution towards a social cause based on consideration of

¹² Kotler and Zaltman, 1971

¹³ Robins, 2005, pp. 96

engaging potential customers to consume their products, thus, bringing profit in exchange for its contributions. Often, a company will associate its brand and brand image to a charity or social issue as a way to reach out to a wider base of consumers and to prompt greater sales. While cause-related marketing is becoming more and more common in corporate practice, critics of cause-related marketing argue that such practices are questionable in terms of their appropriateness to ethical standards.

Bayline et al (1994) point out the various moral questions raised by critics regarding cause-related marketing. First, critics fear that cause-related marketing exploits the individuals involved in the social causes it purports to support as a means to an end where, in worst cases, cause-related marketing benefits no one other than the company using the social cause for marketing. Second, in the course of a cause-related marketing program, the beneficiaries of the program can become misrepresented and dehumanized, stripped of individuality or human dignity, as it turns social issues into commodities. Third, the complex causes of the social issues may become simplified and unknown to the consumers who buy into the cause-related marketing, while delivering self-satisfaction to the consumers who believe they are consuming for a good cause. Bayline et al assert that cause-related marketing is clearly not pure altruism, although partially motivated by altruistic intentions, and that much of the moral questions surrounding the ethics of cause-related marketing can only be solved by the conscientious efforts to discriminate between good and bad corporate marketing programs. These criticisms are still valid today, and

more and more efforts are made to raise awareness amongst consumers to exert more discretion when supporting a cause through corporate marketing.

Further moral problems involved in cause-related marketing are highlighted by Brenkert (2002). In his article, Brenkert illuminates the difference between social marketing and commercial (cause-related) marketing as having a different moral rationale, where the moral rationale behind commercial marketing is that consumers voluntarily choose what is offered by the marketing strategy, based on the desires prompted or held by consumers and how the marketing meets those desires. However, because of commercial marketing works on this rationale, it may result in unintended negative effects of the actions which cannot be accounted for, including the miscalculation of consumer desire by marketers (thus, providing the wrong goods to satisfy these desires) and the misunderstanding of how to satisfy their desires by consumers (thus, incurring opportunity cost which may have been better used for the social cause they support).

Despite these moral problems, there has been a rapid increase in cause-related marketing seen over the recent decade, bringing cause-related marketing to the mainstream. Existing literature on consumer response to cause-related marketing has shown that most people are positive about cause-related marketing as a good way to raise money for social causes and that cause-related marketing can result in favorable attitudes and image toward the firm, with cause-related marketing shown to have the potential to influence purchase decisions. However, such findings do not necessarily point to the fact that consumers are blind and naïve. Qualitative research show that consumers respond to

cause-related marketing with increased caution. Webb and Mohr (1998) interviews of 44 sample population on attitudes toward cause-related marketing show that most interviewees show mixed feelings towards cause-related marketing campaigns, with about half of the sample expressing negative attitudes stemming from skepticism about implementation and the firm's motives.

With the increase in the number of companies engaging in larger numbers of cause-related marketing campaigns that must compete to grab the attention of the same targets – socially conscious consumers – and the emergence of the less socially conscious new generation, the result has been that skepticism towards marketing in general has increased especially over the past decade. Jahdi and Acikdilli (2009) underscore that negative perception such as cynicism and mistrust towards marketing has proliferated among consumers, especially due to the over-use of ethical claims by some companies without substantiate activities to prove them, and show how marketing communication tools can help in communicating, publicizing, and highlighting CSR politics to various stakeholders through examples cases.

At the same time, studies have shown that more positive consumer response to cause-related marketing can be gained through the strategic use of variables behind consumer decisions. Strahilevitz and Myers (1998) found that cause-related marketing is more effective when promoting luxuries rather than necessities, suggesting that consumers offset the guilt they may feel when buying luxuries with the positive feelings of doing good to society. The success of cause-relating marketing is also dependent on

the cause it supports, with more consumers showing positive response when the cause is important to them, according to the study by Lafferty (1996). Webb and Mohr (1998), introduced earlier, point out that companies will have more success in cause-related marketing campaigns when the terms of the offer are clearly communicated and when the campaign brings actual results through transparent and non-exploitive procedures.

To cite a more recent research, Nan and Heo (2007) conducted a qualitative study on whether brand-cause fit influences consumer attitude towards cause-related marketing and found that cause-related marketing bring positive attitude in consumers primarily about the company rather than ad or brand, and that brand-cause fit does not have affect on a cause-related marketing message influencing company image. However, through further analysis, the study also found that interviewees with high brand consciousness showed more positive attitude towards cause-related marketing ad and brand when there is high brand-cause fit.

V. The “Positive” Commercialization of Disaster

As outlined in the Introduction, the Tohoku region after the Great East Japan Earthquake, where the disaster-affected areas are mostly rural with low population density, faces a formidable task to recover its population after disaster. Not only that,

concerns about radiation leakage from the Fukushima nuclear power plant and the infiltration of salt water in agricultural lands from the massive tsunami add to the list of difficulties in rebuilding the disaster-affected areas whose main industry is in the primary sector. These various considerations have been reviewed and discussed, not only within the government agencies, but with and amongst the various stakeholders involved, such as the private sector and the members of the local community. The results of the discussions have been incorporated into building a comprehensive reconstruction plans for the disaster-affected areas, with the announcements of overall plans for recovery from the Japanese government of all levels – national, prefectoral, and municipal – forthcoming steadily since the June 2011.

However, since the implementation of government plans necessarily involves multiple stakeholders and long processes of bureaucratic administration, many issues left in the aftermath of disaster in the Tohoku region have not been met in the speed at which local communities in disaster-affected areas have expected and needed. The road to recovery is still a long ways to go for Japan's northeastern Tohoku region, and continuous attention and assistance is necessary to build back the community hit by the earthquake with solutions to the diverse problems that the disaster has left them. In the midst of this situation, two aspects of commercialization observed in the reconstruction stage of the Great East Japan Earthquake – specialized tours to disaster affected areas and the promotion of special Tohoku products – have been observed as a way to revive local businesses in the disaster-affected areas in the Tohoku region, directly engaging local

businesses and supported by public and private sector agents. What adds interest to this two “positive” commercialization of disaster is that, these initiatives are a unique form of cause-related marketing which has gained much success in massively engaging the Japanese public at a time when other cause-related marketing has been refrained from being overtly publicized with caution. The following three sections will introduce in detail the two types of “positive” commercialization of disaster and why they are unique compared to traditional cause-related marketing campaigns.

A. Promotion of Tohoku products

One of the “positive” commercialization of disaster found after the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake is the “buy to support Tohoku (買って応援)” campaign. In the three prefectures of the Tohoku region, the agricultural and marine product sector which are most affected by the Great East Japan Earthquake are still struggling from the aftermath of the catastrophe. In face of the increasingly shrinking market for local businesses due to concern over nuclear radiation despite public and private efforts to guarantee product safety, the “buy to support Tohoku (買って応援)” campaign emerged as a strategy to overcome these difficulties. This movement was initially started by owners of local businesses in the disaster-affected areas who realized that the shrinking market is detrimental to Tohoku businesses and that waiting for top-down reconstruction cannot deliver a solution for the immediate problems the local businesses faced. An

illustration of how this movement started can be found in Mr. Kousuke Kuji's narration of his initiative, presented at the "Tohoku Disaster Recovery and Japanese Sake Promotion in the US" seminar held by JETRO Chicago and the Japan Chamber of Commerce & Industry of Chicago.

Mr. Kousuke Kuji is the owner of the Nanbu Bijin Brewery in Iwate prefecture, which suffered extensive damage from the earthquake but remained largely intact. Since sake is a secondary good in terms of basic needs, sake lost priority in consumption after the earthquake, not only in the region but all throughout Japan. While struggling to reconstruct his brewery and pondering about what he can do to assist in disaster recovery, Mr. Kuji realized that revitalization cannot be achieved just by rebuilding infrastructure and that reconstruction of the economy is essential. The refrain from what is considered frivolous consumption among the Japanese after the earthquake, even during the cherry blossom season which is greatly celebrated in Japan, Mr. Kuji felt that such refrain hurts the economic recovery of Tohoku rather than helping it. So, he started a small media campaign which combated the danger of a "Secondary Economic Disaster" – the self-restraint in consumers causing further economic damage to Tohoku region – through Twitter and, in collaboration of other Tohoku brewers, through Youtube on which he posted a video. The video received over half a million views and attracted huge media

attention, all of which resulted in a flood of support which brought more initiatives to increase the consumption of Tohoku products.¹⁴

Through such initiatives, “buying Tohoku products” was framed as a way to help and support the recovery of the Tohoku region, especially the most affected coastal areas whose products were being shunned due to concern over nuclear radiation, as a social - movement-turned-commercial-marketing. A large number of specialty and online stores selling a variety of Tohoku products from agricultural and marine products to traditional crafts and disaster-specific goods (new products created by local communities after the disaster) were opened to provide more platforms through which Tohoku products can be sold, promoting both the stores themselves as well as Tohoku’s local businesses and products. The initiatives created direct links between local businesses and consumers by providing a place for local businesses to market their products both online and offline. These new market spaces, especially the online platforms, were advertised through the vast network of SNS. These initiatives were not only made by concerned individuals, local communities, and civil society including non-government or non-profit organizations in cooperation with local business owners but expanded to the government and private corporations who utilized their existing resources to participate in the movement. The participation of the government and large private sector companies extended the consumer market available to the local businesses for marketing their products in these new market spaces to a substantial degree by letting the local businesses

¹⁴ Japan External Trade Organization, 2012

tap into the pre-existing consumer base carried by the companies and government agencies.

In particular, national and multinational e-commerce companies participated in the movement as a part of their cause-related marketing campaign for disaster relief by becoming the bridge between consumers and local business in Tohoku. For instance, Rakuten, an online commerce website, is running a semi-permanent event promoting Tohoku products through their website, where a special page is dedicated to introducing specialty products from Tohoku. Utilizing the particular features of its business as a platform for individual businesses to sell their products online, Rakuten provides a bridge between Tohoku's local businesses and consumers while highlighting the need for support for these local businesses through their promotion activities. Similar efforts can also be found in other e-commerce websites as well, such as Gurunabi, Oisix, Amazon Japan, and the online websites of major supermarkets and retail stores. The bridge between Tohoku's local businesses and consumers are not only assisted online but offline as well. Major retail companies are holding special fairs for Tohoku products under the slogan, "Ganbaru Nippon" and "Ganbaru Tohoku."

Figure 1. Examples of promotional banners found on e-commerce websites

- Rakuten's "Ganbaru Nippon" logo and banner for Rakuten Ichiba offline fair



- Gurunavi's banner for their special promotion of Tohoku products



Such fairs and offline promotion events for Tohoku products are also organized through local businesses and by government agencies in various scales and locations around Japan. A list of some of the initiatives made as part of the "buy to support Tohoku (買って応援)" campaign is given in Table 1 below.

Table 1. List of Initiatives involving the Promotion of Tohoku Products after the Great East Japan Earthquake

Category	Type	Products	Name	Details	Access
Gov't initiative	Information Portal	Information	Tatsukeai Japan Information Portal	Comprehensive information on aid assistance and campaigns for revitalizing Tohoku region, including "Support to Buy Tohoku"	http://tasukeaijapan.jp/
Gov't initiative	Information Portal	Information	Tohoku Shopping Center Tour (復興商店街を巡る旅) on Travel to Tohoku website	Introduces seven shopping center/clusters in towns along the Pacific coast of Tohoku region with shops selling local products as well as restaurants and bars in temporary buildings	http://www.tohokukanko.jp/feature/shun-fukkou/
Local initiative	Online Sales Platform	Existing local products	Minamisanriku de Okaimono (南三陸町 de お買い物)	Online market for Minamisanriku products	http://www.odette-shop.com/
Local initiative	Online Sales Platform	Existing local products	Iwatesan Dotto Shopping (岩手産どっとジャパン)	Online market for Iwate products	http://iwatesan.jp/
Local initiative	Online Sales Platform	New and existing local products	Makko.com (マッコー.com)	Online market for Ishinomaki products. Also offers selection Of products that were developed and made after the earthquake	http://www.miagi-hukko.jp/
Local initiative	Online Sales Platform	Existing local products	Fukkou Department Store (復興デパートメント)	Online market for Tohoku products.	http://fukko-department.jp/?mid=552716
Local initiative	Online Sales Platform	Mainly marine products (raw and processed)	Domannaka Otsuchi Cooperative (立ち上がり！ど真ん中・おおつち)	Online market for Otsuchi fishery products by a cooperative formed by four owners of marine product processing plants which were damaged by the tsunami	http://www.otsuchi.jp/ http://shop.doman-naka.com/
Corporate initiative	Online Sales Platform	Agricultural products	Organic Shop Rin (オンラインショップ Rin/ひとりひとりが今できる	Promotion of Tohoku agricultural and traditional products within their e-commerce website	http://rin-shopping.jp/html/newpage.html?co

			こと)		de=97
Corporate initiative	Online Sales Platform	Agricultural products	Daichiwo Mamuru Kai (大地を守る会/福島と北関東の農家がんばろうセット)	Promotion of Tohoku agricultural products by selling special packages made up of agricultural produce from Tohoku region	https://store.daichi.or.jp/GoodsDetail/index/itemCode/01238252
Corporate initiative	Online Sales Platform	Agricultural products	JA Town Shop Navi Tohoku (JA タウン ショップナビ/東北)	Promotion of Tohoku agricultural products within their e-commerce website	http://www.jatown.com/shop/pages/about.aspx
Corporate initiative	Online Sales Platform	Agricultural products	Oisix (東北からありがとうの食便り)	Promotion of Tohoku agricultural products within their e-commerce website	http://www.oisix.com/CategoryX.708.215.htm#LMen uL215
Corporate initiative	Online Sales Platform	Specialty products	HIS National Travels Market (HIS 全国旅市場/食べて応援しよう「東北のお土産」)	Promotion of Tohoku specialty products within their e-commerce website	http://otoriyose.his-j.com/shop/c/c0001/
Corporate initiative	Online Sales Platform	Existing local products	Rakuten Ichiba	Promotion of Tohoku products within their e-commerce website	http://event.rakuten.co.jp/food/ouen-ichi/
Corporate initiative	Online Sales Platform	Existing local products	Gurunavi	Promotion of Tohoku products within their e-commerce website	http://shop.gnavi.co.jp/Mallgn/special/tohoku_gourmet/
Corporate initiative	Online Sales Platform	Existing local products	47 Club Online Delivery Site (お取り寄せサイト 47 CLUB/被災地店舗の商品のページ)	Special page that introduces local shops and restaurants in Tohoku region, which come with the high recommendation of the 47 Club specializing in information on best local products	http://www.47club.jp/contents3/47club_fukkou.html?intid=210_b
Volunteer initiative	Online Sales Platform	New local products	Smile from Tohoku	Online market for charity products made by local businesses in Tohoku region after the	http://smilefromtohoku.com/

Great East Japan Earthquake					
Local initiative	Information Portal/Online Sales Platform/Offline Promotion	Mainly marine products (raw and processed)	Kibounowa Project (希望の環)	Platform to enhance cooperative efforts amongst producers, shops, and consumers of Tohoku products which holds offline fairs and markets as well as offers online purchase of Tohoku products	http://kibounowa.jp/
NPO/local collaboration	Social Enterprise	New local product	Otsuchi Quilting Project (大槌復興刺し子プロジェクト)	Social enterprise formed by women at the evacuation center in Otsuchi village which sells embroidered and quilting products to create an alternative business for the earthquake victims, currently sells products through their website and selected shops in major cities in Japan	http://tomotsuna.jp/?mode=f2#
Local initiative	Social Enterprise	New local product	Hanasake Nipponno Kai (ハナサケ！ニッポンの会)	Promotion of Tohoku sake products, focusing on the development of new sake products (ハナサケニッポン花見酒) through the collaboration of sake brewery and sake shops	http://hana-sake.jp/
Local initiative	Social Enterprise	New local product	Work for Sanriku! Project Web Shop (三陸に仕事を！プロジェクト Web ショップ)	Online shop for bracelets made of fishing nets by more than 300 women living along the ports of Sanriku area as an alternative source of income	http://sanriku.tv/misanga-tamaki/
National initiative	NGO	Existing local products	Fundraising Project for Japan Sake (日本酒義援金プロジェクト)	Promotion of Japanese sake through campaigns and events at registered shops selling Japanese sake while 500 yen for every 1800 yen bottle of sake is donated to the reconstruction of Tohoku region	http://www.fightnippson-sake.net/

Another interesting aspect to note amongst the initiatives to support the disaster-affected areas by consumption of Tohoku products is the emergence of new products made by local communities. A number of social enterprises have started up in communities whose livelihoods were threatened by the earthquake and imminent recovery impossible. Projects were led by members of the community, often in collaboration with non-profit organizations who provided information and guidance in ways to systemize the production process as well as market the products. For instance, the Otsuchi Quilting Project was started by a group of women in the evacuation center in Otsuchi village, who wanted to do their part in assisting the village to rebuild and recover from the disaster. These women started making embroidered and quilting items, which was picked up by NPO Terra Renaissance, to develop into a social enterprise which now boasts of 187 members. According to their website, the total revenue made through the sales of these embroidery and quilting products are 22,055,216 yen from the sales of more than 14,000 items as of 30 September 2012, among which 9,595,240 yen have been allotted as the income for the members of the project, providing an alternate, sustainable income for the people who have lost their livelihood.

The Otsuchi Quilting Project is not the only project that has been successful in terms of economic return. Similar social enterprises have found equal success, such as the Work for Sanriku! Project selling bracelets made of fishing nets made by women living along the ports of Sanriku area, while many of the private sector and government initiatives have also been met with great enthusiasm, such as the “Smile Tohoku Market

(スマイル東北市), a large-scale event involving 14 locations in Yokohama City organized by the Japanese government in collaboration with many corporations as well as Tohoku's local businesses, which mobilized 136,800 people and brought 5,010,000 yen of revenue to Tohoku businesses exhibited in the event and a donation of 801,042 yen.¹⁵

The campaign to promote Tohoku products has not only succeeded in expanding the market for Tohoku's local businesses, but also has given a positive effect on consumption nation-wide. Asahi Shibun reports of how the boom in sake produced in the Tohoku region has led to the revival of the sales of Japanese sake in 16 years. According to the article, the continual drop in sake consumption since 1995 has been broken in 2011 by 1.2 percent year-on-year rise, with shipments of sake from Miyagi increasing the most, recording a rise of 27.7 percent. The article presents one of the reasons for this rise in sales to be the expansion of distribution opportunities for sake makers in Japan's major cities, thanks to reconstruction-themed sales plans by business partners such as the "Reconstruction Assistance Bars," bars which have been set up temporarily in major locations to promote Tohoku sake by an Akita-based izakaya chain.¹⁶

To be fair, the promotion of local products is not new to Japan. Japan is famous for developing and marketing local specialties (omiyage) targeting tourists and visitors. The Japanese culture of giving and receiving gifts when returning from a trip has created

¹⁵ The details of the "Smile Tohoku Market" event can be found at <http://www.city.yokohama.lg.jp/keizai/shogyo/syouten/touhokuichi.html>.

¹⁶ Kaneko, 2012

a huge market for local specialties, a market whose annual sales reaches trillions of yen.¹⁷

However, what can be seen in the promotion of Tohoku products after the Great East Japan Earthquake is that the promotion of these local products not only goes beyond the regular push in marketing, but also involves a cooperative public-private cause-related marketing strategy which emphasizes the need for support in the disaster-affected areas of the Tohoku region to boost sales of products made by local businesses while profiting the other parties involved such as other private sector companies, the government agencies, and non-government agencies. At the same time, local businesses in the Tohoku region also engage in cause-related marketing themselves by promoting their products under the campaign and gaining larger revenue through boosted sales.

B. Specialized tours to disaster affected areas

Past experiences of disasters have shown the importance of local businesses in revitalizing local communities in the process of disaster recovery. Existing literature on disaster management have also noted that the continuation and growth of local businesses is a vital component in the disaster recovery by reducing population dispersion and by increasing the social capital available in the disaster-affected communities. To communities who faced population loss from disaster, visitors to the neighborhood can be an important source of income for local businesses which contribute to their revitalization.

¹⁷ Mori, 2012

The revitalization of tourism in a disaster-affected area assists recovery from disaster through the inflow of population and the resulting increase of expenditure in the area which becomes a source of income for local businesses. Another positive effect of the inflow of tourists in a disaster-affected area is the sense of hope and expectations of fast recovery it brings by the mere presence of more people brings vitality back in the streets of disaster-affected communities which faced sudden outmigration of population after the catastrophe.

Furthermore, an inflow of tourists into a community which has yet recover from the damages from disaster remind the members of the community of the larger society of people who are invested in and take interest in the well-being and reconstruction of the disaster-affected areas. And again, visiting disaster-affected areas strengthen the existing interest the visitor already had, which prompted the journey to those communities. In essence, bonds between the disaster-affected community and those from outside of the disaster-affected region can be created by the revitalization of tourism in the region.

However, a recent report revealed an interesting response from the Lower Ninth Ward in New Orleans hit by Hurricane Katrina, the residents of whom complained about the tours bringing outsiders to the neighborhood to observe the aftermath of the Hurricane, 7 years since the disaster hit. Due to the complaints, tours have been banned by local government.¹⁸ One possible explanation for the complaints from the Lower Ninth Ward residents against tours to their neighborhood may be that, over the 7 years since

¹⁸ Plaisance, 2012

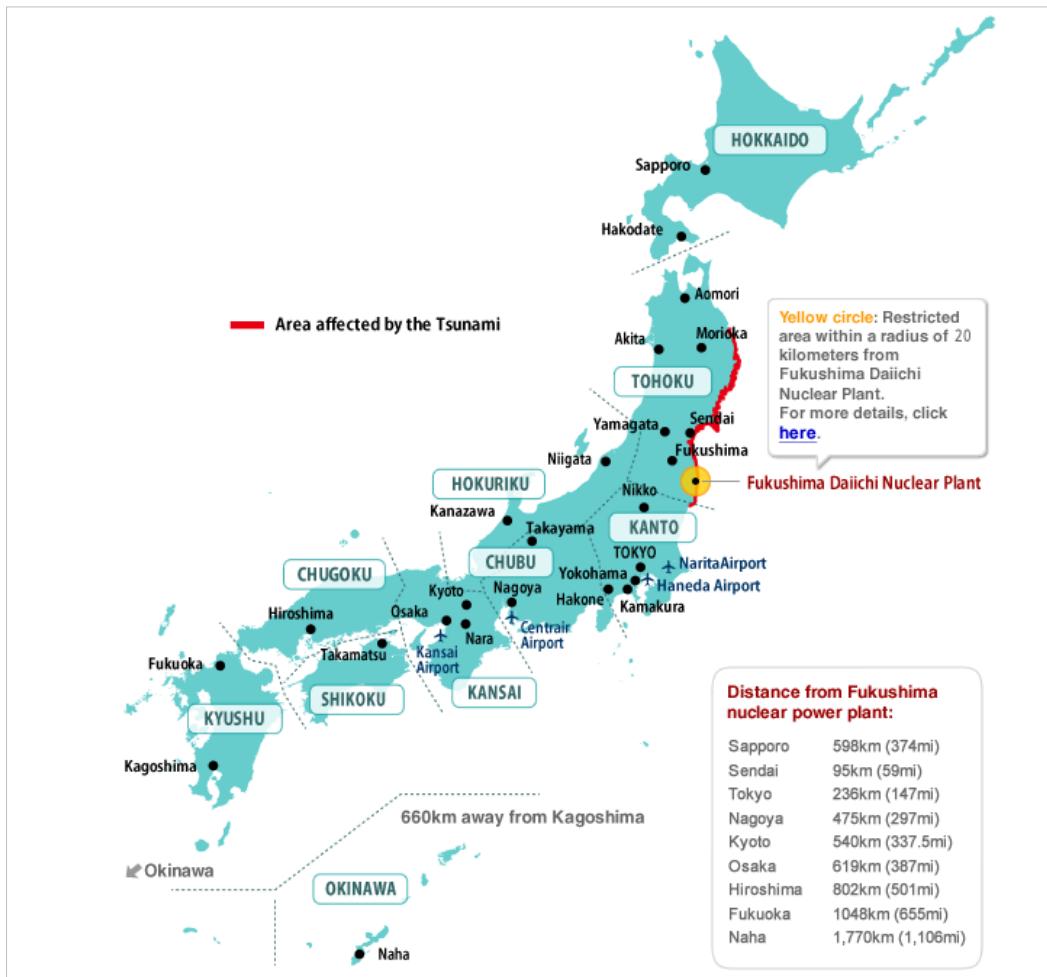
Hurricane Katrina, while other areas in New Orleans have walked a path to recovery, the Lower Ninth Ward is still facing difficulties due to the few number of returnees to the neighborhood despite the financial and physical resources put into the area by the government and various NGOs. The disillusionment felt by the residents who have remained or returned to the neighborhood after the disaster may be a reason behind the distrust and annoyance expressed towards visiting outsiders.

Although it has not yet been quite two years since the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake, the second facet of the “positive” commercialization of disaster is most interesting when compared to the case of the residents of Lower Ninth Ward in New Orleans, 7 years after Hurricane Katrina. This second facet of the “positive” commercialization of disaster is the new types of tour programs that have emerged in the aftermath of the Great East Japan Earthquake.

Since the tsunami brought the heaviest damage to the Tohoku region, the most severely affected areas by the Great East Japan Earthquake are the rural areas along the Pacific coast of Japan, many of which are not included in the customary tour destinations of the Tohoku region. In fact, many of the destinations in the region are inland, with tourist destinations concentrated in the capitals of the prefectures and urban and mountainous areas, such as UNESCO world heritage Hiraizumi in Iwate Prefecture’s capital Morioka city, Lake Okama in Miyagi prefecture, onsen (hot springs) and skiing facilities spread throughout Tohoku’s mountainous regions. Major tourist destinations that suffered direct damage from the tsunami are Sendai, Matsushima, and Iwaki. Even

among these three, Matsushima, well-known as one of the three most scenic destinations in Japan composed of some 260 islands, escaped from receiving much damage thanks to the barrier that the islands created against the tsunami, as illustrated in Figure 2 and Table 2.

Figure 2. Tsunami-hit Areas in Tohoku Region



Source: Japan National Tourism Organization website http://www.jnto.go.jp/eq/eng/03_attraction.htm

Table 2. Major Tourist Attractions in Tohoku Region and Their Locations (Inland v. Coastal)

Prefecture	Area	Attractions	Location
Iwate	Morioka City	Ishiwarizakura Cherry Blossoms	Inland
	Hachimantai	Hachimantai National Park, Matsukawa Hot Springs	Inland
	Hiraizumi	Hiraizumi (World Cultural Heritage Town)	Inland
	Oshu City	Esashi-Fujiwara Heritage Park	Inland
	Tono City	Tono Village of Old	Inland
	Hanamaki City	Hanamaki Hot Springs	Inland
	Ichinoseki City	Genbiki Hot Springs	Coastal
	Kitayamazaki	Kitayamazaki Cliffs	Coastal
	Kitakami City	Tenshochi Cherry Blossoms	Inland
	Shizukuishi Town	Oshuku Hot Springs	Inland
Miyagi	Sendai City	Akiu Otaki Waterfall, Akiu and Sakunami Hot Springs, Osaki Hachimangu Shrine, Sendai Castle, Annual Festivals (Aoba, Tanabata, Jozenji Street Jazz Festivals)	Partially coastal
	Osaki City	Naruko Gorge, Naruko Hot Springs Village	Inland
	Tome City	Meiji Village	Inland
	Kurihara City	Mt. Kurikoma	Inland but significant damages
	Shiroishi City	Shiroishi Castle, Kamasaki Hot Springs	Inland
	Zao Town	Lake Okama, Sumikawa Snowpark, Togatta Hot Springs	Inland
	Matsushima Town	Matsushima islands	Coastal but only little damage
Fukushima	Fukushima City	Mt. Bandai, Hanamiyama, Iizaka Hot Springs, Waraji Festival	Inland, outside restricted area
	Tamura City	Abukuma Cave	Inland, outside restricted area
	Iwaki City	Shiramizu Amida Temple, Iwaki Yumoto Hot Springs, Spa Resort Hawaiians	Coastal, outside restricted area
	Nihonmatsu City	Kasumigajo Castle, Dake Hot Springs	Inland, outside restricted area
	Aizu Wakamatsu City	Tsuruga Castle, Higashiyama Hot Springs, Aizu Festivals	Inland, outside restricted area
	Kitakata City	Kura Town	Inland, outside restricted area

	Hinoemata Village	Oze Grasslands	Inland, outside restricted area
	Shimogo Town	Ouchijuku Edo Town	Inland, outside restricted area

Source: Based on the Japan National Tourism Organization brochures on Tohoku region tourist attractions and the “Travel to Tohoku” website <<http://en.tohokukanko.jp>>

However, after the initial surge of incoming population in the form of volunteers died down, Tohoku region suffered a sharp drop in visitors due to misinformation and bleak news about the disaster, lingering fears about nuclear radiation, and the sense of inappropriateness to indulge in tours within the disaster-affected region. Tour reservations to the Tohoku region during the Golden Week in 2011 just after the Great East Japan Earthquake are reported to have shown a 90 percent drop from 2010, with the number of foreign visitors to Tohoku and Japan as a whole has dropped due to concerns regarding radiation.¹⁹ The “White Paper on Tourism in Japan, 2012,” published by the Japan Tourism Agency, analyzes the year-to-year change in the number of Japanese overnight guests in Tohoku prefectures against national numbers, and found that lodging facilities in Iwate, Miyagi, and Fukushima prefectures all show increase from April 2011 onward because many earthquake victims and people involved in the recovery and reconstruction

¹⁹ Asahi Shinbun reports that, according to a survey by the Japan Tourism Agency, only 0.8 percent of 3,651 foreign visitors to Japan between January and March 2012 visited the Tohoku region when in 2010, the figure was 3.3 percent. (See Suzuki and Tanaka, 2012) Also, Yomiuri Shinbun reports that the number of foreigners staying overnight in the Tohoku prefectures nose-dived to about 90,000 in 2011 from about 330,000 in 2010. China also recommends its citizens stay away from the prefecture and other areas hit hard by the disaster. (“Many foreign tourists still steering clear of Tohoku region,” Daily Yomiuri Online, 2012)

process stayed at these facilities.²⁰ However, as the data on lodging facilities for tourists (where more than 50% of guests are usually tourists) show a decline from July 2011, the reason speculated to be the progress in moving earthquake victims into temporary housing, it can be said that the demand for tourism in these prefectures has not sufficiently recovered.²¹

To ameliorate the downturn of tourism in Tohoku region, major campaigns to promote tourism to the Tohoku region have been launched by the Japan Tourism Agency and local governments with their affiliates, such as “Tohoku Tourism Expo” and “Destination Tohoku.” These campaigns aimed to revive tourism in Tohoku region by appealing to people both national and foreign that visiting Tohoku to enjoy its various tourist attractions and culture such as local food will help the region recover from the disaster. In the case of the “Destination Tohoku” campaign, the central government is investing 800 million yen towards the project. The information on the campaign can be accessed in a special website which offers information on tourist sites and events, as well as various visitor programs, in Japanese, English, Korean and Chinese.²² In addition, the central and local governments have schools and business enterprises have been strongly encouraged to plan their trips in Tohoku region. These efforts seemed to have paid off,

²⁰ According to a preliminary estimate by the Japan Tourism Agency, about 20.5 million people – including Japanese and foreigners – stayed overnight in the three prefectures in 2011. Many of these people apparently were engaged in reconstruction work, and the figure was up by about 1.2 million from 2010.

²¹ Japan Tourism Agency , 2012

²² Japan Times Online, “Promoting Tohoku tourism,” 2012

since, according to the national newspaper, Yomiuri Shinbun,²³ major tour operators reported a 90 percent recovery of the number of visitors to the region, and sales of tour packages during the Golden week and cherry-blossom season in 2012 fully recovering and even surpassing those of year 2010 for major travel agencies. Expectations of higher number of visitors were felt by major tourist attractions, for example, the Hiraizumi Tourism Association in Iwate Prefecture anticipated 350,000 visitors – almost 50,000 more visitors than previous years – during the Golden week thanks to the registration of Hiraizumi as a World Heritage in June 2011.²⁴

Meanwhile, Tohoku's coastal areas were unable to benefit from these campaigns because many of the towns were too damaged in the aftermath of the Great East Japan Earthquake, and thus were not able to accommodate tourists. Yomiuri Shinbun reports that in May 2012, major attractions in the coastal areas such as the Ishinomori Mangattan Museum in Ishinomaki city, which attracted an annual number of 180,000 visitors, remains closed while sightseeing boats shuttling between the city and Kinkasan Island has its operations suspended. Local businesses which offered hands-on tourist activities, such as fisherman's barns where visitors can enjoy fresh seafood and ride on traditional fishing boats have been swept away by the tsunami. Additional difficulties in recovering the pre-disaster rate of incoming tourists in the coastal come from the damages in infrastructure such as transportation systems and accommodation facilities. The JR

²³Daily Yomiuri Online, "Tohoku tourism recovering from impact of disaster," 2012

²⁴ Statistics for the actual number of visitors to Hiraizumi during the 2012 golden week have not been reported.

Kesennuma Line, which operated along the coast line, is significantly destructed with little sign of recovery, and there is an overall lack of accommodation facilities available in the coastal towns due to the slow recovery of facilities as well as the high amount of the facilities being taken up by reconstruction workers.²⁵

In midst of these circumstances, a new type of tourism emerged to bring visitors to the Tohoku region. Like the “buy to help Tohoku” campaign, a movement to “visit to help Tohoku” has attracted the attention of many Japanese planning for travel since as early as April 2011. It has been reported that although in early 2011, the number of national travel reservations have decreased by 27.8 percent from the same period in 2010, but the number increased 1.6 times in the third week of April when reservations for golden week in early May are made. Among these reservations are those geared towards volunteer work in the disaster-affected areas in Tohoku. The Tokyo Volunteer and Citizen Activities Center was overwhelmed by enthusiastic response to their volunteer program scheduled for the golden week in the Tohoku region, to which almost 600 people applied to 200 available spaces. Meanwhile, during the two weeks up to April 25th, 250 volunteer programs scheduled for the golden week were filled.²⁶ Another report mentions that during the 2011 golden week, the number of volunteers visiting Miyagi prefecture was about 20,000 per day. At the period of the report, which was late June 2011, the

²⁵ Daily Yomiuri Online, “Tohoku tourism halfway to full recovery,” 2012

²⁶ FNN Speak Special , 2011

number of volunteers has gone down to about 4,000 people per day, among which 1,000 are through travel agencies.²⁷

Tour programs to the Tohoku region with focus on disaster-affected areas continue to thrive, while at the same time, are evolving to attract a more variety of consumers. Whereas during the 2011 golden week, these volunteer programs put volunteer work as the main focus of the tour, changes have occurred in the trend to “visit to help Tohoku,” where more focus is given to enjoying what Tohoku has to offer while a part of the program gives options to participate in activities involving local communities and volunteer work. Another type of tour that has been popular during the 2012 golden week has been tours around the disaster-affected coastal areas with guides giving first-hand accounts of the event of the earthquake and its aftermath. The Japan Times reports that there has been a change in the perception of the Japanese outside the disaster-affected regions, who were previously hesitant in enjoying tours in Tohoku area but have now accepted the idea that just by visiting and consuming local products and enjoying the culture can be a form of support. Bus tours as well as study tours where sightseeing is combined with interacting with local residents of the affected communities to listen to their stories while enjoying local food are becoming popular.²⁸ Some examples of current tour programs to the Tohoku region for the purposes of supporting disaster recovery are illustrated in Table 3.

²⁷ Yamada, 2011

²⁸ Japan Times, “Tours to Tohoku region changing: Sightseeing, study and business,” 2012

Table 3. Examples of Current Tour Programs Supporting Tohoku Disaster Recovery

Tourist Agency	Features	Website	Note
JTB Global Marketing & Travel Inc	- "Tohoku Post-Disaster Support 2-Day Bus Tour" - Main feature and purpose is to participate in volunteer activities in disaster-affected communities	http://www.jtbgmt.com/japaninfocus/leisure/season-sunrise2_vol30.html	-
KK JTB	- Volunteer tours from Kanto, departing from Tokyo incorporating sightseeing with volunteer activity and opportunities to listen to local people's experience	http://www.jtb.co.jp/tabeat/volunteer/	NPO initiative
NYK Cruise Line	- Special cruise ship tour to disaster affected areas - Optional tours will include shopping in Ishinomaki, Miyagi Prefecture, while listening to the stories of volunteer guides - Food and drinks made from Tohoku area ingredients to be served - Part of the earnings to be donated to relief efforts	http://mainichi.jp/english/english/features/news/20121019p2a00m0na005000c.html (Link to the Mainichi Shinbun article advertising the tour)	-
Kuji-shi Sanriku Tetsudo KK. (Sanriku Railway Company)	- Tour visiting disaster-stricken areas along the Sanriku shore with a guide as front line study training in disaster-stricken area	http://www.sanrikutetsudou.com	-
Miyato-chiku Support Team G, Miyagi Prefecture	- Tour (3 nights/2 days) from Tokyo/Yokohama involving volunteer activities such as cleaning beaches in Oku-Matsushima or Miyato Island, with sessions with disaster victims, fishing tours, lunch with local fishermen	http://sinsaisien.web.fc2.com/katudohoukuku.html	Government initiative
IxsmTravel. Com Tohoku Disaster Relief "Kizuna" Tour	- Incorporates two days of volunteer activities in Minamisanriku among the 6 night tour program	http://www.ixsmtravel.com/index.php?main_page=product_info&cPath=97_24_180_42_1&products_id=350	Overseas travel agency
Handmade Tours	- Visits disaster-affected areas including the coastal villages outside the main tourism route	http://www.handmadetours.info/hand/2013318tohoku/1.html	Overseas travel agency

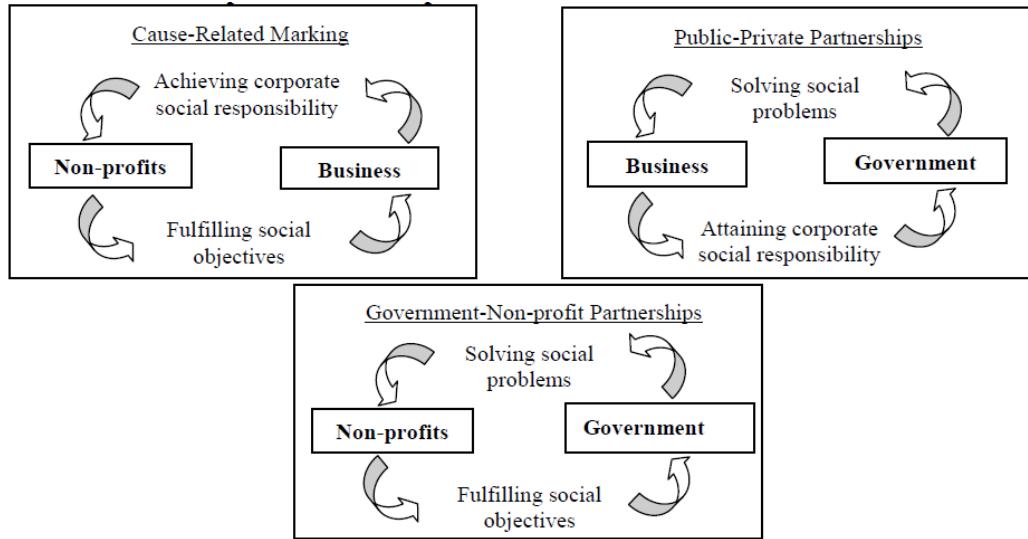
The popularity of these tours and the quick acceptance of the Japanese public, both the residents in the disaster-affected communities and the visitors from outside the region, towards the validity of such tours being beneficial to the region are quite exceptional. As mentioned before, tours to disaster-affected areas have also been arranged in New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina since 2005, but after seven years, New Orleans residents complaining against out-of-town visitors coming to the hard-hit Lower 9th ward of the city to get a close-up look of the aftermath and reconstruction after the hurricane have prompted officials to stop and fine tour operators who run tours around the hard-hit neighborhood. Although not it is reported that not all residents share the same complaints, it is clear that touring in disaster-affected areas of New Orleans was not accepted as kindly as has been in Japan. Here again, this “positive” commercialization of disaster stands out as a successful cause-related marketing strategy in the way it brings together the needs of the disaster-affected communities with those of the potential tourists from outside the region through a mutual trust in the good intentions held by all participants. This mutual trust not only exists between the local community and the visiting tourists, but is also extended towards the tour operators – the private companies who are the initiators of this cause-related marketing. How this mutual trust is possible may be related to the unique partnership framework that the two “positive” commercialization of disaster exhibits.

(3) Difference from Other Cause-related Marketing Strategies

Because the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake is still a relatively recent disaster, existing literature that analyzes the two marketing initiatives described above are scarce. However, one noticeable paper by Eric Kong (2012) investigates the Japanese tourism industry after 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake as a case study to see how a cross-sector collaboration framework can better achieve social objectives. In this study, Kong points out that a large part of the literature on cause-related marketing have dealt with concepts of cause-related marketing, public-private partnership, and non-profit government partnerships separately, with relatively little research on cross-sector collaboration, especially in the field of disaster management, as can be seen in Figure 3 below retrieved from the article.²⁹

²⁹ Kong, 2012

Figure 3. Concepts of Cause-Related Marketing, Public Private Partnerships and Government-Non-profit Partnerships



Source: Kong (2012)

Kong discusses the strengths and weaknesses of businesses, non-profits, and the government to illuminate that, in a scheme where public-private partnerships and government-non-profit partnerships are formed separately, certain weaknesses that each of the agents hold are not fully complemented by the partnership. For instance, businesses are the resources to bring financial support but often find it difficult to make a long-term commitment to find and assist sustainable solutions and the government provides long-term plans but the execution of these plans can bring burden to the government, while non-profit organizations are able to provide long-term assistance but face a sharp decrease in funding with time. Alternatively, Kong suggests that, to tackle the imminent

problems faced by the Japanese tourism industry, businesses, non-profits, and the government should collaborate together to bring synergy through a combination of the resources each sector possess, as illustrated in Figure 4 below, also retrieved from the article.

Figure 4. Strategic Cross-Sector Collaboration between Businesses, Non-profits and the Government



Source: Kong (2012)

Kong uses the Japanese tourism industry as a case to illustrate how such strategic cross-sector collaboration framework can be implemented. The government side can be represented by the activities of the Japan National Tourism Organisation (JNTO) which can promote travel to Japan through various activities both nationally and overseas.

Overseas non-profit organizations such as the Tsunami Volunteer Center (TVC) in Thailand founded after the 2005 Indian Ocean Tsunami can provide the framework for bringing foreign population into Japan through its recruit of volunteers. Registered tour operators set up travel packages to the disaster-affected areas as well as to non-affected areas while generating revenue.

As can be seen from the previous section on specialized tours to disaster-affected areas in the Tohoku region, such collaboration has indeed been happening in Japan after the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake with great success. In the case of the promotion of Tohoku products, there has been government initiative to create more new market spaces (online and offline) for and to promote the market spaces created by both local businesses and non-profit organizations in a strategic collaboration. As Kong suggests, both the promotion of Tohoku products and the specialized tours to Tohoku region show how across-sector collaboration can bring greater and wider engagement of individuals and result in a greater success to achieve the objective of revitalizing Tohoku local businesses and communities. This cross-sector collaboration can be seen as one of the distinctive characteristics of the two “positive” commercialization of disaster from other cause-related marketing.

Another distinctive characteristic can be articulated in terms of the direct involvement of local-businesses and communities in the framework of cause-related marketing initiatives. Traditionally and generally, cause-related marketing is a type of

transaction between a private company and a non-profit organization that brings mutual benefit. This partnership can be illustrated as the Figure 5 below.

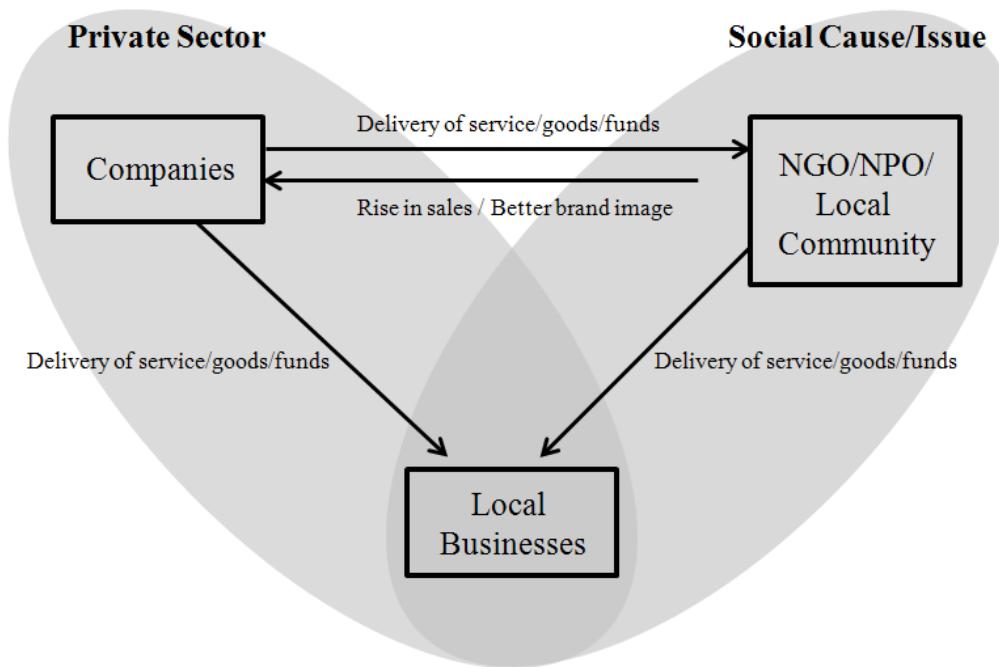
Figure 5. Partnership Framework for Cause-related Marketing



Source: Created by author

However, in the case of the two “positive” commercialization of disaster, another agent – local businesses and communities – becomes involved in the partnership framework, as illustrated in Figure 6.

Figure 6. Partnership Framework for the Two “Positive” Commercialization of Disaster



Source: Created by author

In the collaborative partnership framework of the two “positive” commercialization of disaster, another agent takes up significant presence in the picture – the local businesses in the disaster affected areas. Although they are the main object and a part of the social cause in promotion by the cause-related marketing campaign, the local businesses are not passive recipients of the service, goods, or donations given by the companies as part of the cause-related marketing campaign. Instead, in the two “positive” commercialization of disaster, the local business take an active part as they seek a larger

market for their products in order to gain a larger business profit, also acting based on business logic as the donor companies. Because the recipients of the benefits raised by the cause-related marketing are directly exposed and engaged in the cause-related marketing, greater transparency can be achieved, as well as a larger consumer satisfaction by being able to witness directly the actual results of their participation in the cause-related marketing campaign.

Through this process, a base of trust can be formed amongst the donor company, the recipients of benefits (local businesses), and the consumers. This mutual trust enforces the positive feeling shared among the agents in the partnership framework and the consumers, and provides greater incentive for consumers to repeat their contributions to the cause-related marketing campaign. Thus, through this unique partnership framework, the two “commercialization” of disaster observed in Japan after the Great East Japan Earthquake – “buy to support Tohoku” and “visit to support Tohoku” – allows their cause-related marketing initiatives to continue for a longer term, with greater and more successful results.

VI. Behind the “Positive” Commercialization of Disaster

What has made such “positive” commercialization of disaster after the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake possible? And what is more, how were these two cause-related marketing initiatives able to gain such enthusiastic response from the Japanese public in a time when consumers are more and more skeptical about cause-related marketing? The present section will propose three reasons for this success: first, the matching of variables behind positive consumer response to cause-related marketing to the characteristics of the two “positive” commercialization of disaster; second, the extreme magnitude of the Great East Japan Earthquake which left the major industries of the disaster-affected areas in devastation and the public knowledge of such; and third, the creation and reconstruction of social capital through the formation of a national campaign.

(1) Variables behind Positive Consumer Response to Cause-related Marketing

The first set of answers can be induced in reference to existing studies on the variables behind consumer response to cause-related marketing. As shown in the literature review, several variables can be noted as bringing greater positive response from consumers for cause-related marketing: promotion of luxuries rather than necessities; support of cause that has personal importance to consumer; clear communication of the

terms of the offer with actual, transparent, and non-exploitive results; high brand-cause fit in the case where consumers have high brand consciousness. The two “positive” commercialization of disaster more or less exhibit all of the above characteristics. The matching of positive variables to the characteristics of the two cause-related marketing initiatives are shown in Table 4 below.

Table 4. Matching of Positive Variables to the Characteristics of the Two Cause-related Marketing Initiatives

Positive Variable	Characteristics of the Two Cause-related Marketing Initiatives	
	Promotion of Tohoku Products	Specialized Tours to Affected Areas
Promotion of luxuries rather than necessities ³⁰	Many Tohoku products which have been known for its success in sales are non-necessities: for instance, quilted and embroidered products made by Otsuchi Quilting Project,	Tours are considered luxuries in themselves, and the shopping during tours are mostly gifts

³⁰ The term “luxuries” is used here to denote pleasure-oriented consumption, according to Strahilevitz and Myers (1998). Pleasure-oriented consumption refers to the purchase of products whose monetary incentives come mainly from “the desire for sensual pleasure, fantasy and fun (e.g., the consumption of a hot fudge sundae or a week in the Bahamas)” as opposed to goal-oriented consumption where monetary incentives are “the desire to fill a basic need or accomplish a functional respectively tasks,” which are considered practical or necessary products (436). In the case of Tohoku products, I have noted that popular products have been non-necessities such as bracelets or alcoholic beverages, but at the same time, there also has been great response from Japanese consumers to buy Tohoku products that may be considered necessities as well. In this case, the monetary incentive has been to substitute a product which needs to be bought anyway with Tohoku products to assist the revitalization of disaster-affected areas. At the same time, the products (such as bracelets or alcoholic beverages) which have shown high sales may not be “luxuries” depending on how one takes the term, as most of the products are reasonably priced or even relatively cheap – a reason that the products have been received well. Thus, it must be noted that the term “luxuries” used here have been used in a broad sense, and that not all Tohoku products fit this categorization.

	bracelets made by Work for Sanriku! Project, and Japanese sake. Many of the agricultural and fisheries products are also special Tohoku local food products which are difficult to categorize as necessities.	
Support of cause that has personal importance to consumer	The Great East Japan Earthquake affected the majority of Japanese either directly or indirectly, and the devastation left after the catastrophe has had strong national impact and impression.	
Clear communication of the terms of the offer with actual, transparent, and non-exploitative results	Creating new market spaces for Tohoku products connect consumers with local businesses, where sales of products become direct sources of income for the local businesses.	Tour packages offered by companies bring actual and transparent results to the local communities which are directly witnessed and experienced by the participants of the tour.
High brand-cause fit in the case where consumers have high brand consciousness	Agents involved in cause-related marketing are use their business resources as part of cause-related marketing – e.g. e-commerce sites using their online platform to promote Tohoku products made by local businesses in disaster-affected area.	Agents involved in cause-related marketing are use their business resources as part of cause-related marketing – e.g. Tour operating companies providing tour packages to disaster-affected areas and developing tour programs that aim to maximize benefit for local communities.

As seen in Table 5, there is a clear matching between the four variables that affect positive consumer response towards cause-related marketing identified in the four notable researches discussed in the literature review. Other variables that positively or negatively affect consumer response to cause-related marketing exist, but due to the unique partnership framework created in the two “positive” commercialization of disaster, the elements of cause-related marketing that may cause skepticism in consumers are

minimized in the case of these two strategies. As such, the positive response from the Japanese public towards these two strategies is not surprising and can be thought as quite in line with existing research.

(2) Situational Background

While few earlier literature deals with business recovery after disaster or the role of the private sector in disaster recovery, there has been a wider recognition of the importance of local businesses in rebuilding communities after disaster in more recent studies on post-disaster recovery. Nigg (2005) elucidates that business recovery matter for communities because they provide goods and services as well as employment opportunities for community residents, and thus, obviously, the longer businesses are closed, the economic strain on the families whose members are employed by those enterprises will be greater, and the length of time it takes household members to do their tasks longer due to the difficulties in acquiring goods and services within the community. Furthermore, if commercial enterprises become non-operational, the tax revenue collected by the local government will decrease, and with it, the community's financial resources to assist those in need after the disaster in the long-run, once the short-lived external aid and assistance funds run out. The recovery of the business sector will determine the survival of community-based services such as public work maintenance, social and health services, schools, cultural and recreational programs.

In addition, Nigg refers to the ‘ghost towns’ that were identified following the Northridge earthquakes in Los Angeles where owners of damaged businesses and residences eventually abandoned the town to point out that, community recovery and business recovery go hand in hand – that if the local community is left with the only option to consume outside of their community, the businesses that rely on local residents as their major clients and serve specific needs in the neighborhood become affected by the changes in consumption pattern and find it difficult to recover, which in turn lead to population loss within the community.

Xiao and Van Zandt (2012) identify the direct correlation between population maintenance and local business recovery after disaster. In a research based on data of 980 homes and 145 businesses after 2008's Hurricane Ike, Xiao and Van Zandt studies the interdependency of households and businesses in post-disaster return and finds that “the reopening of businesses can influence nearby households’ decisions to return to their homes and the return of households in the market area will increase the chances for businesses to return”(2523). Two reasons the study specifies as behind this correlation is the availability of jobs and of lower-order goods, both of which facilitate the households’ recovery to normalcy. One interesting finding in this study is that the survival of local businesses after disaster is not as dependent on the level of population in the neighborhood as on that of the greater geographical area as a whole, since the market for businesses often stretch beyond the local community. However, the decrease in the size of the larger market can be detrimental for local businesses. In sum, Xiao and Van Zandt

contend that the mutual dependence between households and local businesses means that an interruption in either part will affect the other, and because of this dependence, helping businesses to recovery is one way to assist the recovery of households and the household occupancy in a disaster-affected area.

In light of these researches, the aftermath of the Great East Japan Earthquake has left great problematic circumstances to the affected Tohoku region in terms of the local businesses. The major industries in the three prefectures of the Tohoku region can be categorized into two main areas: the secondary industry led by corporate presence and composed of the manufacturing and assembly of parts, and the primary industry of agriculture, forestry, and fisheries. In terms of the secondary industry, the Great East Japan Earthquake caused a sharp disruption in the industry by destroying facilities, equipment as well as the infrastructure necessary to run these facilities such as power and water lines. These damages prolonged the resumption of businesses in many of the enterprises for months after the earthquake. The disruption in the supply chain in the Tohoku region was extended to the production in the major corporations whose product manufacture depended on the parts and materials provided by the Tohoku enterprises. Fourth- and fifth-tier subcontractors suffered from the earthquake and paralyzed the existing manufacturing networks. However, according to the survey conducted by the Ministry of Economy, Trade, and Industry in August 2011, the recovery of the manufacturing industry turned out to be faster than expected, with 93 percent of the 91

production bases directly affected by the earthquake and tsunami were restored with 80 percent recovering pre-disaster levels of production.³¹

The relatively fast recovery of the secondary industry can be attributed to the characteristic of the industry in Tohoku region being a part of the supply chain for major Japanese corporations. Many of the suppliers did not receive physical damage directly from the earthquake, but rather found difficulty in resuming production due to the damage in infrastructure such as power and supply chain routes. Effective dispatch of corporate assistance and the rapid repair of infrastructure by the government showed that the Japanese system to deal with disasters had high resilience, as can be seen by the fact that the automobile supply chain, one of the major supply chains disrupted by the earthquake, was back into business for the most part within two weeks after the disaster.³² In addition, the positive effects of the enormous amount of funding being pumped into post-disaster reconstruction, as well as the variety of incentives provided by the government to induce more investment into the Tohoku regions such as tax breaks, financing and funding, and deregulation, and the enhanced loan program for businesses, are further contributing to the relatively fast recovery of the secondary industry in Tohoku region, a recovery which is vital to the undisrupted continuation of corporate production.

However such rapid recovery may not represent the full picture of the secondary industry in Tohoku region. As mentioned before, fourth- and fifth-tier subcontractors

³¹ “Ministry of Economy, Trade, and Industry, 2011

³² Takahiro Fujimoto, 2011

composed of small local businesses greatly suffered from the earthquake. Fujimoto (2011) point out that the exact number of the parts manufacturers affected by the disaster was still not precisely known after one month from when the disaster struck, and manufacturers of products with poor substitutability and poor visibility are recovering relatively slowly compared to those of other products. According to the report by the Small and Medium Enterprise Agency of the Japanese government in April 2012, less than 70 percent of small-to-medium sized enterprises (SMEs) have resumed business in tsunami inundated areas. Furthermore, among the secondary industries, the processing industry shows a slower recovery than the manufacturing industry which are more extensively under the influence of large-scale corporations, because of its heavy connection to the primary industry in the region. Survey results show that 50 percent of the processing industry found difficulties in finding alternative suppliers for particular raw materials necessary for production.³³In particular, the marine products processing industry, which are clustered on the coastal areas, was more affected by the earthquake.³⁴

In addition, how effective the reconstruction plans formulated by the Japanese central and local governments will be in assisting the recovery of SMEs is still left for observation. As Lyons (2009) points out, although previous research suggest that

³³ Ministry of Economy, Trade, and Industry, 2011

³⁴ According to the “2012 White Paper on Small and Medium Enterprises in Japan,” the marine processing industry showed almost 20percent difference from the rest of the manufacturing industry in terms of recovery rate. In addition, among the SMEs in the tsunami-hit areas which resumed business after the earthquake, 14percent had a decrease of 30percent or more employees, while 31.3percent of the marine product processing industry showed such decrease. (See “Key Points of the 2012 White Paper on Small and Medium Enterprises in Japan,” April 2012)

informal businesses and small-scale developments are more likely to boost the economy of the disaster-affected areas at grass-roots level and create livelihood opportunities for the local community, because these small-scale actors lack connections, information, and coordination necessary to influence national level decision making, reconstruction is often carried out in relatively small number of large-scale projects involving large-scale contractors. Thus, the small-to-medium local businesses in the secondary industry, especially in the most affected areas along the Pacific coast of Japan, are still struggling for survival and rehabilitation, with the possibility that assistance from the public sector may not be able to address directly the needs of these local businesses.

While the situation of the secondary industry showed a fast, supportive recovery, the situation of the primary industry was not quite as hopeful. The tsunami accompanying the Great East Japan Earthquake resulted in a wipe-out in the coastal areas of the Tohoku region and greatly affected the primary industries in those areas, especially the farmlands, agricultural facilities, and fisheries. The total damage in the primary industry is estimated at 520 billion yen, among which damages to the marine industry take up a significant portion whose total value of damages is estimated at 350 billion yen. According to the Nikkei Newspaper, in addition to the direct cost of damages, the indirect economic loss due to the halt of shipments of intermediate products from the disaster-affected areas to the rest of the nation is estimated at 250 billion yen over the first half of the 2011 fiscal

year.³⁵ As noted in the section on the secondary industry, the secondary industry in this region, especially the marine product processing industry, is highly connecting to the production from the primary industry. Thus, although the primary industry such as agriculture and fishery may not have been a major contributor to the regional economy on itself, the overall effect on the regional economy is significant when related industries are counted. For instance, fisheries, marine product processing, wholesaling, warehousing, ship repairs and cooperatives put together employed almost half of the workforce in the coastal cities.³⁶

Rebuilding the primary industries face heavy obstacles. The tsunami infiltrated saline in the farmlands, affecting future production in the region. For instance, the tsunami washed away the topsoil of the Sendai Plain dedicated to rice production. The devastation in the marine industry is greater: Iwate lost 95 percent of its 10,522 fishing boats; Miyagi lost nearly 90 percent of the 13,570 commercial boats registered there; and Fukushima lost more than 80 percent of its 1,068-boat fleet while in terms of ports which an infrastructure containing a great portion of the marine industry facilities, Iwate lost 98 percent of its 111 ports; Miyagi lost all its 142 ports; and Fukushima lost all of its 10 ports. These damages resulted in a 22 percent reduction of Japan's total marine fishery, as the Tohoku region accounted for 22 percent of all Japan's marine fishery production as

³⁵ Asian Disaster Reduction Center(ADRC) and the International Recovery Platform (IRP), 2011. However, Wright (2012) note that “figures compiled after the March 11, 2011, show that 25,014 fishing vessels were lost or damaged, at a cost of ¥1.7 trillion, and that 319 fishing ports were destroyed, at a cost of some ¥8.2 trillion.”

³⁶ Takada et al., 2011.

well as 18 percent of its aquaculture such as oysters, kelp and wakame seaweed, while the three prefectures of Iwate, Miyagi, and Fukushima accounted for 10 percent to 12 percent of all domestic fisheries landings.³⁷

Rebuilding ports and boats is a monumental task on its own, while the nuclear radiation leakage at Fukushima nuclear power plant posed greater obstacles for the rehabilitation of the marine industry. The high levels of radiation found in the ocean and on the seabed led to the closure of fisheries for groundfish and shellfish, and in April 2011, the first shutdown of a Tohoku fishery was made by the Ibaraki local government which banned fishing for sand lance due to levels of radioactive cesium above the legal levels. In February 2012, the Japan Fisheries Association reported that the International Coalition of Fisheries Associations delivered a resolution to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization which noted that "[d]espite safety of fish guaranteed by the Japanese authorities concerned through monitoring and inspections, sales of the seafood have decreased drastically due to rootless negative rumors."³⁸ The concern surrounding nuclear radiation have also influenced the consumption of agricultural and livestock products from Tohoku region despite the government's assertion that the products have been checked for radioactive materials and levels, as consumers' distrust towards the government's provisional permissible standards become widespread. According to an extensive survey on intention to buy rice produced from the Tohoku region, more than 50

³⁷ Wright, 2012

³⁸ Ibid

percent of the respondents showed no intention to buy rice from Tohoku even if the cesium amount detected was lower than the government's provisional permissible standards and more than 30 percent even if no cesium was detected.³⁹

These consumption barriers significantly reduced the market available for the Tohoku region producers, coupled with the sense of inappropriateness towards spending amongst the Japanese in face of the disaster, have shrunk the market for the goods produced in the Tohoku region.⁴⁰ As seen in the literature review, Xiao and Van Zandt (2012) point out that the decrease in the size of the larger market can be detrimental local businesses in disaster-affected areas, more than the return of population in the neighborhood since the market for businesses often stretch beyond the local community. As local businesses in the Tohoku region struggle to rebuild and restart their operations, concern over nuclear radiation created a critical obstacle to recovery by reducing the number of consumers for Tohoku products, thereby decreasing the size of the larger market available for local businesses in Tohoku. Although government efforts have been made to assist local businesses through massive reconstruction programs as well as introducing more accessible loan programs, concerns have lingered about whether the disaster-affected communities have long-term viability as many small local businesses are

³⁹ Asahi Shinbun, "Distrust of government standards fuels avoidance of Tohoku food," 2011

⁴⁰ According to the survey conducted by the Ministry of Economy, Trade, and Industry, in April 2011, more than 80 percent of the retail and services related companies interviewed felt that the major cause of the decrease in sales and number of customers is widespread self-restraint among customers, while 72 percent of the companies voluntarily restrained from holding events. The replication of the survey in August 2011 showed the same results, although 91 percent of the companies interviewed felt that the impact of voluntary self-restraint among customers after the earthquake is decreasing.

left as onlookers rather than actors in the large-scale changes are slowly made in their community under the centralized reconstruction process led by the government. These concerns were deepened due to the significant decrease of the pre-existing market for Tohoku products because of the radiation leakage in Fukushima prefecture.

These concerns were widely publicized in the mass media, along with the endless and worldwide media reports on Fukushima's nuclear leakage, and led to efforts to expand the market available for local businesses initiated by the local community as well as civil society, the private sector, and the local and central government. The public attention on the developments of disaster relief and recovery stages in the Tohoku region after the Great East Japan Earthquake has been tremendous all the more because most Japanese nationals have been directly or indirectly affected by the catastrophe. The Great East Japan Earthquake and its aftermath will continue to stay as one of the hottest news topics for years to come, because of the huge changes the earthquake has brought to the nation. Furthermore, the Japanese population's attention and interest in the Tohoku region will not die down easily due to the social capital created and strengthened after the Great East Japan Earthquake where a great portion of the Japanese nationals have invested personally in disaster relief and recovery stages by direct volunteering, donating, and taking part in cause-related marketing campaigns. The creation and reconstruction of social capital after the Great East Japan Earthquake will be illustrated in the next section.

(3) Creation and Reconstruction of Social Capital: “Ganbare Nippon” and “Kizuna”

Actions of altruism are often highlighted in disaster response, especially in terms of volunteerism. In generally, the period up to six months after the event of disaster show a strengthening of social ties and solidarity as national and international volunteers flood into the disaster-affected area to lend a hand. After the Kobe earthquake and Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans, U.S.A., tens of thousands of young volunteers arrived in the disaster-stricken areas with the desire to help, creating a new form of social capital through their self mobilization, a social bond formed around the disaster among people who are from various backgrounds and localities. Despite critical evaluation of such massive introduction of volunteers to disaster-affected areas – such as the difficulty in effective coordination – this social bond encourages the sense of community and assures social cohesion, and in many cases, the social network created during this period lasts beyond the six-month span of heightened volunteerism after the disaster.⁴¹ More recently, social network services (SNS) such as Twitter, Facebook, and Youtube, have been widely used as dynamic channels of communication enhancing the engagement of national and international society in the disaster situations. The active and rapid sharing of information on the up-to-date statuses of disaster response and recovery through SNS not only

⁴¹ Wisner, 2009

brought a larger audience, but created new communities of people who shared the feeling of altruism and sentiments towards the victims of disaster and served as a tool for the initiation of action amongst those communities.⁴²

Dynes (2002) points out that among various forms of capitals, social capital is the less damaged and less affected in disaster situations, and thus, serves as the primary base for community response, while at the same time being the “only form of capital which is renewed and enhanced during the emergency period”(9). Dynes looks at the different forms of social capital that emerge in disaster response, where new social capital emerges from existing social capital to meet new problems created by disaster. One of such emerging social capital in the face of disaster comes from the changes in obligations. The changes happen in two ways: first, disaster situations reorder the priority of obligations in relevance to the impact of disaster; second, the role of the citizen expands as the disaster situation creates in the members a stronger identification with the community behavior in the emergency. These obligations can also be understood as norms, another form of social capital. Norms make the larger community feel the obligation to assist in disaster situations, facilitating the emergence of altruistic behavior while strengthening the norm itself. The strength of the norm to bring action is proportionate to the level of damages incurred by the disaster – the larger the disaster, the more communication and knowledge there will be about its aftermath, and invoke stronger identification and sympathy with the victims of disaster amongst the members of society. And when there is stronger

⁴² Examples can be found in Freberg, 2011

identification and sympathy felt towards the victims amongst the members of society, more people will engage in the actual behavior of helping, reinforcing the norm. In this sense, Dynes argues that disasters provide optimum conditions for the development of altruistic norms.

The role of social capital in disaster management gained importance over the past two decades and has recently been most underscored in recent literature as the missing link to recovery after disaster. Nakagawa and Shaw (2004) study the relationship between social capital and disaster recovery through a case study that compares the Kobe and Gujarat Earthquake. Through the case studies, Nakagawa and Shaw emphasize that while all disasters are extremely local, social capital and leadership in the community are universal factors that are widely applicable and that these two factors allowed for speedy and satisfying recovery in the earthquake affected areas of Kobe and Gujarat.

Aldrich (2012) illuminates four factors – damage, population density, human capital, and economic capital – in relation to population recovery after disaster, as well as exploring the factor of social capital. His findings suggest that more than the other four factors, social capital explains why some communities rebuild quickly while others fail to do so best. Aldrich outlines three specific mechanisms through which denser social networks lead to faster recovery following a disaster. First, social ties become ready-made support networks for financial, physical, and logistic guidance, and the information spread through civil society – such as “who is coming back when and what services will be provided” – give critical guidance in collective decision-making process of survivors.

Thus, social networks provide information, support both financial and administrative, and guidance through weak and strong social ties. Second, greater levels of trust amongst neighbors allow the members of the community to be more politically active and more connected to better mobilize and overcome barriers to collective action, assisting them in attracting and controlling resources. Finally, social networks that are embedded in the community increase the probability that residents will stay in the community after disaster by raising the cost of ‘exit’ for the individuals. As a result, because the members of the community have a higher stake in the local area, they will become more voiced in the process of reconstruction to allow for more collective action and better articulation of demands to authorities.

The Great East Japan Earthquake also gave appearance to the same types of growth in social capital and the emergence of new social networks as discussed above.⁴³ However, there are two characteristics in the aftermath of the Great East Japan Earthquake that is particular to the case of Japan. The first characteristic involves the pre-disaster situation of Japan as a whole. The Great East Japan Earthquake struck Japan at a difficult time. Since the bubble economy burst in Japan, the Japanese economy has been in a state of stagnant deflation for more than a decade, with the slump sinking deeper with the global financial crisis in 2008. Japanese public debt marked a record high in 2010, the highest among industrial countries tracked by the Organization for Economic

⁴³ The peak number of volunteers in April 2011 right after the Great East Japan Earthquake is reported to be around 450,000 according to Japan Today, “Volunteers still needed in Tohoku,” 2012.

Cooperation and Development.⁴⁴ When the earthquake hit the coasts of Japan on 11 March 2011, the horror of the event itself was coupled with the gloom of further expected difficulties the national economy will have to face. In light of this background, it is noteworthy that a popular mantra and government-led slogan in the wake of the calamity has been “Ganbaro Nippon,” which can be roughly translated as “Hang in there, Japan” or “Never give up, Japan.” Most notably, “Ganbaro Nippon” was used by the Japan Tourism Agency as a unified logo and catch-phrase to promote domestic travel both nationally and overseas, engaging joint efforts from public and private sectors.⁴⁵

Figure 7. The Logo for “Ganbaro Nippon,” created by the Japanese government



What is interesting here is that, while the earthquake affected the northeastern region of Tohoku in Japan with its destructive forces relatively contained in the region, the slogan frames the efforts to recover from the earthquake as a national problem. The use of the slogan “Ganbare Nippon” rather than “Ganbare Tohoku” implies that the aftermath of the

⁴⁴ Tabuchi and Wassener, 2010

⁴⁵ Japan Tourism Agency, 2011

Great East Japan Earthquake is a nation-wide concern, and that the recovery from the disaster will be involving nation-wide, not just regional, resources. Furthermore, the perpetuation of the slogan created a sense of national solidarity and reinforced the sympathy and concern felt by the national population.

The second characteristic is the rise of the word “Kizuna (絆),” meaning “bond” or “solidarity” in Japanese, which surfaced as a keyword after the Great East Japan Earthquake. According to Japan’s Kanji Aptitude Testing Foundation, kizuna was voted top as the character that best summed up the year 2011 in a public poll participated by more than half a million people.⁴⁶ The word was used frequently in the media during the year and has also been used in the title of many projects following the Great East Japan Earthquake, such as the “Kizuna Project” for youth exchange organized by the Japan Foundation and private sector projects such as Kirin KIZUNA Relief-Support Project. The Great East Japan Earthquake brought unprecedented numbers of Japanese helping one another, and the emphasis of on the word “Kizuna” exhibit the fact that there is a new awareness towards the ties in society emerging in Japan. The recognition of the value of social bond is felt stronger than before, with the victims of the earthquake as well as those who participated in disaster response as volunteers sharing the feeling of bonding and the devastation caused by the disaster itself reminding the people about the value of relationships. Thus, the strong hold of word kizuna in the minds and hearts of the

⁴⁶ BBC News Asia, 2011

Japanese people can be seen as the actualization of how the Great East Japan Earthquake strengthened the social capital both pre-existing and newly emerging in Japanese society.

As illustrated above, these two characteristics found in the aftermath of the Great East Japan Earthquake both widened (Ganbaro Nippon) and deepened (Kizuna) social bonds and feelings of solidarity amongst the Japanese. The broadened and strengthened social capital in Japanese society may be one of the triggers to a greater transformation from that observed after the 1995 Kobe Earthquake. The 1995 Kobe Earthquake is often noted by scholars a turning-point in Japan's civil society, with the mass media coining the year 1995 as "the Year One of voluntarism" and scholars as "the renaissance of voluntarism." A massive number of volunteers landed in the disaster-affected areas of Hyogo prefecture, while noticeable increase in voluntary and non-government activities was observed after the Kobe Earthquake, and the usage of the term "civil society" for voluntary organizations and non-profit organizations came to existence at the aftermath of the Kobe Earthquake.⁴⁷ Tatsuki (2000) describes the changes in Japanese society after the Kobe Earthquake an emergence of a "new reality of society"(195) which empowered people and consisted of the two dimensions of self-governance and community solidarity – two aspects that have been dormant within Japanese people for decades. These transformations created a basis for the promotion of civil society in Japan.

What has been seen after the Great East Japan Earthquake is a further stage of transformation in the realization of self-governance and community solidarity sparked by

⁴⁷ Shaw and Goda, 2004

the 1995 Kobe Earthquake. One of the observations by the media after the Great East Japan Earthquake has been the work of the social enterprises interacting closely with the communities and neighborhoods in affected areas, which are now energetically solidifying its activities in the worst hit areas.⁴⁸ In a business environment and culture where it was difficult for social enterprises to flourish before due to the lack of awareness, support, and the extremely high competition within the business world, it seems that the event of the Great East Japan Earthquake has opened the roads to the rise of social enterprises, more specifically, innovative entrepreneurship, as the Kobe Earthquake did for civil society. Ibata-Arens (2012) describes the shift in national consciousness after the Great East Japan Earthquake as “Japan’s Sputnik Moment,” where people have realized that bigger is no longer always better, while non-governmental organizations and social entrepreneurs rose to meet the challenges which were not being handled very efficiently by the central government, as was seen by their management of the nuclear power plant crisis. More specifically, an extraordinary environment of innovation, as Ibata-Arens puts it, is being created in Japan, where “new ideas are being tried on a trial-and-error basis...and risk-taking on the part of the many young people helping to rebuild Tohoku is being noticed and celebrated in Japan.”

“Ganbaro Nippon,” “Kizuna,” and the creation of an innovative and open environment after the Great East Japan Earthquake, put together, illustrate a meaningful change in Japanese society. The nation-wide feelings towards “Ganbaro Nippon” and

⁴⁸ Cahalane, 2012

“Kizuna” represent how the social networks available to the victims of the Great East Japan Earthquake have expanded through a shared bond which recognizes the disaster as a “Japanese” concern rather than a regional “Tohoku concern.” This social bond has brought thousands of Japanese of all ages to take interest in Tohoku’s reconstruction, and maintain the commitment to do a part in recovering from the disaster. Furthermore, the strengthened and expanded social networks and bonds after the earthquake have provided an informal safety net for the local communities and young entrepreneurs to find innovative measures to revitalize the local economy of Tohoku’s most affected areas, which are struggling despite the various reconstructions plans put into action by the central and local governments. In short, a new foundation of social capital has been created after the Great East Japan Earthquake, opening new possibilities for the disaster-affected region to rise from the catastrophe. The situational background of the aftermath of the earthquake and the heart-felt need for action shared nation-wide, combined, enabled the two distinctive commercialization of disaster illustrated above with little resistance by consumers who have been increasingly disillusioned by cause-related marketing initiatives.

VII. Limitations and Future Studies

Several limitations must be acknowledged in the present paper's method of research. Primarily, there has been a difficulty in accessing up-to-date data and information, while the sources used in compiling this research have been mostly secondary and in English. Because the Great East Japan Earthquake has happened relatively recently, the results of investigation in the various facets of the aftermath of the earthquake are constantly being published on the changing environment and landscape of Tohoku. A thorough review of recent works on the reconstruction process of Tohoku will give more insights useful for the present study, especially those that give a close account of the social enterprises and the assistance to rehabilitate local business after the Great East Earthquake based on fieldwork. A more comprehensive listing of the various initiatives made to promote local business rehabilitation and expand the market available for these businesses will contribute to a fuller study on this subject. These challenges will be left for future research on the topic, as more concrete results of the current efforts will be available with time. Further future studies that provide qualitative research on the changing situations of the local community in the Tohoku region and the successes and challenges of the local business initiatives will also benefit to bring a closer look at the new frameworks of partnership that are coming forth from the aftermath of the Great East Japan Earthquake.

VIII. Conclusion

The Great East Japan Earthquake brought devastation to the Tohoku region of Japan, and left in the affected areas monumental challenges to face as they work towards reconstruction. Past experiences of disasters have shown the importance of local businesses in revitalizing local communities in the process of disaster recovery. Existing literature on disaster management have also noted that the continuation and growth of local businesses have been noted as a vital component in the disaster recovery by reducing population dispersion. However, in the Tohoku region now, local businesses, especially the small-to-medium enterprises and those in the primary industry such as agriculture and fisheries, still face huge obstacles to recovery despite the many reports on the fast recovery of Tohoku region. The difficulties have amounted by the nuclear disaster created by the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant, which has brought national and international concern about nuclear radiation leakage and its effect on products originating from the Tohoku region. The concern surrounding radiation has significantly shrunk the market available for local businesses in Tohoku, creating a major decrease in their potential source of income. Despite the various efforts made by the government through proposing comprehensive reconstruction plans, the time required for the reconstruction plans to be realized work against the recovery of local businesses, many of which have already lost or are in immediate danger of losing their livelihood.

This paper investigated two special cases of cause-related marketing to revive local businesses in the Tohoku region observed in Japan after the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake. The promotion of Tohoku products through the “buy to support Tohoku” movement, and the enthusiastic response to specialized tours to disaster-affected areas through the “visit to support Tohoku” movement are two ways in which a “positive” commercialization of disaster is made. These two “positive” commercialization of disaster happened through national movements to “buy to support Tohoku” and “visit to support Tohoku” which have mobilized the Japanese public and engaged various stakeholders including the civil society and the government. The private sector has both expanded and utilized the national movement by actively creating products and platforms and marketing these products and platforms in connection to the social cause of supporting the revitalization of Tohoku’s disaster-affected communities and local businesses.

In doing so, the two cause-related marketing strategies to “buy to support Tohoku” and “visit to support Tohoku” have exhibited a unique form of partnership amongst private, public, and civic stakeholders that is distinctive from traditional forms of partnership in cause-related marketing campaigns. Here, the recipients of the cause-related marketing campaign and a part of the social cause itself are largely local businesses in disaster-affected areas who also engage in profit-seeking business activities. In pursuing larger consumer markets for their businesses, these local businesses are not passive recipients but also actors themselves in the cause-related marketing initiatives. In

addition, the revitalization of local businesses also contributes in turn to the larger social cause of sustainable reconstruction after disaster. Thus, the two “positive” commercialization of disaster observed in Japan provide a new type of strategic collaboration for cause-related marketing that brings together various agents in private and public sectors as well as giving expanded roles to the agents involved.

This paper has argued that this unique form of partnership was not only possible, but readily accepted and welcomed by the Japanese public because which make use of the social capital both existing and newly created. More specifically, the widespread and deep concern and commiseration felt nation-wide in Japan, due to the tremendous impact the Great East Japan Earthquake had on the country and the lives of the people and framed by the slogan “Ganbaru Nippon” and “Kizuna,” have expanded the resources available in existing social networks by the disaster-affect communities to find new ways to overcome the shrinkage in the market for their products while creating new social bonds and networks amongst the local communities, the Japanese public, and agents in the private and public sectors. Furthermore, the social capital built and shared in these various networks are continuously reinforced through the participation in the support for Tohoku, giving new hope for the local businesses to overcome existing difficulties.

Since it has only been two years since the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake, these two methods will need more time to prove their effectiveness in the long-term reconstruction of the affected region, especially in terms of long-term economical and financial sustainability. However, the continuous reinforcement and expansion of social

capital exhibited through these two positive commercialization of disaster observed in Japan have already contributed to the rehabilitation of the region and will quite possibly continue to contribute in revitalizing the local businesses, which in turn, will increase the resilience in the disaster-affected communities. At the same time, these two movements show how local circumstances can give birth to innovative partnership frameworks in the aftermath of a large-scale disaster.

One of the variables that will determine whether the two “positive” commercialization of disaster will continue to be successful will depend on how successful the reconstruction after disaster pans out in the future, according to the plans put forth by the Japanese central and local governments. As mentioned before, one of the reasons for the negative stance seen from the Lower Ninth Ward residents in New Orleans towards tours entering their neighborhood is the imbalanced redevelopment and reconstruction after Hurricane Katrina where the Lower Ninth Ward was left behind in the process. In the same way, because the most affected areas that experienced massive wipe-out from tsunamis from the Great East Japan Earthquake are dominantly rural areas with aged population, careful planning and comprehensive support will be required to prevent the same kind of turn of heart in local communities in those areas in the future as the Lower Ninth Ward. The most important issue that needs to be tackled will be to prevent further population dispersion and to find a way to bring in new and possibly, younger-generation, residents in the area. Whether the plans being implemented by the Japanese government will achieve this is left to be seen.

Another important variable for the continued success of the two strategies which is more closely connected cause-related marketing is the maintenance of the level of engagement amongst the various agents involved in the partnership framework created in the cause-related marketing initiatives. So far, the enthusiastic response from Japanese consumers and the social obligation to show concern towards the Tohoku region have kept the private sector to continue their involvement in the cause-related marketing initiative for more than a year. However, especially in the “buy to support Tohoku” campaign, the priority given to the campaign has been noticeably decreasing, as evidenced by the smaller and marginal area given to the banners showing Tohoku products and local businesses on the front page of e-commerce websites such as Rakuten. Based on business logic, this may also mean that less consumers are engaged in the actual purchase of Tohoku products through these e-commerce platforms, which may point to the fact that a change in strategy may be necessary to find a better way to attract consumers.

As more time passes, and with the reconstruction plans slowly being implemented, the initial public concern and attention given to the disaster-affected areas will undoubtedly decrease from the level it was just after the catastrophe. The key to continued success in the two cause-related marketing strategies and the further enlargement, or at least the maintenance, of available market for Tohoku products and tours to disaster-affected regions will depend on the pace of decrement of the initial enthusiasm to lend a hand in revitalizing local businesses in Tohoku.

Although the future of Tohoku region is yet uncertain, I would like to end this paper on a positive note. The innovative frameworks seen from the two “positive” commercialization of disaster as presented in this paper gives great hope that the disaster-affected areas in the Tohoku region will find its way to a stronger and sustainable future with the great many individuals bound by kizuna who carry a continued interest in the region. As much as the grief and pain that the Great East Japan Earthquake has caused to the people in Japan, the positive social changes brought by the Great East Japan Earthquake, such as the space and opportunities for young, innovative ideas to take a chance and the stronger social capital built since the Great East Japan Earthquake, carry the potential for the development of new frameworks which will benefit Japanese society, and which will, hopefully, become an inspiration to many around the world.

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Appendix

<Timeline of Major Reconstruction Guidelines and Plans Released by Japanese Central Government>

Date	Reconstruction Plan	Issued By
25 June 2011	Towards Reconstruction: Hope Beyond Disaster	Reconstruction Design Council ⁴⁹
29 July 2011 (revised 11 August 2011)	Basic Guidelines for Reconstruction in response to the Great East Japan Earthquake	Reconstruction Headquarters ⁵⁰
August 2011	Iwate Prefecture Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami Reconstruction Plan : Basic Reconstruction Plan “To Protect Life, To Live Together with the Sea and Land, and To Create a Homeland Iwate and Sanriku”	Iwate Prefecture
29 September 2011	Challenges and Actions in Economic/Industrial Policies - The central government, corporations and local governments should work with one another to overcome the current crisis, solve problems and achieve new economic/industrial frameworks capable of addressing the big changes of the time-	Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry
24 December 2011	Strategy for Rebirth of Japan: Overcoming Crises and Embarking on New Frontiers	Cabinet

⁴⁹ Advisory panel to Prime Minister Naoto Kan

⁵⁰ The predecessor body of the Reconstruction Agency