Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University

INBOUND TOURISM POLICIES AND PROMOTION ACTIVITIES IN OITA PREFECTURE FOR MAINLAND CHINESE TOURISTS

By

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ABSTRACT

This research was designed to measure the willingness of the local governments as well as the prefectural government of Oita in attracting the mainland Chinese tourists and to identify their current policies and efforts on promotion activities. The main methods applied in this research were internet survey followed by face-to-face in-depth interview with staff from the prefectural and local governments. The study therefore argues that the prefectural government has a higher level of willingness of attracting mainland Chinese tourists in comparison with the local governments. Although Oita's prefectural government has already realized the importance of mainland Chinese market and is taking actions from diverse aspects including the policy perspective as well as the promotion perspective, yet the local governments are still on the way of learning and exploring the possibility of inbound tourism. The work ends by giving some recommendations which could be taken into consideration for Oita's local governments when they plan to develop the mainland Chinese market in the near future.

CHAPTER I – INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background

In the 2007 White Paper of Japan's Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism (MLIT), it was clearly stated that Japan should realize itself to be a tourism-based country because "Tourism not only contributes to the revitalization of regional economy, the increase in employment opportunities and the development of all other areas of the nation's economy, but also promotes mutual understanding with other nations (MLIT, 2007, p37)". Among the Five Fundamental Goals set in the Master Plan for the Promotion of a Tourism-based Country, the first goal has indicated that "To increase the number of foreign tourists visiting Japan to 10 million per year before the end of 2010 (MLIT, 2007, p.37)", which shows the determination of the Japanese government to attract foreign tourists.

As one of the most important sources of Japanese inbound tourism, mainland Chinese tourists have been playing an indispensable role for the Japanese inbound tourism market. Despite of the fact that there exist some controversies on the problems of territory, history and etcetera pending to be negotiated between the two countries on the level of government, both sides are continuing making efforts to develop the tourism industry and communication as they have been doing since Japanese government began to issue the group visa for the tourists originating from all regions of Mainland China in 2005. In the year of 2013, the total number of mainland Chinese tourists traveling to Japan reached 1,314,500 people which meant a 7.8 percent decrease compared with 2012, however, during the period from September to

December, the number of mainland Chinese tourists visiting Japan broke the highest

record of the history (JNTO, 2014).

Figure I-1: Number of Total mainland Chinese Tourists to Japan and Oita Prefectures
Source: Japan National Tourism Organization and Oita Prefecture
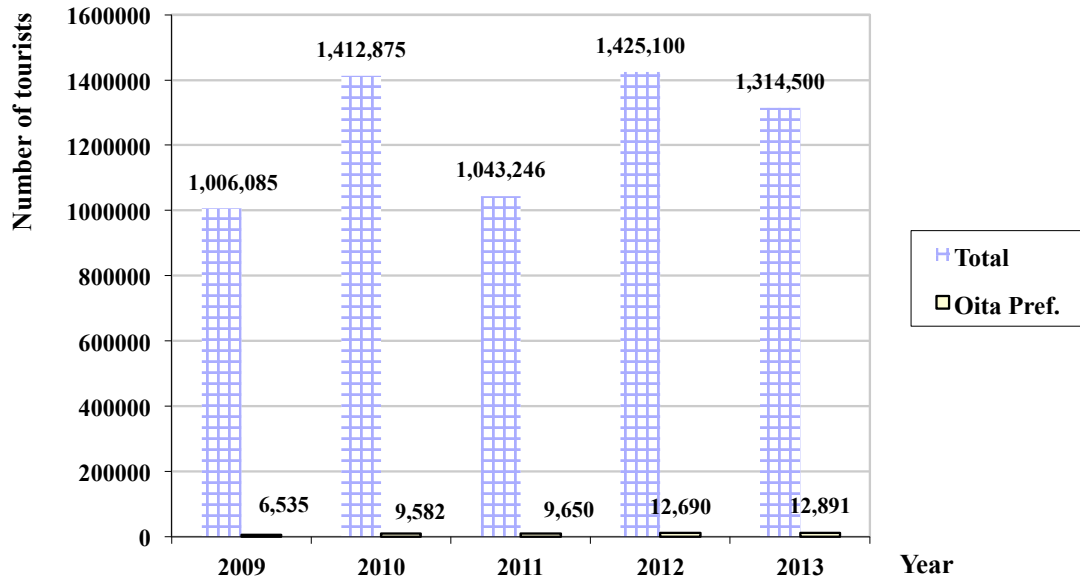
Compared to the national trend, according to the official data from the Oita

Prefecture, in 2013, the number of mainland Chinese tourists who had stayed

overnight in Oita was 12,891 people, less than 1 percent of the total amount of the

mainland Chinese tourists visiting to Japan, and the same situation has been kept

happening for several successive years (Figure I-1). In the meantime, in comparison

with the number of tourists from Korea and Taiwan arriving in Oita Prefecture, the

number of mainland Chinese tourists is much less than those two regions during the

past years (Figure I-2). This situation made the author begin to think questions like:

Why there exists such a huge disparity in the number of tourists for these different

countries and a region while they are all located in the same region of Asia? What are

the ideas of Oita's local governments about this situation? Is there any link between the inbound tourism policies of Oita Prefecture and the number of mainland Chinese tourists? What kind of efforts the Oita Prefecture is making in order to attract mainland Chinese tourists? etc.

Therefore, this report looks into the current policies towards the inbound tourism market in Oita Prefecture especially those focusing on mainland Chinese tourists as well as the activities the local governments are carrying out related to the inbound tourism market, which lead the author to explore and find out a possible solution to the situation mentioned in the previous paragraph.

Figure I-2: Number of mainland Chinese Tourists, Taiwanese Tourists and Korean tourists to Oita Prefecture (2009-2012)

Source: Oita Prefecture
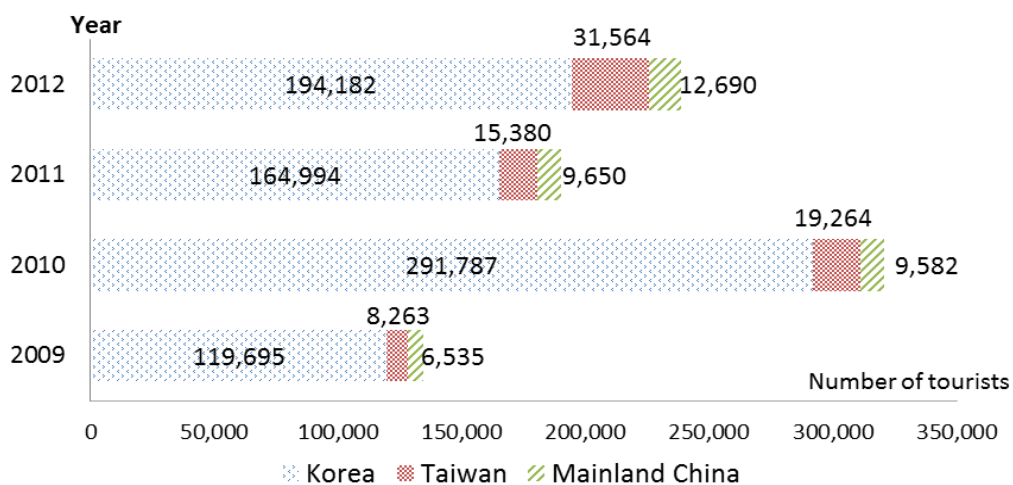
1.2. The Research Questions

In order to clarify the central theme of the study, the author specified the research questions as follows:

1. To what level of importance of the mainland Chinese tourists market do the local and prefectural governments of Oita put comparing with other countries?

2. What are the advantages and disadvantages of current tourism policies of Oita Prefecture in attracting mainland Chinese tourists?

3. What are the promotional activities of local and prefectural governments of Oita to increase mainland Chinese tourists?

4. What are the differences between the promotional activities of Oita to mainland Chinese tourists and to tourists from other countries or regions?

1.3. The Objectives of the Research

Based on the research questions listed above, this research is expected to achieve the objectives of:

1. To measure the willingness of attracting mainland Chinese tourists of local and prefectural governments of Oita in comparison with the tourists from other countries;

2. To identify the current policies and administration of Oita Prefecture to mianland Chinese tourists;

3. To identify the efforts of local and prefectural governments of Oita on the promotion of Oita Prefecture to mainland Chinese tourists.

1.4. Research Methodology

This research is considered as a qualitative research including identifying the policies and promotion activities related to the inbound tourism towards mainland Chinese tourists in Oita Prefecture. The research was designed to achieve the objectives set in the above paragraph.

The population of the research involved the employees from tourism department

of the prefectural government of Oita Prefecture as well as those from the respective local government of the cities in Oita. In order to acquire the detailed information and data, the author used the approach of conducting a series of interviews among the research population. Before beginning the formal interviews, the author firstly conducted an online survey with structured questionnaires administered to the tourism department of the local governments of all the eighteen cities and towns in Oita Prefecture as well as that of the prefecture government. After getting the answers from all the governments, the author compared the answers and selected five cities out of eighteen together with the prefecture government of Oita according to their willingness of participating in an in-depth interview shown in the online survey results. The questions of the interviews were designed by the author according to the result of the Internet questionnaire released before the formal interview and were divided into two parts focusing on policies and promotion activities respectively. The interviews were recorded and stored in digital devices and the contents were dictated right after the interview and turned into textual documents. After having finished the data collecting, the author carried out the content analysis based on the texts aiming to find out the patterns of the answers of each question thus leading to the possible answers to the research questions listed in paragraph 1.2.

1.5. The Significance of the Research

The researcher expected that through this research, information and data could be provided about the willingness of attracting mainland Chinese tourists among the administrative department of prefecture government as well as local governments of

Oita Prefecture. Assessing their perspective on willingness might predict the short term developing scheme towards the inbound tourism especially of the mainland Chinese tourists.

Identifying the current regulations and administration directing at mainland Chinese tourists of Oita Prefecture could help to obtain a further understanding about Oita's tourism polices towards mainland Chinese tourists.

Together with the identification of the policies and the launch of the promotion activities, the research might give the administrative departments some advice or suggestions on how to establish and carry out promotion activities based on the existent policies in order to develop the inbound tourism in Oita Prefecture, especially develop the market of mainland Chinese tourists.

Developing the inbound tourism market of mainland Chinese tourists could help to develop the tourism of Oita Prefecture and thus to encourage the local economy significantly, bringing dramatic benefit to the stakeholders of the tourism industry. The large number of mainland Chinese tourists and their increasing needs of short-distance traveling will bring energy to the area of Oita Prefecture. Moreover, their potential power of consuming will stimulate the local products market and bring enormous economic benefits to this region.

1.6. Report Outline

The report will be divided into five chapters which constitute the main body of the work. In Chapter II, the author will give the readers a detailed review of the existent studies related to the topic of this research, including the background

information about the research area of Oita Prefecture on its tourism from various aspects such as the current market of Chinese inbound tourists to Japan at national level as well as to Oita Prefecture, the development of Japan's inbound tourism policies, and its promotion activities for the Chinese market; and the knowledge about the inbound tourism all over the country of Japan, as a groundwork for the whole study.

Chapter III is a part where the methodology of this research will be introduced and explained in details. The author will describe the detailed steps of the research from research design down to the activities of carrying out the research and finally the method of processing the data.

Chapter IV would be the most important part of this report because it would demonstrate the findings and results of the study that the author obtained through the whole research. In the meantime, the author would discuss a series of topics based on the findings thus leading up to possible issues which could be studied in the further research.

The author would give some recommendations on the making of inbound tourism policies and carrying out promotion activities aiming at mainland Chinese tourists in the scope of Oita prefecture, and the whole report would end up with a conclusion covering the central theme of the research.

CHAPTER II － LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter aims to review the existent studies and researches which constitute the basic knowledge and background information of this research. The academic works mentioned in this part would cover a variety of different aspects relating to the inbound tourism situation in Oita Prefecture, the market of Chinese tourists in Japan as well as the inbound tourism policies of Japan.

2.1. An introduction of Tourism in Oita Prefecture

Figure II-1 Map of Oita Prefecture
Source: Oita Prefecture

Having a territorial area of 6,339.82 km^2 and a total population of 1,175,821 people (Oita Prefecture, 2014a), Oita Prefecture, which is located in the northeastern part of Kyushu Island of Japan, is composed with eighteen municipalities including fourteen cities: Beppu, Bungo Ono, Bungo Takada, Hita, Kitsuki, Kunisaki, Nakatsu, Oita, Saeki,

Takeda, Tsukumi, Usa, Usuki, Yufu; three towns: Hiji of Hayami County, Kokonoe and Kusu of Kusu County; and one village: Himeshima of Higashi Kunisaki County (Figure II-1).

2.1.1. Tourism resources in Oita

On this land abundant of natural resources are available, and agriculture and fishery has been developing in prosperity, which lead to the spreading of the fame of those agricultural and fishery products all over the country, for example, the Shii-take (Lentinus edodes), Kabosu (one kind of citrus fruits), globe fish, Seki Aji (horse mackerel of Seki) and Seki Saba (mackerel of Seki), among others. Apart from these special local products, one specialty that should be emphasized is the onsen (hot spring) in Oita Prefecture, which has become one of the main reasons for both domestic and international tourists to come to this region and spend their leisure time.

With the possession of 4,471 hot spring holes, the number of hot spring sources in Oita Prefecture is far ahead than any other prefecture in Japan (Oita Prefecture, 2013a) and is nearly 1.6 folds as the number of hot spring sources in Kagoshima Prefecture. The large amount of hot spring sources enables the prefecture to have the largest flow rate of the hot spring in Japan of 285.2 kiloliter per minute (Oita Prefecture, 2013b). One of the most unique things about Oita's hot spring is its diversity of types. While there are eleven types of hot spring available in world, Oita Prefecture has ten types, only the radioactive spring is not available. That means if you are a hot spring fanatic, you can experience

most of the hot spring types in just one prefecture. Thanks to the abundant sources of hot spring, the famous hot spring resorts in Oita have been recognized as the most popular hot spring sites among the domestic visitors in Japan. According to the survey carried out by Jalan Research Center in 2013 (published in 2014), among the 331 hot spring sites appearing in the questionnaire, the Yufuin Onsen won the first place in the section of "The onsen site that you want to go the most" and the third place in the section of "The onsen site that you want to go again the most", while the Beppu Onsen occupied the third place in the ranking of "The onsen site you have visited during this year" and the forth place in "The onsen site that you want to go again the most". Having realized the importance of hot spring to the development of the local tourism industry and economics, the prefectural government registered the logo of hot spring and the catchphrase of "Onsenken Oita (Hot spring prefecture Oita)" as its trademark (Figure II-2), aiming to use it in its promotion activities toward the whole nation (Onsen Prefecture Oita, 2013).

Figure II-2 The logo and catchphrase registered as trademark
Source: Oita Prefecture
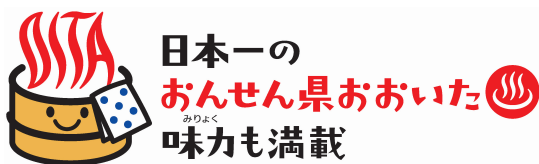
Oita also possesses other unique tourism resources besides the most famous hot spring, both natural and cultural. The outlying island of Himeshima village located in the most northeastern part of the prefecture, has one of the important natural resources of

Oita. With its name of Oita Himeshima Geopark, it was recognized as Japan National Geopark by the Japan Geopark Committee (JGC) on 4 September 2013, thus became one of the thirty-two geoparks in Japan and the first geopark in Oita Prefecture together with Oita Bungo Ono Geopark (Oita-Press, 2013). In terms of the cultural resources, the Usa Jingu (Usa Shrine) could be counted as one of Oita's cultural heritage sites. It is located in Usa city and is famous for its position of being the sōhongu (head shrine) of the approximately 40,600 shrines around the country that enshrine the Hachiman-jin (god of bow and arrow) (Usa Jingu Chō, 2014). This part of land offers not only modern factories like Sapporo Beer Factory in Hita city which offers the visitors an experience of learning the history of the brand, observing the work on the pipelines, and even tasting the fresh draft beer on the spot, all of which give the spectators a multisensory perception of a modern manufacture, but also a variety of historical places, for example, the old castles which arouse the attention of people, making them turn their sight on the history that once happened on this land. Thanks to the TV series "Tactician Kanbee" which has been broadcasted in the year of 2014, the Nakatsu city where the leading character Kuroda Kanbee established the Nakatsu-jo Castle is drawing the attention of the tourists on this old city.

2.1.2. Tourism market in Oita

Despite the fact that Oita Prefecture does not have the same influence as those remarkable places such as Kyoto and Tokyo where their fame has been spread worldwide

and even possess World Heritage Sites in the area or close to the region, it is attracting more and more tourists, both domestic and international, to its territory to participate in various kinds of activities like relaxing the body and mind in its proud hot springs, enjoying the stroll along the nostalgic stone paved streets and having a taste of the local gastronomy cooked with the local agricultural and fishery products, and the like.The total number of the tourists visiting Oita Prefecture is, although not in a very remarkable speed, increasing gradually (Figure II-3). The total amount of tourists including domestic and international, has reached to 4,341,306 persons in the year of 2013, with a 4.5 percent of increase in comparison with the 4,155,549 person in the previous year. It is easy to discover from the figure that the international tourists only occupy a tiny part among the total arrivals, for example, in 2013 the number of international tourists occupies a 7.5 percent of the total tourists. There is a very notable turbulence during the latest six years (2008~2013); a sharp drop was noticed both in 2009 and 2011 while a rebound was observed in the following years.

The factors that caused this dramatic change are complicated but for the year of 2009, one possible factor might be the outbreak of the influenza A, also known as H1N1 which swept over the whole world since a significant reduction in global international tourism demand was observed when the avian flu broke out and spread throughout the world from the end of 2003 until 2007 (Kuo, Chang, Huang, Chen, & McAleer, 2009) while the world financial crisis occurred in the same year might be another important factor. On the

other hand, one important factor that is attributed to the drop in 2011 might be the
Tohoku earthquake and Tsunami disaster occurred on 11 March 2011, which had caused
innumerable losses and enormous damage to this country, as well as a fear of radioactive
contamination among the international tourists.

Figure II-3 The comparison between the number of domestic tourists and international
tourists during 2008 - 2013

Source: Oita Prefecture
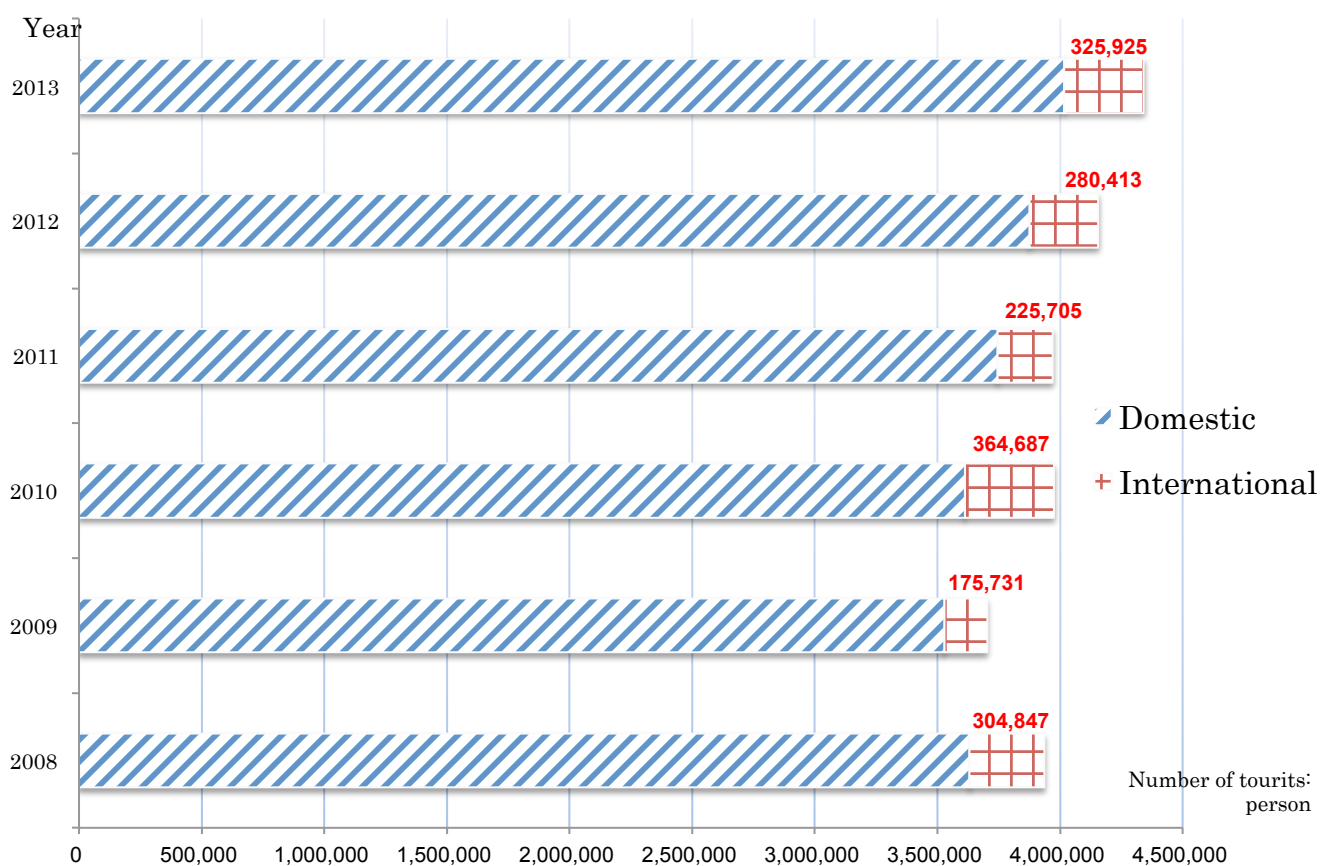
If we look into the detailed data of the international tourists during the latest six
years (Table II-1), it is not difficult to discover that visitors from Korea are maintaining
the main source among all the inbound tourists arriving in Oita. However, the number of

Korean visitors has not recovered to the level of 2010 after the sharp drop happened in 2011. In the meantime, the number of Chinese tourists is increasing steadily after the drop in 2009 and even did not stop its steps after the earthquake in 2011, yet still only reached 6 percent of that of Korea. Hong Kong and Taiwan are likely to be the regions that have a great potential of delivering even more tourists to Oita in the coming years because a dramatic rise could be observed right after the disaster of 2011 and the number keeps going up in the following years. Consequently, the number of tourists from Hong Kong in 2013 has increased 2.78 times from that in 2008 while the number of visitors from Taiwan in 2013 is 2.26 times as that in 2008. The total amount of tourists from the rest of the countries and regions apart from Korea, Mainland China, Hong Kong and Taiwan is going steadily up as well, which also contributes to the increase in the number of total international arrivals.

Table II-1 Number of international tourists to Oita Prefecture 2008~2013

	2008		2009		2010		2011		2012		2013	
	Number	Year on year(%)	Number	Year on year(%)	Number	Year on year(%)	Number	Year on year(%)	Number	Year on year(%)	Number	Year on year(%)
Korea	234,864	95.3	119,695	51.0	291,787	243.8	164,994	56.5	194,182	117.7	211,571	109.0
Mainland China	7,930	75.2	6,535	82.4	9,582	146.6	9,650	100.7	12,690	131.5	12,891	101.6
Hong Kong	6,831	116.9	8,280	121.2	4,425	53.4	9,255	209.2	11,388	123.0	19,000	166.8
Taiwan	19,672	134.4	8,263	42.0	19,264	233.1	15,380	79.8	31,564	205.2	44,467	140.9
Other Asian Countries	15,756	113.9	10,976	69.7	20,683	188.4	15,363	74.3	18,957	123.4	22,850	120.5
Others	19,794	141.5	21,982	111.1	18,946	86.2	11,063	58.4	11,632	105.1	15,146	130.2
Total International	304,847	99.8	175,731	57.6	364,687	207.5	225,705	61.9	280,413	124.2	325,925	116.2

Source: Oita Prefecture

Since Oita Prefecture is so well known for its hot spring resources throughout the country, it is nearly no doubt that a large part of the tourists visited here with the purpose of bathing in the hot spring. According to a survey carried out by the Regional Revitalization Section of Oita Prefecture during 2013~2014, which consisted of 5,859 samples including both domestic and international tourists visiting Oita, 43.9 percent of the interviewees chose the option of "because I feel the fascination of the hot spring" as the answer to the question "Why do you choose Oita Prefecture as your travel destination?", which followed by the answer "because it has abundant natural resources" (23.6 percent) and "because the food is delicious"(19.5 percent)(Oita Prefecture, 2014c). In the same survey, among the eighteen municipalities, the one that has been visited the most turned out to be the Yufu City where 23.7 percent of the interviewees had visited followed by the Beppu City (21.7 percent). In terms of the degree of personal satisfaction of the travel experience in Oita, 25.1 percent indicated they were "greatly satisfied", 60.7 percent were "satisfied". On the contrary, less than three percent of the interviewees expressed their opinion of "dissatisfied" or "very dissatisfied". The above results showed that the degree of satisfaction towards the tourism of Oita Prefecture could be measured as high (Oita Prefecture, 2014c)

2.2. The market of Chinese inbound tourists to Japan

Nowadays China has a world-wide fame of delivering a great number of its citizens to a variety of foreign countries and regions so that they are able to realize an oversea

travel. Their footprints have been left on nearly all the continents of the globe and the number of oversea travelers is still increasing unstoppably. The total amount of outbound tourists from China reached to 33,557,100 person-time in 2013, a 18.55 percent of increase compared with the previous year (China National Tourism Administration, 2014).

2.2.1. Chinese tourists to Japan at national level

Since it became possible for the mainland Chinese tourists to visit Japan in the form of group in September of 2000, more than 10 years have passed and the number of people visiting Japan in 2013 has reached 1,314,437 person, nearly an increase of three times compared with that of 2003 with the number of 448,782 person. However, a notable turbulence in the number of touristic visitors could be observed (Figure II-4), especially in the year of 2011 when the Tohoku earthquake and Tsunami disaster occurred, causing a decrease to nearly half of the number of previous year. Apart from the natural disasters, other factors also have affected the action of mainland Chinese tourists in visiting Japan. For example, after the crash incident between Chinese fishing-boat and the patrol boat of Japan Coast Guard near the Diaoyu Islands (Japan: Senkaku Islands) happened in September of 2010, the number of Chinese visitors, including visitors on official business, private business and tourism dropped temporarily, therefore Japanese National Tourism Organization (JNTO) (2013) pointed out that it should be noted that the deterioration of the relationship between Japan and China would affect the activities of visiting Japan of

the Chinese citizens in a direct way. On the other hand, the outbreak of infectious disease also limited the movement of the tourists such as the SARS in 2003 and the Influenza A in 2009 (JNTO, 2013).

Figure II-4 The trend of mainland Chinese visitors to Japan 2008-2013
Source: Japan National Tourism Organization, 2014
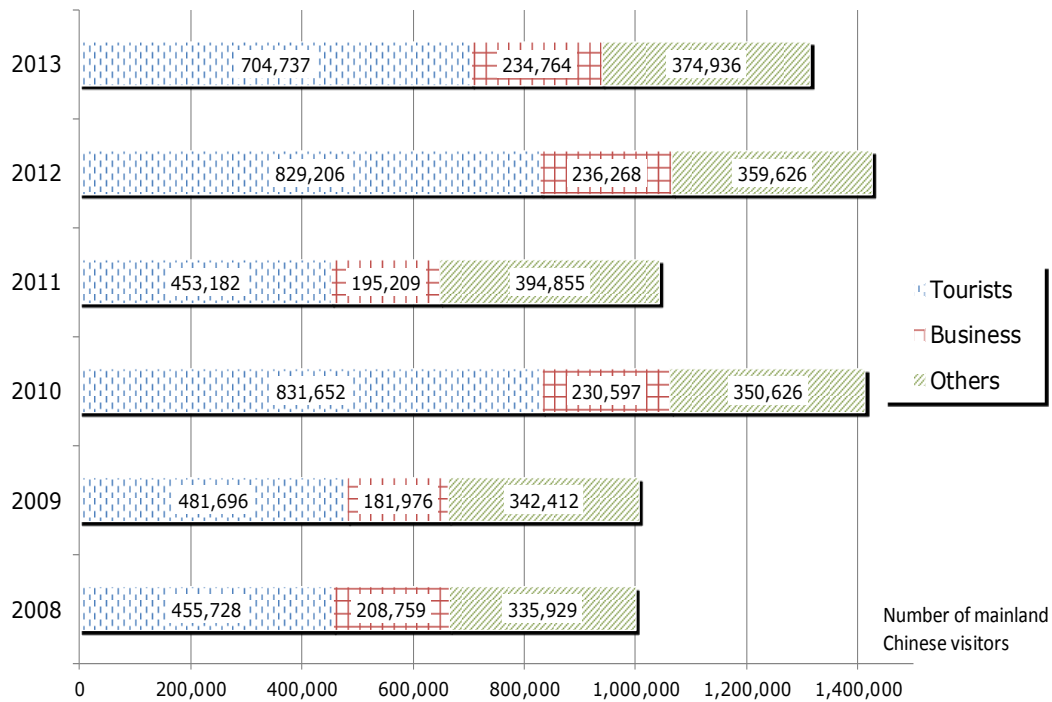
Among the Chinese visitors to Japan, the traveling patterns were categorized by JNTO (2013) into five models as: 1) group travel, which is the common form of traveling abroad in China and one certified tour-leader must be included in the group to manage and coordinate the whole trip; 2) individual travel: apart from those who come with a business visa or a visa for visiting relatives, the citizens who have certain financial capabilities also might be issued an individual visa for touristic purpose; 3) cruise travel: the itinerary is usually combined with destinations of Korea and a large part of them

departed from Shanghai. When visiting Japan, the cruise ships anchored mainly in those ports of Kyushu such as Fukuoka, Nagasaki, Kagoshima and so on; 4) incentive travel: if the group consists of hundreds of members, there would be a large probability for them to choose the Golden Route or "Tokyo plus Hokkaido" route. If it is a small group and has plenty of budget, the travelers would more likely prefer those golf or hot spring resorts as their destination; 5) educational travel, which mainly refers to school excursions, which consist of communicating with local schools, experiencing Japanese traditional crafts and taking a tour of the factory, etcetera.

JNTO (2013), in the same handbook published by itself, also nominated a series of regions as leading markets of visiting Japan taking into consideration of various aspects such as geographical, political, economic and cultural factors, among which are Beijing, Tianjin, Shanghai, Liaoning Province, Shandong Province, Jiangsu Province, Zhejiang Province and Guangzhou Province. It also listed up several destinations that have been highly evaluated by Chinese tourists: 1) Tokyo, the most famous destination among Chinese therefore the number of tourists who choose Tokyo as their destination for their first visit to Japan is overwhelmingly large; 2) Hakone and Mont. Fuji: the latter is considered as the symbol of Japan among the Chinese tourists so that it is one of the spots indispensable of the "Golden Route"; 3) Hokkaidō, where Chinese tourists, especially those who reside in the eastern and southern part of China are attracted by its snow scenery; 4) Kansai region, famous for its traditional architectures, townscape and culture,

especially Kyoto and Osaka are enjoying a high reputation and are core spots of the "Golden Route"; 5) Okinawa, known as beach resort spot among Chinese citizens and has become more and more popular since its special visa policy towards mainland Chinese tourists (see 2.3.2).

2.2.2. Chinese tourists to Japan at prefectural level of Oita

In 2013, the number of mainland Chinese tourists has increased 75.6 percent in comparison with that of 2006 (Figure II-5). However, compared with other regions where the number doubled during the same period, for example the amount of Taiwanese tourists increased by 109.6 percent while the tourists from Hong Kong increase by 166.7 percent in the last eight years, the speed of increase of Chinese tourists is not so fast as Taiwan and Hong Kong. If the population of each region is taken into consideration, mainland Chinese travellers might have a lower rate of traveling to Oita Prefecture than Taiwanese and people from Hong Kong. Taking the year of 2012 for example, 31,564 Taiwanese tourists among its 23,316,000 population (DGBAS, 2013) visited Oita while 11,388 Hong Kong tourists among its 7,154,600 citizens (C&SD, 2013) arrived in Oita. On the other side, of 1,354,040,000 mainland Chinese population (National Bureau of Statistics of China, 2013), only 12,690 of them had once stayed in Oita. Nevertheless, the range of distribution of Chinese population is so wide, much wider than any other country in Asia, while most of the population who carry out oversea travels, including to Japan, concentrate in relatively big cities and economically rich regions, especially the

eastern region of China (Dai, Jiang, Yang & Ma, 2013), therefore the percentage of the tourists who visited Oita Prefecture among the whole arrivals in Japan should be observed as well when comparing the rate with other countries or regions. Despite of the increase in the number of mainland Chinese tourists who visited Oita during these years, the percentage it occupied among total Chinese visitors to Japan has been remaining below 1 percent except in 2007 (Figure II-6), which signified that less than one person among 100 Chinese visitors would stay in Oita Prefecture. This percentage is even lower than that of Hong Kong and Taiwan while comparing with that of Korea, it is much lower.

Figure II-5 Number of international tourists who stayed overnight in Oita Prefecture 2006~2013

Source: Oita Prefecture
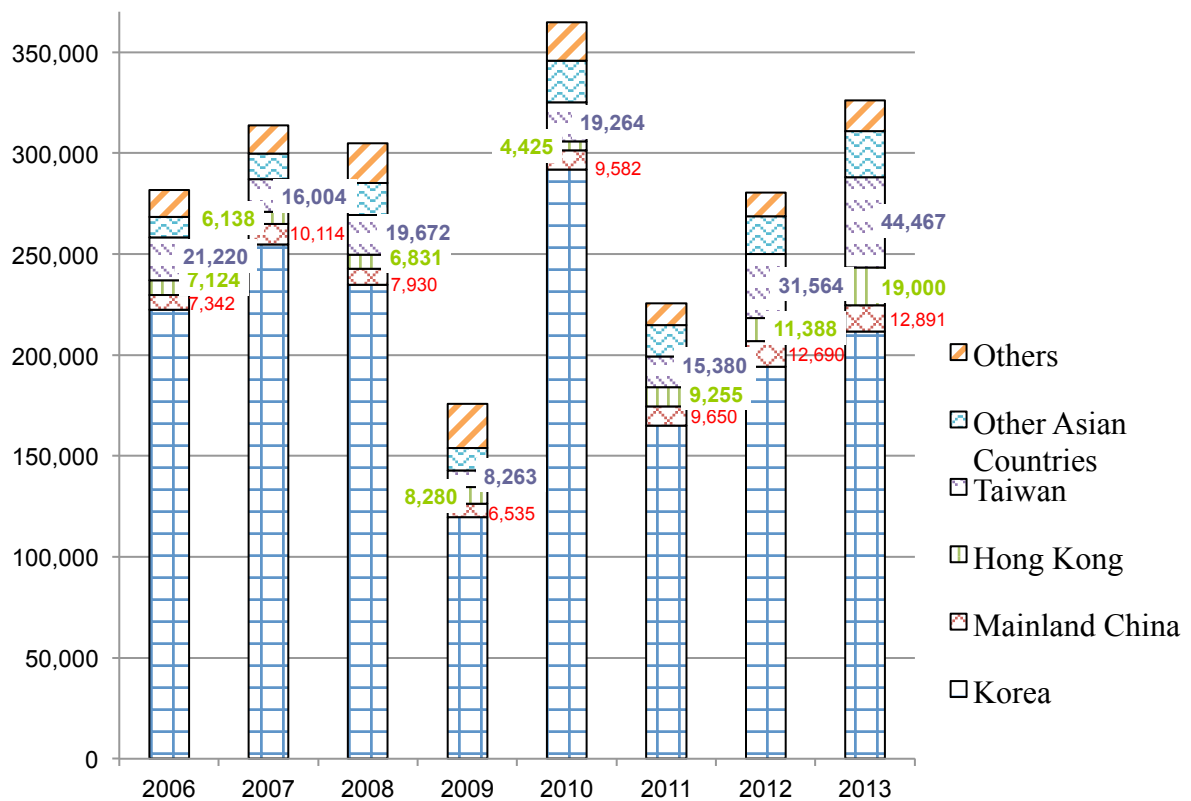
The means that Chinese tourists use to arrive in Oita Prefecture cover the land, sea and air transportation. When the tourists firstly arrive in a gateway city, which in case of Kyushu can refer to Fukuoka, they may either take a highway bus to Oita or ride on a train directing to Oita. Speaking of the sea transportation, the figures of mainland Chinese tourists could be found in two kinds of cruise ships: the domestic passenger ships of Japan and the international cruise ships departing from China and return to the same country. The domestic passenger ships which Chinese tourists often use are operating mainly two routes: Beppu to/from Osaka and Oita to/from Kobe, where are among the destinations that Chinese tourists would like to visit when being in Japan. On the other hand, the international cruise ships that take Chinese tourists to Oita also have brought large economic effect to this area (Beppu, 2012), although the cruises once stopped in 2011 right after the Tohoku earthquake and tsunami disaster while restarted in the same year on 10 August (Feng, 2011). According to the study of Beppu city (2012), there were totally eight times of calling at the Beppu Kokusai Kankō Kō (Beppu International Tourism Port) by the cruise "Legend of the Seas" of the cruise company "Royal Caribbean International", having brought 14,172 Chinese tourists to Beppu, of which 13,802 person participated in the bus tours traveling in Beppu city and surrounding areas. Arriving in Oita Airport is another choice of getting to Oita besides the land and sea transportation. However, it is a pity that yet no airline company has started air routes between cities in China and Oita although the latter possesses an international terminal

which is used for the flights between Oita and Seoul of Korea. Still the Chinese tourists

could take flights from metropolises like Tokyo, Osaka and Nagoya to arrive in Oita.

Figure II-6 The percentage of the international arrivals who stayed overnight in Oita Prefecture compared with total arrivals in Japan according to nationality 2006~2013.
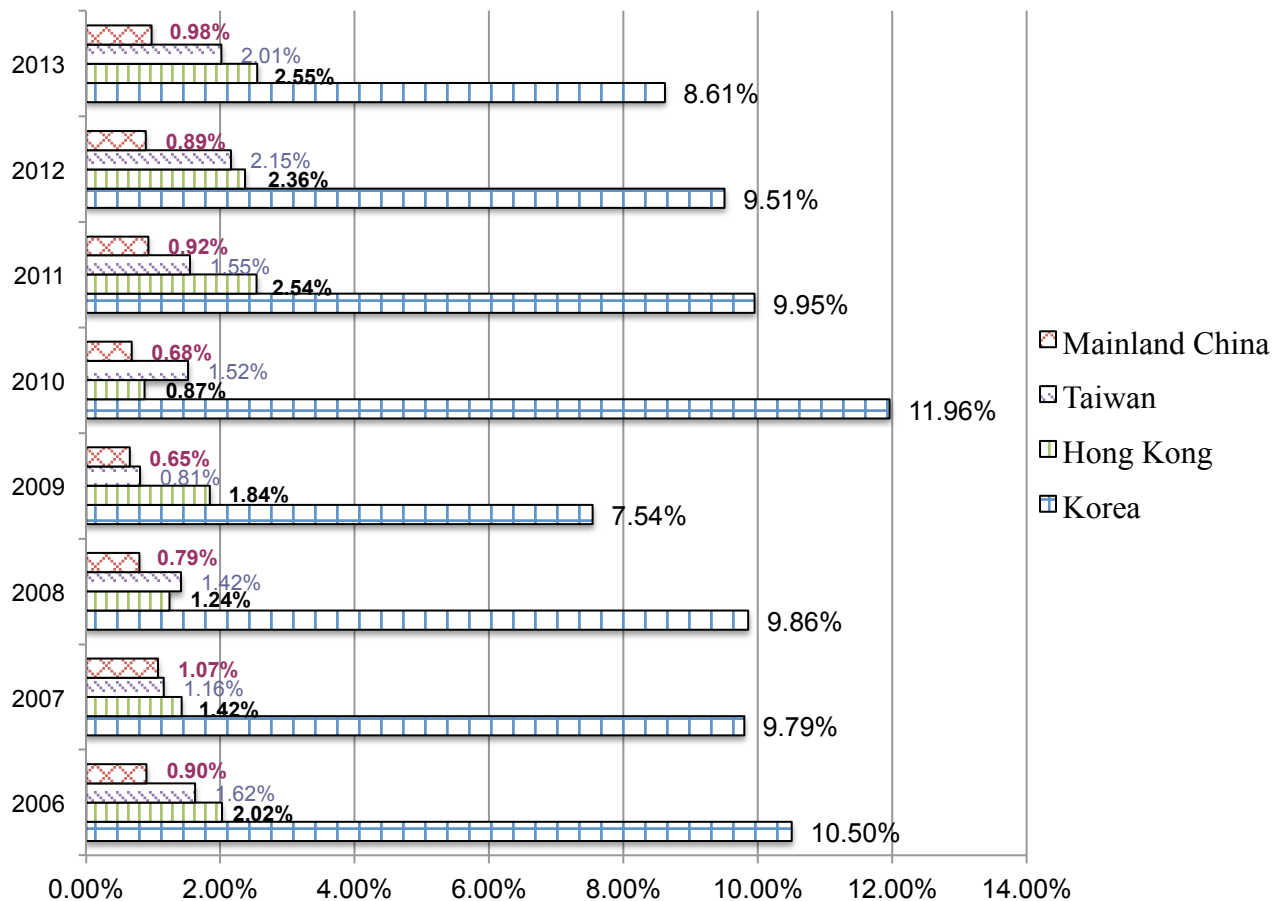
2.3. Inbound tourism policies in Japan

From the time when the diplomatic ties between Japan and China were restored in

1972, the number of Chinese visitors to Japan has risen from 643 person in 1972 to

1,314,437 person in 2013 (JNTO, 2013). During more than forty years, both sides have

kept making efforts in improving bilateral relations in political, economic and other aspects including positively introducing and implementing policies related to international tourism which includes the bilateral tourism between Japan and China.

2.3.1. The history of inbound tourism policies

In the White Paper of Japan's Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism of 2007, the country made the idea that Japan should realize itself to be a tourism-based country as one of its tourism policies (MLIT, 2007) and after achieving the goal of ten million inbound tourists in 2013, although three years later than it planned, Japan again established the target of twenty million inbound tourists in 2020, the year when Japan celebrates the Tokyo Olympic Games (MLIT, 2013, p43). But when looking back to the history, the first inbound tourism policies of Japan could be traced from 1859, the year when Japan opened its borders with the opening of three ports of Yokohama, Nagasaki and Hakodate, which means Japan has a history of developing the inbound tourism policies for nearly 155 years. Soshiroda (2005) has classified the development history of Japan's inbound tourism policies from 1859 to 2003 into five periods including ten short phases (Figure II-7).

The first period began from 1859 when Japan opened its borders and lasted until the year the Japan Travel Bureau was established in 1912. During this period, Japan was in the stage of germination when they used the international tourism policies as a part of diplomatic policies to raise the international status of Japan. During the phase one,

foreigners who wanted to travel in Japan were restricted in their range of movement but later on in the phase two they were able to have more choices of modern routes thanks to the "Welcome Society" which was founded by the financial world and began providing services to foreign tourists (Takagi, 1966). The second period was from 1912 to 1941, during which the Japan Tourist Bureau and the International Tourism Office were founded respectively in 1912 and 1930. The main objective of the policies and activities during the second period was to acquire foreign currency in order to recover from depression. It was also a period of preparing the inbound tourism policies and national parks along with the facilities in the surrounding area were established to attract foreign tourists.

Soshiroda continued to count from 1945 when the World War II ended and defined the third period from 1945 to 1970, the year that the International Expo was held in Osaka, as the "period of the re-establishment and fruition of inbound policies" (Soshiroda, 2005, p1116). It was in the phase five of this period when Beppu became the designated city under the "law for international tourist city construction" which was established for the purpose of tourism development.

Figure II-7 The development of inbound tourism policies during 1859~2003.

1st Period ↓	Phase 1 ↓	1859	Japan opened its borders.
	Phase 2 ↓	1893	The "Welcome Society" was founded.
2nd Period ↓	Phase 3 ↓	1912	The Japan Tourist Bureau was founded.
	Phase 4 ↓	1930	The International Tourism Office was founded.
			The International Tourist Office was founded. The International Tourist Committee was founded.
		1941	
3rd Period ↓		1946	
	Phase 5 ↓		1948: All Japan Tourism Association was established.
		1955	The National Tourist Association and the Japanese Tourist Association were founded.
	Phase 6 ↓		
		1963	The Basic Tourism Law was established.
	Phase 7 ↓		1964: The Japan National Tourist Organization was founded. The Tokyo Olympic Games was held.
		1970	The Osaka International Expo was held.
4th Period ↓	Phase 8 ↓		
		1987	The "ten-million plan" was launched.
	Phase 9 ↓		
		1996	The "Welcome Plan 21" was established.
5th Period	Phase 10 ↓		
		2003	The "Visit Japan Campaign" was launched.

Source: Soshiroda (2005)

Table made by the author

During the phase six, the whole country was preparing for the Tokyo Olympic Games held in 1964, thus selected a series of areas and routes for international tourists. Moreover, policies relating to the improvement of infrastructure and transportation system were implemented. During the phase seven, important issues as the establishment of the Basic Tourism Law and the founding of JNTO could be written in the chronicle of the development of inbound tourism policies. The celebration of the Osaka Expo helped

the improvement of the facilities as well as the promotion of the routes related to the Expo areas. The phase eight and nine composed the fourth period when the Japanese government put much energy in regional revitalization and helped the local communities to attract international tourists. Beginning with the establishment of "Welcome Plan 21" which requires the local government's effort in formulating and carrying out the promotion plan aiming at foreign tourists, the fifth period Soshiroda concluded in his work was from 1996 until 2003. In 2003, the "Visit Japan Campaign" was launched with the target of attracting 10 million foreign tourists by 2010 together with the policies of promotion activities, developing arrangements for the acceptance of foreign tourists and smoothing the immigration and emigration procedures for the foreign tourists, among others (MLIT, 2003).

2.3.2. Japan's inbound tourism visa policies toward Chinese tourists

It was not until 2000 that Japan's government admitted to issue temporary visitor visa for Chinese group tourists from limited regions including Beijing municipality, Shanghai municipality and Guangdong Province which were considered as regions with relatively higher income comparing with the other parts of China (MOFAJ, 2011). In September of the same year, the first group of Chinese tourists issued with group tourists visa arrived in Japan. Later in 2004, the scope of the regions where group tourists' visa could be issued was expanded to Tianjin municipality, Liaoning Province, Shandong Province, Jiangsu Province and Zhejiang Province, then to Chongqing municipality in

2006. In the following years, the government implemented several policies concerning

the relaxation of the requirements of issuing visas for the Chinese tourists (Table II-2) in

order to increase the number of the Chinese tourists. With the development of the visa

policies of the Japanese government, especially after the issuing of individual tourist visa

to citizens of "the wealthy class" which was admitted in 2009, more and more Chinese

tourists are able to travel in Japan without being limited to the specified sphere of

activities indicated in the fixed itinerary within fixed days, which means they are able to

decide the destinations to visit as well as the period of staying on their own. From 2011,

Japanese government made further efforts in relaxing the visa policies for the Chinese

tourists, making it possible to issue multiple entry visas for individual tourists.

Table II-2 The development of Japan's tourism visa policies towards Chinese tourists
Source: JNTO, 2013

Year	Visa policy
2000	Starting to issue group tourists visa for residents in Beijing, Shanghai and Guangdong.
2002	The period of issuing the group tourists visa for Chinese tourists was shortened to one week.
2004	The regions of issuing group tourists visa was expanded to Tianjin, Liaoning, Shandong, Jiangsu and Zhejiang
2006	Chongqing was added to regions of issuing group tourists visa.
2008	Starting to issue family tourists visa for families composed of 2~3 person.
2009	Starting to issue individual tourist visa to wealthy class.
2010	Relaxing the requirements for individual tourist visa in the standard of "the wealthy class".
2011	Starting to issue multiple entry visa for individual tourist arriving firstly in Okinawa.
2012	Starting to issue multiple entry visa for individual tourist visiting Miyajima, Iwate and Fukushima Prefecture.

2.4. Japan's promotion activities for Chinese market

Along with the improvement of the visa policies towards the Chinese tourists, Japanese governments have also launched a series of promotion activities aiming at the mainland Chinese market, facing to the tourism industry and the aviation industry as well as to the public. The history of overseas promotional campaigns can be traced back to the phase three (1912-1930) of the second period defined by Soshiroda when the Japan Tourist Board launched overseas promotional campaigns for the first time, including publishing advertisements in Chinese and establishing information offices in China (JTBF, 1982). During the phase six (1955-1963), the scope of state examinations for interpreter guides expanded to Chinese and other languages in addition to English and French (Soshiroda, 2005). During the fourth period composed with phase eight and nine, the Japanese government continued to carry out overseas campaigns with a similar strategy and framework of the phase four, with an additional focus on neighboring Asian countries (Soshiroda, 2005). According to Soshiroda (2005), initiatives in the phase ten of fifth period by local governments and collaboration between the government and private sector companies are emphasized rather than national government leadership and East Asian countries are the main targets of promotional endeavors.

With the launch of the "Visit Japan Campaign" in 2003, the national government as well as local governments have carried out a series of promotion activities targeting the Chinese tourist (Table II-3) including broadcasting commercials starred by famous

actresses with high popularity among Chinese residents, establishing offices in China, holding and participating a variety of promotional events and other kinds of activities.

Table II-3 A part of Japan's promotion activities toward Chinese market from 2001

Year	Promotion activities
2001	March: The television commercial starred by the famous actress Noriko Sakai produced by JNTO was broadcasted in China
	December: JNTO broadcasted television commercial starred by the famous actress Takako Tokiwa in China
2004	January: The exposition of visiting Japan "Yokoso! Japan Shanghai" was held in Shanghai.
	August: The JNTO Shanghai office was opened.
2005	"Visit Japan Campaign Festa in Guangzhou" was held.
2007	August: "Japan Festa" was held in Qingdao.
	October: Japan participated in the East Asia International Tourism Expo held in Dalian (Liaoning Province).
2008	May: The mascot of "Kitty" was designated as the tourism ambassador of Japan toward Chinese and Hong Kong.
	September: The "Shanghai Japan-China Culture and Tourism Week" was held.
2011	Hokkaido Shanghai office was opened.

Source: JNTO, 2013

2.5. Conclusion

This chapter clarified the background of the research topic. During recent years, under the national tourism policies of inbound tourism, the number of Chinese tourists that visit Japan is increasing in a rapid speed while the number of those who arrive in Oita Prefecture and stay overnight still occupies a very tiny part of the total number of arrivals. Despite the fact that Oita Prefecture possesses a variety of tourism resources, both natural and cultural, in its territory, its attraction to mainland Chinese tourists is not as high as to the tourists coming from other Asian regions like Korea, Taiwan and Hong

Kong. A variety of studies have focused on Japan's national government's endeavor to develop the inbound tourism and the establishment and implementation of the inbound tourism policies and promotion activities. In the meantime, the research on policies that Oita Prefecture is implementing and the promotion activities it is carrying out is still in a potential form. This research aims to explore the policies and promotion activities related to Chinese inbound tourism in Oita Prefecture in order to illustrate the willingness of attracting Chinese tourists of local and prefectural governments of Oita and their efforts on the promotion activities.

CHAPTER III   RESEARCH METHEDOLOGY

This study will use diverse approaches to explore the obstacles in the inbound tourism market of Chinese tourists to Oita Prefecture. This chapter illustrates methods in detail which were applied in the research. Sections covered include the research design, the process of preparing, collecting and analyzing the necessary data.

3.1. Research Design

3.1.1. Research design

A research design is "the management of conditions for the collection and analysis of data in a manner that aims to combine relevance to the research purpose with economy in procedure" (Selltiz, 1976). In order to conduct research in an efficient and effective way with the purpose of getting the answer of the research questions and achieving the research objectives, a research design is indispensible for a researcher before he or she starts research. Justice (1999) provides a general design logic relating various elements of research design in the form of a hierarchy as Figure III-1. Following this flow of design logic, the first element which needs to be taken into consideration is the research problem. Reviewing the objectives and questions of this research, the main problem is to identify the willingness of attracting mainland Chinese tourists of local and prefectural governments of Oita and current policies, administration as well as the promotion activities for the mainland Chinese tourists, therefore the purpose of the research could be classified to "description" according to Babbie's classification of the three purposes of research of exploration, description and explanation (Babbie, 2010).

Figure III-1 A hierarchy of design decisions
Source: Justice, 1999, p.85
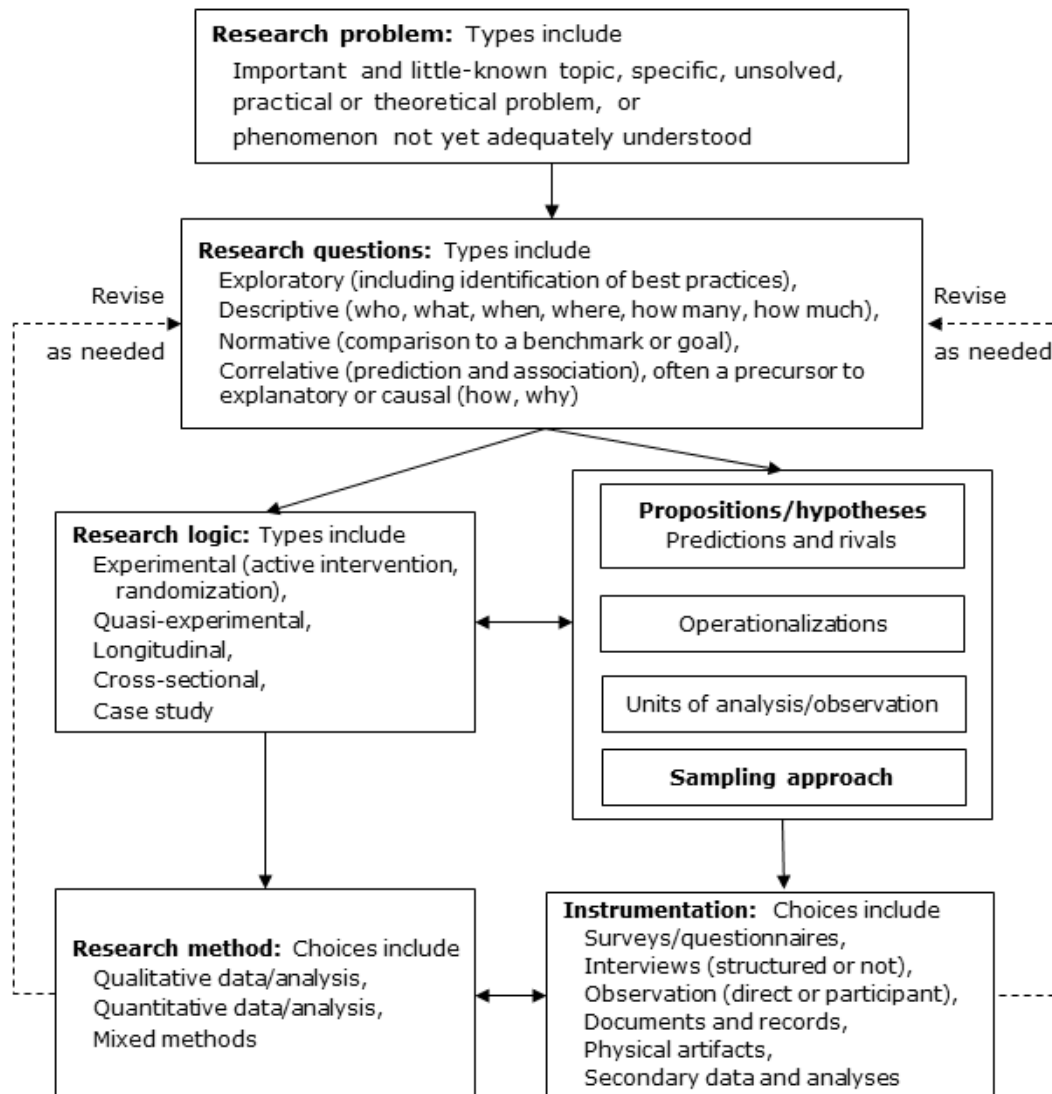
3.1.2. Research method

Since there are so many different research strategies, to choose an appropriate strategy is so important for the author before starting research. The author chose a "survey research" as her main research method associated with the process of data collection. A survey is not just a particular technique of collecting information using

questionnaires but also using interview, observation, content analysis and other techniques, so there is no necessary connection between questionnaires and survey research (De Vaus, 2002). Survey typically collect descriptive, behavioral, and attitudinal information and is one of the three main techniques used to collect primary data (Rea & Parker, 2012). According to the objectives of this research, firstly the author wanted to know the willingness of both prefectural and local governments in attracting the mainland Chinese tourists, which could be interpreted as the "attitude" of the governments. In the meantime, the author also wanted to obtain and illustrate the current situation of the policies and promotion activities for mainland Chinese tourists, which consisted of "descriptive" information of the government's policies as well as their "behaviors" of carrying out promotion activities.

There are many kinds of surveys depending on the dimension being explored as basis for classification. Firstly, the author had to decide who is being selected as a sample of the survey or on what basis a person is being included in the survey and what instrument to be used to carry out the survey. Due to the contents of research which were closely related to the policies and actions of the prefectural and local governments of Oita, the persons included in the survey were required to be the informants who were from the government departments related to tourism in order to acquire data related to the research questions. Purposive (judgmental) sampling, according to Babbie is " a type of non-probability sampling in which the units to be observed are selected on the basis of

the researcher's judgment about which ones will be the most useful or representative" (Babbie, 2010, p.193). And the "informants", referred to "someone who is well versed in the social phenomenon that you wish to study and who is willing to tell you what he or she knows about it" (Babbie, 2010, p.195), were the respondents selected for survey research. Therefore, the way of purposive or judgmental sampling of key informants was considered to be the effective sampling method for this research.

The next consideration for the author was to choose the specific way of administering the survey. Usually there are several main methods of administering survey questionnaires to a sample of respondents (Babbie, 2010): self-administered questionnaires in which the respondents have to complete the questionnaire by themselves; face-to-face interviews, telephone surveys and online/internet surveys using email, web page or combined method. De Vaus (2002) also compared the strengths and weaknesses between different approaches by focusing on five considerations, among which are response rates, obtaining representative samples, effects on questionnaire design, quality of answers, and implementing the survey. Face-to-face interview is commonly regarded to have a high respondent rate and it provides the greatest flexibility in the design of the questions, which allows the interviewer to cast longer than other methods and is "especially effective when the research question at hand requires depth and specificity" (McGehee, 2012, p.365). However, this approach may need higher cost as well more time and to find a suitable interviewer is the most serious problem (De Vaus,

2002). With limitation of budget and time, the author did the face-to-face in-depth interviews by herself, reducing to some extent the risk of getting contaminated results brought by staff interviewers who would have the probability of placing their own interpretation on questions according to De Vaus (2002). The instrument used in the interview would be an interview schedule with a series of unstructured questions, aiming to get responses as detailed as they could be.

Since Oita Prefecture consists of eighteen municipalities, it signifies that there are eighteen local governments and one prefectural government, which mean totally nineteen administrative departments related to tourism in the area. With the same problem of limited time and budget, it was difficult for the author to carry out the face-to-face interviews among all the governments of Oita Prefecture and to make all the staff in the tourism department as respondents of the survey. Therefore, she considered to choose a few of these staff who could be representative and were willing to participate in the survey so that she was able to have enough time to administer the interview and thus obtaining answers with better quality. How to determine the specific informants was another task for the author before carry out the in-depth interviews. Again considering the objectives of this research, the author planned to carry out an internet survey among all the local governments as well as the prefectural government to get the information of each government. In comparison with face-to-face interview, internet survey is barely affected by greater geographical distant and it can produce samples in a very quick speed

compared with other survey methods (De Vaus, 2002). Furthermore, the construction and distribution of an internet survey has been simplified by computer software and with the assistance of the computer, the questionnaires are able to complete tasks like self-coding, including automatic skips, control the order in which questions are answered and help reduce item non-response (De Vaus, 2002). Although there are several tools for internet survey, the author decided to carry out the survey using web page in the first stage of this survey research. This involves placing the questionnaire on a web server and getting respondents to visit the relevant web page to answer the questions and the responses are automatically submitted and stored in the database of the website for further analysis by the researcher. The questionnaire applied for the web page survey was designed with structured questions consisting of "policies related" and "promotion activities related" questions.

3.2. Process of Preparing and Collecting

3.2.1. Internet survey

After the research design came to the surface, the author moved forward to the stage of carrying out the survey and collecting the data. However, without any preparation, the survey would not be able to go smoothly as it was expected neither it would come out with quality responses.

3.2.1.1 Questionnaire design

Designing the questionnaire for the internet survey appeared was among the first steps in the period of preparation. How to design the questionnaire with questions that are

likely to obtain the interest of the respondents and in what order they should be put so that the respondents are able to answer them smoothly in a good tempo remains to be a problem ready to be solved. In this case, the author firstly chose to use questionnaire composed with closed-ended questions in the web page survey for the reason that "closed-ended responses can often be transferred directly into a computer format" (Babbie, 2010, p.256). The contents of the questions were categorized into three focuses:

1. The profile of the department where the respondent represents including the composition as well as the function of the department. The questions of this part were mainly designed to multiple-choice questions and included contingency questions.

2. The policies and attitude relating to the inbound mainland Chinese tourists. In order to measure the willingness of attracting mainland Chinese tourists in comparison with that of other countries or regions, the author used the rating scale question which is regarded as an approach to measure attitudes (De Vaus, 2002). Besides, contingency questions inquiring about the existence and contents of inbound tourism policies were also included.

3. The promotion activities toward the mainland Chinese market. In this part, the author inquired about the contents, frequency and planning of the promotion activities in order to identify their initiatives in the Chinese market.

In the end of the questionnaire, the author added a question about the willingness of the respondents in participating in a face-to-face in-depth interview in the near future.

Therefore the author was able to judge from the responses more easily in choosing the informants for the face-to-face interview in the second phase of the research. Since the respondents were expected to be Japanese, the questionnaire was completed in Japanese and then uploaded to the website service of Google Drive[1], a service which allows the user to upload and share the document through internet by accessing on the specified web page where the document was stored. Before distributing the questionnaire, the author first asked her supervisor for help in testing the practicability and validity of the web page questionnaire.

3.2.1.2. Distributing the questionnaires

With the questionnaire prepared, the author started to contact the potential respondents and distribute the questionnaire among the staff in the tourism related departments of all the local governments as well as the prefectural government in Oita. First she accessed to the official websites of the government of each municipality and collected the contact e-mail address of the tourism related department. Then she sent an inquiry mail to these addresses, introducing herself as well as this research and asking for their help and cooperation in this research. For those who responded in very short time and expressed their willingness in the participation of the research, the author immediately sent the web page link of the questionnaire to them through e-mail together with several simple instructions in filling out the questionnaire. While in terms of those who didn't respond to the e-mail in one week since the day when the e-mail was sent, the

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[1] Refer the questionnaire to
  https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1_tnhOOO7KM2_prpjTm-S_Kcic_1ubrOJplnONN-CgKY/edit?usp=s

author contacted directly to the department offices by telephone, introduced the research and asked their favor of participating in the survey. After obtaining the consent of the office staff, the author sent the web page link in the same way she did as mentioned above. By the day of deadline of submitting the response, seventeen municipalities and one prefectural government responded to the questionnaire among nineteen target respondents.

3.2.1.3. Selecting respondents for the face-to-face in-depth interview

The main criteria according to which the author selected the target respondents for the following face-to-face in-depth interview were categorized into three types: the level of willingness of attracting mainland Chinese tourists, the level of initiatives in carrying out promotion activities for the mainland Chinese market and the willingness of accepting the request of interview is positive or negative. In the first step, the author filtered out those respondents who selected "no" to the question inquiring whether he or she would like to accept the request of face-to-face interview and then applied the other two criteria on the remaining respondents. In order to measure the level of willingness of attracting mainland Chinese tourists, the author used the scale rating question to compare the willingness of attracting tourists from six different countries and regions which were selected based on the number of tourists who visited Japan in 2013. Five regions that contributed the largest number of inbound tourists in Asia were selected, among which were Korea, Taiwan, Mainland China, Hong Kong and Thailand. Besides, the United States which contributed the largest number of inbound tourists among all the countries

outside Asia was also selected as a reference. The respondents were given alternatives of high, slightly high, normal, slightly low and low towards each country or region. The last criterion was their initiatives in carrying out the promotion activities for the mainland Chinese market. The respondents were inquired if they had carried out any promotion activity for the mainland Chinese market including holding promotional events or making pamphlets, guidebook or promotion video in Chinese, or if they have any plan or just some ideas in promoting themselves among the mainland Chinese tourists.

Reviewing the answers of the mentioned questions (Table III-1), the author first selected Oita Prefectural government as an interview respondent not only because it showed a high level of both the willingness of attracting the mainland Chinese tourists and the initiatives of carrying out promotion activities, but also because it is the prefectural government from which the author was able to get the overall information about policies and promotion activities of the whole prefecture. Then the author selected Kitsuki and Usuki which were municipalities with "high" or "slightly high" willingness in the scale rating question and had some ideas of the promotion activities as well. Choosing other candidate respondents was difficult for the author at first, since there were eight respondents with "normal" willingness who were likely to accept the face-to-face interview. Therefore, the author contacted these eight candidate respondents by email, in which the author introduced the content and schedule of the interview and inquired their willingness of accepting the interview. In the replies, Yufu and Nakatsu

showed their interest in the interview while Usa preferred a telephone interview to a face-to-face one. Besides, the author wanted to know not only the positive side about the policies and promotion activities for the mainland Chinese tourists but also the negative side as well, therefore Nakatsu which didn't have any experience or ideas about attracting mainland Chinese tourists was considered as a suitable candidate respondent for the interview.

Table III-1 Criteria of selecting face-to-face interview respondents and answers
Source: the author

Municipality	Accept interview or not	Willingness in attracting mainland Chinese tourists	Experience in promotion activities	Plans in promotion activities	Ideas about promotion activities
Bungo Ono City	NO	Low	NO	NO	NO
Bungo Takada City	YES	Normal	YES	NO	NO
Hiji Town	NO	Slightly low	NO	NO	NO
Himeshima Village	YES	Normal	NO	NO	NO
Hita City	YES	Low	NO	NO	NO
Kitsuki City	YES	Slightly high	NO	NO	YES
Kokonoe Town	NO	Normal	NO	NO	NO
Kunisaki City	YES	Normal	NO	NO	YES
Kusu Town	NO	Low	NO	NO	NO
Nakatsu City	YES	Normal	NO	NO	NO
Oita City	NO	Slightly low	YES	NO	NO
Oita Prefecture	YES	High	YES	YES	YES
Saeki City	YES	Normal	NO	NO	NO
Takeda City	YES	Normal	NO	NO	YES
Tsukumi City	YES	Low	NO	NO	NO
Usa City	YES	Normal	YES	NO	YES
Usuki City	YES	High	NO	YES	YES
Yufu City	YES	Normal	NO	NO	YES

(Only Beppu City did not participate in this study.)

3.2.2. Face-to-face in-depth interview

3.2.2.1. Interview schedule design

After finishing the selection of interviewees, the author reviewed the answers of the previous internet survey again and started to draft the interview schedule based on the answers. The content of the schedule was categorized into three sections: section of tourism policies, section of promotion activities and free section. In the first two sections, questions constructed based on the results of the internet survey were placed at the beginning of each section, which focused on the detailed reasons why he or she had given this answer and aimed to dig out the deeper information concealed in the answers. Then the interviewee would face new questions which the author did not place in the internet survey at first but still would like to get detailed answers through the in-depth interview. Section three would not consist of any question until the day when the author carried out the interview since the blank page was reserved for the doubt and questions that came up on her way to the interview place or from the talks among the interviewee and her. Same as the internet survey questionnaire, the interview schedules were designed and structured in Japanese by the author. Although she is not a Japanese native speaker, she possesses the qualification of Japanese-Language Proficiency Test with highest level of N1 which certificates the ability to understand Japanese used in a variety of circumstances. In the meantime, she also asked her Japanese supervisor for help in checking the grammar, spelling as well as the rationality of the interview schedule.

3.2.2.2. Carrying out the interviews

After the interview schedule was ready, the author contacted the candidate respondents by E-mail again to confirm the time and place of the interview as well as send them the interview schedule beforehand in case that they could prepare the necessary statistics or data related to the interview questions. On the agreed dates, the author had an excursion to the places where the respondents appointed to carry out the interviews except Usa City which preferred a telephone interview rather than a face-to-face one. Most of the appointed places were the meeting spaces in respective city hall so that the respondents would be able to stay in a familiar environment and feel comfortable and relaxed during the interview so that he or she was likely to have more patience for the interview to answer the questions as detailed as possible. All the interviews were carried out in Japanese and since the answers of the open-ended questions must be recorded exactly as given and the exactness is especially important indicated by Babbie (2012), the author used the digital voice recorder to record the whole process of the interview after she obtained the permission from the interviewees (see Appendix C).

During the course of the interview, the author followed the order of the sections and questions, giving enough freedom to the interviewees to state their opinions. In case that the interviewees were confused with the meaning of the questions, the author explained in other words or used detailed description until they caught the point of the questions. In terms of the telephone interview with Usa City, the respondent sent back the interview

schedule with written answers in brief before the telephone interview, and since his disposable time was very limited, he was able to be engaged in the interview for about twenty minutes, much less than the other face-to-face interview. As a result, the answers of the telephone interview were much more concise in comparison with the answers of the face-to-face interview.

3.3. Analyze, Conclude and Output

This was the final stage of the whole research after a long time of preparing and collecting the data as well as the most important stage after which the author would present her research results and findings.

Before the step of analyzing, responses recorded both in the face-to-face interview and in the telephone interview were transcribed into texts word by word, and simultaneously input into computer for further step of coding and analyzing. As to the ethical issue of protecting the privacy of the interviewees, the author would only recorded their first names in the transcripts yet still to be able to provide the reliability of each respondent.

3.3.1 Making summaries

Since the mass data obtained from the interviews was in the form of textual materials, the first problem the author had to face was how to classify and categorize these pieces of data as well as to identify the themes running through different transcripts. Harding recommended making summaries first because "reducing an interview to the key points

can enable the researcher to see through the mass of detail and repetition to the points that are most relevant to the research questions or objectives" (Harding, 2013, pp.56) and "paraphrasing the content into a shorter form can eliminate unnecessary features such as repetition" (Flick, 2009, pp.325). Before summarizing, the author read and re-read the transcripts to make sure that she hasn't neglected any ideas or sections, thus starting the process following the instructions of Harding (2013, p.57):

1. *Identify the research objectives that the section of the transcript is most relevant to.*

2. *Decide which pieces of information or opinion are most relevant to these objectives and which are detail that do not need to be included in the summary.*

3. *Decide where there is a repetition that needs to be eliminated.*

4. *On the basis of these decisions, write brief notes.*

With all the transcripts processed through summarizing, the author was able to move forward to the next step of initial analyzing as was introduced in the following section.

3.3.2. Making comparisons

The second process that Harding mentions is to use the constant comparative method in the early stages of analysis since it is "a helpful approach to identifying similarities and differences between cases in a dataset" (Harding, 2013, pp.66). Some researcher even argues that it is at heart of all qualitative data analysis, which relies on constantly comparing and contrasting (Barbour, 2008). Harding (2013, p.66) also provides a helpful approach to use the constant comparative method:

1. *Make a list of similarities and differences between the first two cases to be considered.*

2. Amend this list as further cases are added to the analysis.

3. Identify research findings once all the cases have been included in the analysis.

Using constant comparative method enabled the author to examine the commonality as well as the differences concealed in the scripts so as to proceed to find out the relationships between different issues within a dataset.

3.3.3. Coding

Gibson and Brown (2009) suggest that where a commonality has been identified, the next stage is to analyze further and to look for sub-divisions. Although there exist numerous coding strategies in the qualitative methods, the author used the empirical codes that are derived while reading through the data. The whole process of the author's coding work could be described roughly as: identifying initial categories which represent the initial concepts to create codes; summarizing the codes to identify the themes; selecting contents closely related to the research questions to code while in the meantime interpreting the phenomena in their context; reviewing the codes, revising the list of categories, classifying the codes to the appropriate categories.

3.3.4. Identifying conceptual themes

Harding (2013, p.109) suggests that "the identification and analysis of conceptual themes that is most likely to contribute to understanding patterns of relationships". Therefore, the author stepped forward to the process of identifying conceptual themes, using tools such as data memos and tables so as to see patterns in the data and find commonalities within it. The author also followed the basic steps of analyzing a

conceptual theme provided by Harding (2013, p.112):

1. *Identifying the conceptual theme and creating a category;*

2. *Bringing together codes from different illustrative issues into the category;*

3. *Creating sub-categories to reflect different elements of the conceptual theme;*

3.3.5. Writing the final report

Writing is a process to communicate the findings to the people who will be reading the work (Harding, 2013), therefore all the findings and results were translated into English and the whole report was also written in English following the rules of APA (American Psychological Association) style although all the raw data was in Japanese. Once the writing was finished, the whole written work was input to the plagiarism checking site[2] to have its originality verified.

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[2] www.turnitin.com

CHAPTER IV － FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the findings and results of the research and addresses the research questions proposed in the first chapter. Some representative responses from informants of the interviews will also be translated and shared in this chapter to give the readers the opportunities to observe and feel the perception of the informants from their narration.

4.1. An Overview of Tourism Related Departments of Local Governments in Oita

Almost in all local governments as well as the prefectural government of Oita, the tourism section exists as an integral section within the department related to commerce, industry or community development instead of being as a separate department. One of the reasons might be the limited number of employees in the section, which would be introduced later on.

4.1.1. Internal organizational structure of the departments

As an indispensable industry that exists in Oita Prefecture, tourism possesses an important position in both local governments and prefectural government of Oita. A tourism section which is in charge of the tourism related affairs could be found in nearly all the governments. However, it is a common phenomenon that these tourism sections are subordinate units to a larger department which usually includes affairs related to commerce, industry and community development, among others (Figure IV-1). Under this department there exist several different sections that are in charge of different fields including tourism. In most of the local governments, the tourism section is the lowest

level of department division where the employees are taking responsibility for nearly all the affairs of almost every aspect related to tourism. On the other hand, a small part of the local governments, like the Usuki City, which have frequent international communication with foreign countries or regions would more likely to divide the tourism section into groups who are in charge of international tourism and domestic tourism respectively. However, this doesn't mean that the international tourism group is not responsible for any domestic tourism affairs, just that coordinating inbound tourism affairs would be its main job while it still supports the domestic group with the domestic tourism. Likewise, those governments who don't have an international tourism group might also have some international communication but it is just not necessary enough for them to establish a group for inbound tourism. Therefore, basically the tourism related work is carried out cooperatively among the department director, the tourism section chief, and employees from the section (Figure IV-1).

Figure IV-1 Internal structure of the tourism related departments in Oita.
Source: the author
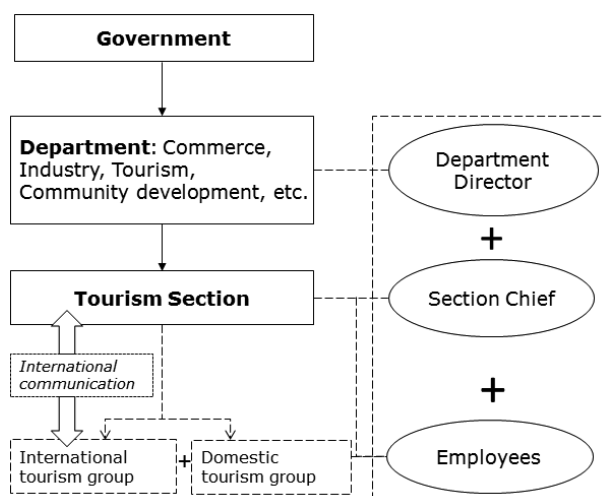
The prefectural government of Oita is a special case to be mentioned. Under its Tourism and Regional Development Section (Japanese: kankō chiiki shinkōka) subordinated to the Tourism& Region Department (kankō chiiki kyoku), it has an international tourism group including an employee who is in charge of inbound tourism of mainland Chinese, which could hardly be found in local governments.

There are several reasons for the local governments of not having established a group or team for mainland China market that could be observed from the interviews. One common reason is that the local governments are not targeting at any specified foreign market at this moment. As the employee from Nakatsu City indicated, "We still haven't reached to the stage of reinforcing any specified foreign country including mainland China. We just consider all the foreign countries or regions as a whole of 'international communication'. So we haven't assigned any group or team for mainland China market." Another important reason is that most of the local governments do not possess a well-prepared framework for accepting the inbound tourists. This is not only because the local government, as well as the employees are far from being equipped with expert knowledge like how to attract foreign tourists, and how to improve the tourism environment to meet the needs of the latter, but also because the number of employees (Table IV-1) and amount of budget is limited. As a result, local governments are not able to operate as the prefectural government which possesses nearly 20 people who work for tourism as to have a specified group, team or even a single person to be in charge of the

mainland China market.

Table IV-1 An example of the numbers of staff working for tourism in local governments

Source: the author

Government	Staff details	Total
Kitsuki city	Department director: 1 + Section leader: 1 + Employee: 1	3
Nakatsu city	Department director: 1 + Section leader: 1 +Employee: 3	5
Usa city	Department director: 1 + Section leader: 1 +Employee: 5	7
Yufu city	Department director: 1 + assistant director : 1 + Section leader: 1 +Employee: 3	6
Usuki city	Department director: 1 + Employee: 6	7

Nevertheless, having realized their own limitation in coping with the inbound tourism, many of the local governments in Oita are working in the form of cooperating with nongovernment associations, of which the representative one is the local tourism association of each municipality. Almost all the local governments as well as the prefectural government have the cooperative relationship with the tourism association of its municipality in various aspects including inbound tourism, carrying out work like research, promotion, and holding events, etcetera.

4.1.2. Basic functions of the tourism section

The tourism section in the local governments of Oita mainly possesses several functions, for example, to plan and hold promotion activities, which 100 percent of the respondents have ticked this choice in the internet survey. The other functions mentioned are: to make tourism policies (12 respondents out of 17, 71%), to preserve tourism resources (10 out of 17, 59%), to promote the community development (9 out of 17,

53%), and other functions like develop the international communication (Oita City). The functions of the tourism section of the prefectural government of Oita cover all the aspects mentioned above and also include taking tourism statistics of which none of the local governments has indicated. It seems like the majority of the tourism sections have placed much attention to the responsibility of planning and holding promotion activities. In the meantime, making tourism policies is another important function of these sections. These two aspects are closely related to the research questions and would be discussed in details in the upcoming sections.

4.1.3. Governments' official websites and provision of information

Official websites of Oita's local governments as well as prefectural government provide various kinds of information about Oita and its local communities including tourism information. All the websites are constructed in Japanese for that the main viewers of the webpages are Japanese. In the meantime, a part of the governments provide information in foreign languages apart from Japanese. According to the internet survey, ten out of eighteen respondents confirmed that their government's official website provided information in Chinese and nine of them offered tourism information in Chinese. However, the fact that most of the Chinese webpages are translated automatically with the use of automatic machine translation service could be discovered during the interviews. Though the translated results sometimes seem to be strange in the words, grammars or structure, most of the governments still chose this way of translation

other than using human translation mainly for the following reasons:

1. Using automatic machine translation is more efficient than human translation in updating the latest information.

2. The cost of automatic machine translation is lower than human translation.

3. There are few or even no employees in the government who has a good command of Chinese.

Words from the section chief of Usa City is quoted here to emphasize the points mentioned above:

"Considering the cost performance, we have to use the automatic machine translation service…Although there are a lot of things that we want to do, with the limited budget, we have to give the priority to the speed rather than the quality of the translation."(Section chief, Usa City)

4.1.4. Budget allocation in inbound tourism

It has been mentioned in Chapter II that Oita Prefecture has registered the logo of hot spring and the catchphrase of "Onsenken Oita" as its trademark to use it in its promotion activities toward the whole nation, thus devoting a great deal of time and energy to develop the tourism. Without the budget from the government, the activities would not be able to go smoothly. As the prefectural government of Oita which takes the responsibility of the overall planning of tourism, it obtained a total budget of about 460 million yen for FY2014 and the allocation on inbound tourism related activities is 40 million yen and it is supposed to be used in the activities which aim to attract inbound tourists from East Asia

like Korea, China as well as the training of interpreter guides (Oita Finance Section, 2014). This is a figure quite large in comparison with the budget allocated in inbound tourism of local governments in Oita, of which the amount could vary from 0 to 2 million yen. In fact, most of the local governments do not have a clear and definite number of the amount allocated for the inbound tourism like the prefectural government does since the inbound tourism business only occupies a small part of their daily work. A part of the local governments like Usa even don't have any budget for inbound tourism.

4.2. Oita's Enthusiasm for mainland Chinese Tourists

In the range of whole Oita, there is a big difference among the local governments in the level of willingness to attract mainland Chinese tourists. For example, the prefectural government and Usuki City both selected the choice of "high" among the six different countries and regions while four municipalities (Hita, Bungo Ono, Tsukumi and Kusu) gave the response of "low" towards mainland China. Among the eighteen respondents of the internet survey, only 17 percent of them (three respondents) gave the rate of "high" or "slightly high" towards mainland China while 33 percent (six respondents) gave "low" or "slightly low". However, although half of the respondents gave the choice of "normal" towards mainland China, three of them gave a higher rate to Korea. When seeing comprehensively from the rating towards all these six countries and regions (Table IV-2), Korea obtained the highest percentage of getting higher rating among all the target regions (39 percent), followed by Taiwan and Hong Kong. Mainland China and Thailand

occupied the fourth and fifth place while none of the respondents paid higher attention to USA. Although the prefectural government has a high level of willingness in attracting mainland Chinese tourists, the local governments do not hold the same opinion; at least, they are not likely to be as positive as the prefectural government.

Table IV-2 Percentage of willingness measurement in Oita's governments
Source: the author

	Korea	Taiwan	Mainland China	USA	Hong Kong	Thailand
High &Slightly High	39%	28%	17%	0%	22%	17%
Normal	39%	44%	50%	50%	50%	50%
Slightly Low & Low	22%	28%	33%	44%	28%	33%

Several factors are likely to have affected their decision on choosing the level to some extent, which resulted from the in-depth interviews with a part of the informants. The first factor might be the current size of inbound tourists from each region. As is mentioned in the previous chapters, among Asian countries and regions, Korea contributes the largest number of foreign tourists to Oita during the latest eight years, followed by Taiwan, Hong Kong, and mainland China (see Chapter II). The local governments as well as the prefectural government seem to be more willing to give closer attention to those regions from where come a great many tourists. The statement of the employee from the prefectural office has made this point clearer:

"We give 'high' rating to those regions from where the number of inbound

tourists is large or is increasing. We want to keep this trend of increase. Although

the number of Korean tourists is large and has reached to an extremely high level,

it is not likely to rise at a fast pace…so we are now making efforts in those regions

that appeared in the questionnaire." (Employee, prefectural government of Oita)

The convenience of access to the municipality is another factor that the governments in Oita take into consideration when measuring their willingness in attracting inbound tourism, as what Prideaux(2005) has summarized, the transport policy is also a factor that affects the tourism flow. To arrive in Oita from abroad, only South Korea has regular direct flights from Seoul to Oita Airport (Access to Oita Prefecture, 2014), while the first stop in Japan of oversea tourists from other countries and regions would have to be any other destination except Oita. This means they have to transfer themselves from the previous stop to Oita by using transportation as trains, buses, rental cars etcetera, which becomes one of the influential factors on their decision of whether going on excursion to Oita or not. The employee from Kitsuki City where rated "slightly high" for its willingness in attracting mainland Chinese tourists talked about the factor of access as follows:

"The first reason why we rated the level of willingness in this way is considering the convenience of access. It is comparatively easy for tourists from Hong Kong, Taiwan and South Korea to get to Oita…In terms of mainland China, there is possibility of carrying out sales promotion in Shanghai, Wuhan and Guangzhou in the future because there are regular direct flights between these cities and Fukuoka Airport."(Employee, Kitsuki City)

Other cities also indicated their concern about the convenience of access to Oita in the interviews. Therefore, the result that South Korea occupied the highest percentage of

the rate "high" and "slightly high" would not be difficult to accept since Korea has much more direct flights or ferries between its big cities and Kyushu (Coming to Kyushu, 2014) in comparison with mainland China.

To sum up, the enthusiasm of the local governments for attracting inbound tourists from mainland China is not as high as that for South Korea although the prefectural government has shown its strong interest in the mainland China market.

4.3. Inbound Tourism Policies in Oita Related to mainland China Market

Tourism policy is defined in the textbook of Goeldner and Ritchie (2012, p.326) as "a set of regulations, rules, guidelines, directives, and development/promotion objectives and strategies that provide a framework within which the collective and individual decisions directly affecting long-term tourism development and the daily activities within a destination are taken". Tourism policy is important because it ensures that "a given destination has a clear idea as to where it is going or what it is seeking to become in the long term" (Goeldner & Ritchie, 2012, p.327). Therefore, by identifying the inbound tourism policies towards the mainland China market, it is possible to acknowledge the strategies and objectives of Oita's government in attracting the mainland Chinese tourists.

4.3.1. Cooperation within Oita and Kyushu

Cooperation refers to "voluntary agreements or joint actions across the same levels in the levels in the structure or between levels" (Jeffries, 2001, p.115). It is difficult for the governments on the local level to take up all the administration and operation about

tourism on their own since tourism involves a very wide range of aspects. Therefore, working in the form of cooperation with various organizations is common among the local governments as well as the prefectural government of Oita.

4.3.1.1. Local tourism associations

Non-governmental tourism associations are established in nearly all the municipalities in Oita. Many of the associations operate with the nature of nin'i dantai (private organization) which is neither controlled nor protected by law, while "Tourism Oita", the tourism association of Oita Prefecture, possesses the nature of non-profitable incorporated association. Several most common forms of cooperation between local governments and local tourism associations could be summarized through the interviews (Figure IV-2). Most local governments entrusted the local tourism associations with tourism related work including: making promotion materials like pamphlets and guidebooks, providing support for the government when guide service is needed, carrying out promotion activities and holding business conventions together with the government. However, in the meantime, many of the associations also carry out their own work without the instruction from the government and since most of them are private organizations, they would be less restricted and more flexible in organizing as well as participating in events like business meetings. Nevertheless, it is because the associations are private organizations which are neither controlled nor protected by laws, the fund resource is very limited and the government's subsidy seems to be indispensable for them. Nearly all the local tourism associations are receiving subsidy from the government in

order to keep daily operation while some associations like the Kitsuki Tourism

Organization which turned into a general incorporated association from April 1st, 2014

also operates with the revenue as their private fund while receiving government's aid.

In regard to the mainland China market, only a few associations are taking actions

related to the mainland Chinese tourists no matter in the form of cooperating with the

government or carrying out independent activities, which mainly focusing on

participating in business conventions held in Japan. Here is an example of such case:

"We are not only carrying out sales activities with domestic land operators,

but also with oversea operators…We have talked a lot with the branch office of

Chinese company 'CITS Japan' in Fukuoka… We attended the business

convention of inbound tourism called 'Travel Mart' held in Tokyo…we were able

to talk with people from Wuhan and Guangzhou.'"(Director, Kitsuki Tourism

Organization)

Figure IV-2 Cooperation patterns between the government and tourism association
Source: the author
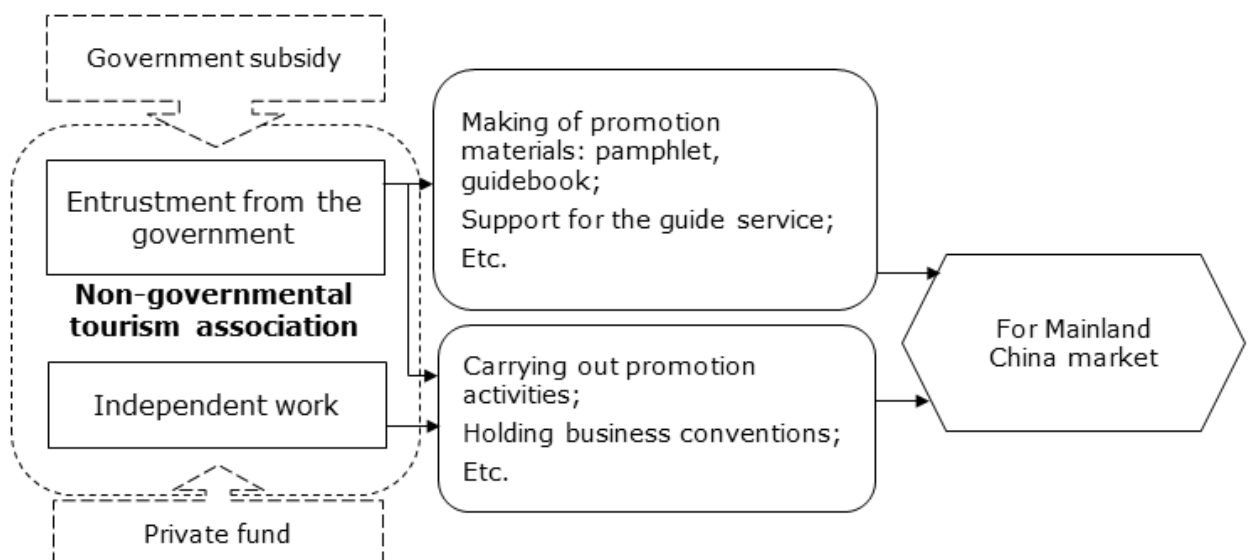
Figure IV-3 Local tourism association in Nakatsu and Usuki
Photo by the author

4.3.1.2. Oita Shanghai Office

Oita Shanghai office was established in the April of 2006 in the name of Oita Economic Exchange Office subordinated to the Japan-China Economic Association Shanghai Office, with its main duty of carrying out activities of business support, tourism promotion and international exchange improvement between China and Oita. All the local governments that the author interviewed have shown great interest in the Oita Shanghai Office despite the fact that except the prefectural government is making good use of the existence of the office, almost none of the local governments has cooperated with the Shanghai office. Nearly all of them have a high expectation of the cooperation with the office in the gathering and dissemination of information between China and the municipality in Oita (Figure IV-3). The local governments believe that the Shanghai Office would be very powerful and reliable when they carry out activities with the help of the office, just as what the informant from Yufu has indicated in the interview:

> *"Apparently we don't know much about mainland China and there is an*

office there (Shanghai), so it would be most effective if we ask for their help…If

we go to the national organization established by Japan, it would cost much more

time since everybody goes there for help. However, as a municipality of Oita, the

Shanghai office will probably give us the highest priority…."(Section chief, Yufu

City)

Figure IV-4 Cooperation with the office in the gathering and dissemination of information between China and Oita

Source: the author
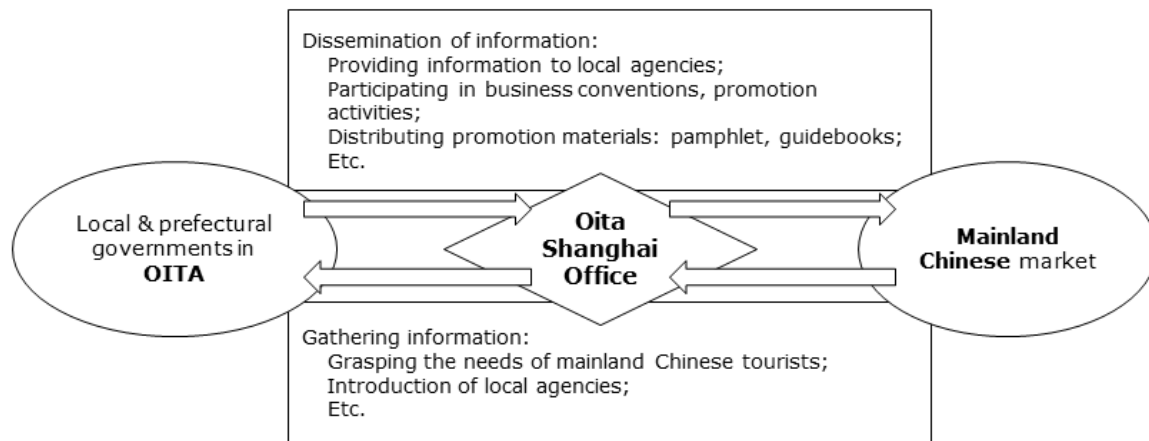
4.3.1.3. Regional collaboration within Kyushu

There are various allied organizations and promotion associations in the range of the

whole Kyushu region. As what Goeldner and Ritchie (2012, p.88) point out, "regional

tourism organization have the goal of attracting tourists to their specific geographic

region", the objective of these organizations is to develop the tourism in specified region

in Kyushu. The regional collaboration within Kyushu that Oita takes part in could be

classified into two types: one is collaborating with other prefectures in Kyushu island, for

example, the organizations like Kyushu Kankō Suishin Kikō (Kyushu Tourism

Promotion Organization) and Alliance of Kumamoto, Nagasaki, Oita, and Saga; another is collaboration within Oita Prefecture which means a collaboration among municipalities of Oita as the Toyo no Kuni Sennen Roman Kankōken (Tourism Areas of Millennium Roman), in which eight municipalities in northern Oita are involved in.

Nearly all the informants participating in the interviews have recognized the importance and necessity of regional collaborations since they have the consensus that it is nearly impossible for tourists, especially oversea tourists arriving in Kyushu to visit only one municipality of Oita. Therefore, with the participation in the regional collaboration, the municipalities in Oita would be able to present themselves in front of the tourists together with other attractive destinations within Kyushu, thus providing the tourists with local tourism information in a more efficient and notable way. Nevertheless, very few of the municipalities have taken advantage of the regional collaboration so far to carry out activities in attracting oversea tourists including mainland Chinese tourists.

4.3.2. Cooperation with mainland Chinese municipal governments

Oita's history of communication with mainland China could be traced back to early the 1970s when Oita city and Wuhan city (Hubei Province) became sister cities. It could be observed that most of the exchange agreements were concluded in the last two decades (Table IV-3) and tourism related agreements were signed between Oita's prefectural government and municipal governments of mainland China while the local governments of Oita have not signed any agreement with mainland China at any level. Except for those

cities which have the relationship of sister city with mainland China cities, other local governments consider it difficult to sign agreements with mainland China municipalities at the local government level. To sum up, at the present, the prefectural government of Oita initiates in the communication with local governments of mainland China aiming to develop the tourism and exchange between two sides, while local governments in Oita have fewer initiatives in the communication with the Chinese local governments.

Table IV-3 An overview of agreements concluded between mainland China and Oita
Source: Oita Prefecture Planning & Promotion Department, 2013

Oita	City, Province of China	Type of agreement	Conclusion date
Oita Prefecture	Wuxi, Yixing, and Jiangyin, Jiangsu Province	Tourism exchange agreement	Apr.29, 2005
	Suzhou, Jiangsu Province		Jul.15, 2006
	Shanghai	Friendship city memorandum	Nov.11, 2011
Oita city	Wuhan, Hubei Province	Sister City	Sep.7, 1979
	Guangzhou, Guangdong Province	Exchange agreement	Oct.9, 1997
Beppu	Yantai, Shandong Province	Sister City	Jul.26, 1985
Usuki	Dunhuang, Gansu Province	Sister City	Sep.27, 1994
Saeki	Handan, Hebei Province	Sister City	Apr.3, 1994
Bungo Ono	Jingzhou, Hubei Province	Exchange agreement	Sep.26, 1994

4.3.3. CURRENT SITUATION OF CHINESE-SPEAKING GUIDES IN OITA

Apart from the cooperation among governments and non-governmental organizations, the current situation of local Chinese-speaking guides is another issue that has been discussed during the interviews. Until the day when the interview was carried out with

the employee of prefectural government of Oita, there are totally eleven Chinese-speaking guides with national interpreter-guide license registered under the administration of Oita, the number of which occupied about 17 percent of the total population of foreign language speaking guides in Oita. Besides, there are four Chinese-speaking interpreter-guides with special license registered in Oita under the program of Comprehensive Special Zone of "Island of Tourism in Kyushu-Asia". However, the number of fifteen Chinese-speaking guides is far from sufficient for Oita as the informant from prefectural government has indicated,

> *"...since the number of mainland Chinese tourists might rise in the future and yet we don't know actually how many of the eleven guides with national license are working as a guide, the number of guides is insufficient...although this year we have four additional guides with special license, we are not sure if they are able to work as a guide even they passed the license exam."*

On the other hand, most of the local governments don't feel very urgent although they recognize the lack of Chinese-speaking guides in their municipality. They are inclined to have the tourists arranged the interpreter-guide by themselves or ask the local people who know some Chinese to help to do some interpretation temporarily as a solution to the problem since they don't regard the lack of Chinese-speaking guides as a serious problem for their municipality at the moment. In the meantime, they don't have a high consciousness of training Chinese-speaking guides under the Special Zone program in comparison with the prefectural government for the reason that they don't predict the

arrival of a large number of Chinese tourists in the near future. In contrast, the prefectural government is positively promoting the training program of Special Zone interpreter-guides, especially is making effort to take advantage of the huge number of foreign students in order to have them participated in the training program.

4.4. Oita's Promotion Activities for mainland China Market

4.4.1. Highlights of Oita's promotion

Promotion "involves giving information about products, persuading people that a product will meet their needs and that it should be purchased, and then encouraging them to make repeat purchases by reminding them about the benefits gained from the product" (Hsu, Killion, Brown, Gross & Huang, 2008, p.269). Each municipality in Oita as well as the whole prefecture could be regarded as products for the tourists and in the activities of giving information about themselves to the tourists, most of the governments have emphasized the local specialties of their municipality which include the local gourmet, natural and cultural landscape, and traditional culture, etcetera as what have been introduced in Chapter II. The promotion aims to present the specialties which are rare not only in Japan but also over the whole world to the foreign tourists. At the same time, some of them are still on the way of researching and exploring what might be attractive to the mainland Chinese tourists according to their characteristics as what the employee of Nakatsu has implied in the interview, *"At first we are still not clear about the characteristics of the mainland Chinese tourists and what is their present boom,*

therefore we don't have any idea about in what aspect our municipality would be attractive to them."

4.4.2. Oita's experience in carrying out promotion activities

According to the results of the internet survey, only four respondents (including three local governments and the prefectural government) out of eighteen (22 percent) indicated that they have the experience of carrying out promotion activities towards mainland China market in some form, for example, participating in promotional events or just making pamphlets in Chinese language. However, for those who haven't carried out any promotion activity for mainland China, the main reasons might be that the cost for the promotion activities is too high in consideration of the limited budget for the local governments and some local governments don't have any experience of carrying out promotion activities for foreign tourists from abroad including mainland China.

4.4.2.1. Promotion events

Among the four respondents who have experience in carrying out promotion activities, only the prefectural government and Oita city had participated in the promotion events which were held in mainland China (Table IV-4). Besides, the Oita Shanghai Office also participated in the local tourism events as well as held promotion events individually like visiting the local travel agencies, transmit the information about Oita and etcetera. The motivation of this series of activities of the prefectural government is that it perceived the necessity of the promotion for Oita to transmit its difference from popular destinations like Tokyo or Kyoto which mainland Chinese Tourists highly

evaluate (see Chapter 2.2.1). On the contrary, most of the local governments do not have the experience of carrying out or participating in the promotion events towards mainland Chinese Tourists no matter in China or in Japan. Their main reasons could be classified into two types: The cost is too high that it exceeds their capability; and so far they devoted their time and energy to the domestic market and have not carried out any promotion event for oversea tourists. We have discussed about the budget of the local governments in previous sections and it still seems to be a main factor that affects the activities of the governments in Oita, just as what the informant from Kitsuki has explained,

"To be exposed in the Chinese media costs a lot of money…no matter through magazines, newspapers or radio, the cost would be calculated according to the number of the audience and since China has a huge population, the cost would be terrible…So we would prefer to use means that don't cost so much, for example, the social network sites (SNS)…now individual tourists from Korea, Taiwan and Hong Kong came here mainly by SNS, guidebooks, anyway by internet at last."(Employee, Kitsuki City)

4.4.2.2. Promotion materials

Despite that the local governments are not able to participate in the promotional events like tourism fairs or seminars for the mainland China market, some of them made some effort in providing one or two kind of promotion materials in Chinese language like tourism maps and pamphlets, among others, in which they highlight the specialties of their municipalities. Most of these materials were made based on the original Japanese

version but the content was partly revised in order to enable the Chinese visitors to understand them more easily. On the other hand, the promotion materials made by the prefectural government are more plentiful in comparison with those of the local governments, which include not only the general introduction of the prefecture but also special guidebooks featuring the hot spring in Oita, trying to emphasize the biggest specialty of Oita.

Table IV-4 Main promotion events toward Mainland China that Oita participated during the last 10 years.

Source: Oita Prefecture Planning & Promotion Department, 2013

Date	Event	Place
November, 2005	Oita Prefecture participated in the Asia Food and Travel Fair and carry out promotion of Oita.	Shanghai
February, 2006	Oita Prefecture held the promotion event of "Oita Tourism Night" toward travel agencies and the mass media.	Shanghai
October, 2006	Oita Prefecture held the seminar of school trips for the education bureau and school principles.	Suzhou
September, 2010	Oita Prefecture participated in the opening ceremony of Kyushu & Okinawa Week in Shanghai EXPO and held the promotion event of "Oita Night"	Shanghai
June, 2011	Oita Prefecture participated in the joint promotion event with other prefectures of Kyushu making presentations toward major travel agencies and the mass media.	Shanghai
October, 2011	Oita Prefecture held the Oita Economics and Tourism Seminar in Wuhan.	Wuhan

Figure IV-5 Pamphlets in Chinese language about Kitsuki

Source: Kitsuki City

4.4.3. Plans and ideas of promotion activities for the future

4.4.3.1. Promotion activities

Among the eighteen respondents participated in the internet survey, ten of them did not show any willingness or plan of carrying out promotion activities for the mainland Chinese tourists, six of them indicated that although they did not have any definite plan of promoting towards mainland China but still have some primary ideas, while the rest two of them confirmed that they already had promotion plans. The number of local governments which do not have any plan or idea of carrying out promotion activities occupied about more than half of all the respondents. Through the information obtained from the informants who participated in the in-depth interview, one of the main reasons coincide with that of not having experience of carrying out promotion activities for the mainland Chinese tourists in the last section, which is that the promotion strategy of those

local municipal governments would continue to focus on the domestic market instead of oversea markets. Therefore, their willingness of attracting mainland Chinese tourists as well as foreign tourists from other countries is low comparing to domestic tourists.

The primary ideas owned by the local governments who do not have a definite plan at the moment for the mainland China market could be mainly classified into three categories: participating or holding promotion events, participating in business conventions and making promotion materials. As it has been discussed in the previous sections, the cost of participating or holding promotion events individually would cost a large amount of money and energy, for most of the local governments, their idea of this activity would be more likely based on the idea of cooperating with the prefectural government or other prefectures of Kyushu to participate in the joint events toward the oversea market including mainland China, which also coincide with the idea of participating the business conventions. Compared to the promotion events and business conventions, making promotion materials seems to be an easier option for the local governments as well as the prefectural government that almost all of the respondents who had primary ideas no matter with or without a definite plan expressed their ideas of making promotion materials in the form of paper materials or promotion videos.

4.4.3.2. New tourism

Suzuki (2013) has enumerated some examples of new tourism that recently appeared in various media such as medical tourism, volunteer tourism, sports tourism, industry tourism, etc. Since Oita possesses abundant natural resources like hot spring and the

agriculture and fishery industry prospers, the hot spring tourism and green tourism so far are not so strange to the prefectural as well as the local governments. Oita has quite a long history of developing hot spring tourism since the World War II when Beppu was designated as the health resort for the US military. Yufu city also has been developing the hot spring tourism for more than fifty years while inspecting and learning from the Kurort (spa) in Germany. The Sennen Roman Kankōken (see 4.3.1.3.) also involves the concept of green tourism with its provision of experience in staying with a farm family or fisherman family, which is quite popular among the Indonesian and Korean according to the words of the informant from Usuki.

On the other hand, nowadays the medical tourism seems to have an attraction to the mainland China market, from where many people have a desire of receiving a health check-up or even treatment for certain disease during their temporary stay in Japan. However, Oita has reservations about the promotion of medical tourism according to the informant from the prefectural government,

> *"Now the situation is that there are people who want to promote the medical tourism while some oppose. The Japan Medical Association has an objection to the medical tourism. At the present and as the prefectural government, Oita is not promoting (the medical tourism) positively. We are still under study and discussion."*

Nevertheless, the consciousness of Oita's governments in using the concept of new tourism as one of the promotion instruments is still weak and they have hardly considered

of the possibility of using the new tourism for the promotion towards mainland Chinese tourists. In the meantime, the types of new tourism in Oita are not so varied. The concepts mentioned above like sports tourism, industry tourism are still not as popular as the green tourism or medical tourism that hardly any informant of the local governments has mentioned of any one of them.

CHAPTER V － CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1. Summary

Being a destination that is less popular than famous sites like Tokyo and Kyoto, Oita's prefectural government has a higher level of willingness of attracting mainland Chinese tourists for the potential of increase in visitors' number in comparison with the local governments. The latter show a lower level of willingness of attracting tourists from mainland China than those from Korea, Taiwan and Hong Kong, which could be observed from the policies of various perspectives such as budget allocation, information providing, cooperation within Kyushu as well as oversea collaboration, training Chinese-speaking interpreter guides etc., in which the prefectural government is positively making efforts in order to attract more mainland Chinese tourists.

In terms of the promotion activities, the proportion of the governments which have experience in carrying out promotion activities for mainland Chinese tourists is small mainly because of the high cost needed for the activities and the lack of knowledge about the needs of mainland Chinese tourists. The strategy of reinforcing the domestic tourism market is another factor for not paying attention to the oversea market from the perspective of some local governments in Oita. On the other hand, for those local governments who have some ideas about carrying out promotion activities for mainland Chinese tourists, making promotion materials in Chinese language seems to be the first choice for them when they start to consider of stepping into the inbound tourism market.

While in the process of promoting green tourism and hot spring tourism to domestic tourists, Oita's governments have not considered of the possibility and opportunity of using the concept of new tourism to attract the mainland Chinese tourists.

Although Oita's prefectural government has already realized the importance of mainland China market and is taking actions from diverse aspects including the policy perspectives and promotion perspective, yet the local governments are still on the way of learning and exploring the possibility of inbound tourism and are facing a variety of challenges if they have the idea of attracting mainland Chinese tourists.

5.2. Recommendation

Paying attention to the mainland Chinese market

For those local governments who do not have any plan or idea about inbound tourism, it might be an option for them to pay some attention to the mainland Chinese tourists apart from the domestic tourists because the number of Chinese tourists visiting Japan as well as Oita is increasing and it could be a good opportunity for the local governments in Oita to develop the tourism with more possibilities.

Studying and exploring the mainland Chinese market

To study the characteristics of the mainland Chinese tourists and explore their need and expectation for the travelling experience in Japan as well as in Oita is an urgent task for Oita's governments which have some ideas of attracting Chinese tourists but without specified plans at the moment. To have a clear grasp of the advantages and disadvantages

of the current tourism resources in its own municipality also might be necessary to be combined with the previous task when carrying out promotion activities for the Chinese tourists.

Making good use of regional cooperation

Regional cooperation within Oita prefecture as well as within the range of the whole Kyushu Island is very important and helpful for the development of domestic tourism as well as the inbound tourism. Therefore, the local governments in Oita are expected to be more initiative in the regional cooperation when they carry out activities of attracting mainland Chinese tourists.

Establishing close relationship with the Oita Shanghai Office

Since the Oita Shanghai Office functions as the bridge and contact point between Oita and mainland China, providing plenty of opportunities for Oita to transmit the latest information to China and vice versa, local governments in Oita are encouraged to establish close relationship with the Oita Shanghai Office and be initiative to exchange information frequently with the local people in China with the help of the Shanghai Office in every possible form, for example, tourism promotion events, business convention among tourism industry stakeholders, etc. To take advantage of the existence of the Shanghai Office might be helpful for the local governments in international communication and the development of the inbound tourism.

Oita still has a long way to go in the development of the inbound tourism and the

willingness of attracting mainland Chinese tourists shown by the governments of different municipalities and the prefecture is not of the same level, which also implies a plenty of challenges for Oita so far as the prefectural government is making great efforts to attract Chinese tourists. How to tackle these challenges deserves a further research in the future.

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Appendix A

QUESTIONNAIRE DETAILS

Date (dd/mm/yr):   /   /

Respondent's name: _____

Governmental Department's name: _____

Introduction:

Thank you very much for agreeing to participate in this research project that I am conducting as student of the graduate school of Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University. The purpose of the survey is to learn about the current situation of the policies and promotion activities of local and prefectural governments of Oita related to the attraction of mainland Chinese tourists. The time to complete the questionnaire would be about 10~20 minutes.

1. What is your position in this organization? [Select one appropriate option]:

    A. Ordinary staff

    B. Section leader

    C. Department director

    D. Others:_____

2. What is the main responsibility and job of this department? [Select all the appropriate options]:

    A. To plan and hold tourism promotion activities.

    B. To make tourism policies.

    C. To preserve tourism resources

    D. To promote the community development

    E. Others:_____

3a. Do you have a group/team or specified person which or who is especially in charge of the affairs of mainland Chinese tourists in the department? [Select one appropriate option]:

    A. Yes… Go to Question 3b Below

B. No… Go to Question 4 Below

3b. What is the main responsibility and job of this group/team or person? [Verbatim response]

_____

_____

4a. Is there any content in Chinese language in the official website of the local government of your city? [Select one appropriate option]:

A. Yes… Go to Question 4b Below
B. No… Go to Question 5 Below

4b. Is there any content related to tourism in Chinese language in the official website of the local government of your city? [Select one appropriate option]:

A. Yes
B. No.

5. Please circle the appropriate level of your willingness in attracting tourist from each of the following countries or regions.

	Low	*Slightly low*	*Normal*	*Slightly high*	*High*
Korea	1	2	3	4	5
Taiwan	1	2	3	4	5
Mainland China	1	2	3	4	5
United States	1	2	3	4	5
Hong Kong	1	2	3	4	5
Thailand	1	2	3	4	5

6a. Until this moment, have you made any specified policies for the mainland Chinese tourists? [Select one appropriate option]:

A. Yes… Go to Question 6b Below
B. No… Go to Question 7 Below

6b. What aspects are involved in these policies? [Select all the appropriate options]:

A. The utilization of business facilities (e.g. Accommodation, dining, shopping etc.)
B. The utilization of sightseeing facilities.
C. The utilization of transportations.
D. Visas
E. Personal safety and security
F. Others:_____

7a. Until this moment, have you carried out or participate in any promotion activities targeting the mainland Chinese tourists? [Select one appropriate option]:

A. Yes… Go to Question 7b Below
B. No… Go to Question 7d Below

7b. What kind of promotional activities have you taken? [Select all the appropriate options]:

A. Holding independent promotional event in China … Go to Question 7c Below
B. Participating in the joint promotional event in China (e.g. Tourism Festival, Trade Fair, etc.) … Go to Question 7c Below
C. Holding independent promotional event in Japan… Go to Question 7e Below
D. Participating in the joint promotional event in Japan (e.g. Tourism Festival, Trade Fair, etc.) … Go to Question 7e Below
E. Making promotional pamphlet/guidebooks for Chinese tourists… Go to Question 7e Below
F. Making promotional video for Chinese tourists… Go to Question 7e Below
G. Others:_____ … Go to Question 7e Below

7c. What is the frequency of these activities? [Select one appropriate option]:

A. Once a year or less … Go to Question 7e Below
B. 2~3 times a year … Go to Question 7e Below
C. 4~5 times a year … Go to Question 7e Below
D. 5 times a year or more … Go to Question 7e Below

7d. At the moment, do you have any scheduled plan or idea of holding promotional activities in order to attracting mainland Chinese tourists? [Select one appropriate option]:

A. No scheduled plan, no idea … Go to Question 8 Below

B. No scheduled plan, but having some ideas … Go to Question 7e Below

C. Already having a scheduled plan … Go to Question 7e Below

7e. What kind of these plans or ideas are? [Select all the appropriate options]:

A. Holding independent promotional event in China

B. Participating in the joint promotional event in China (e.g. Tourism Festival, Trade Fair, etc.)

C. Holding independent promotional event in Japan

D. Participating in the joint promotional event in Japan (e.g. Tourism Festival, Trade Fair, etc.)

E. Making promotional pamphlet/guidebooks for Chinese tourists

F. Making promotional video for Chinese tourists

G. Others:_____

8. If I would like to make a face-to-face interview about the details of your answers for this questionnaire in the future, is it possible for you to accept the request of interviewing?

(The interview will take you about 30~60 minutes and it is not necessary that the person who is going to be interviewed be the same person who answered this questionnaire but he/she should be the person who belongs to the same department.)

A. Yes, it is possible.

B. No, I would not accept.

THIS IS THE END OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE,

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION!

Appendix B

<u>An Interview on the Tourism Policies and Promotion Activities for Mainland Chinese Tourists</u>

Date (dd/mm/yr):   /   /

Interviewee's name: _____

Governmental Department's name: _____

Position: _____

Introduction:

Thank you very much for agreeing to participate in this research project that I am conducting as student of the graduate school of Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University. The purpose of the survey is to learn about the current situation of the tourism policies and promotion activities of local and prefectural governments of Oita related to attracting the mainland Chinese tourists. The result and information of the interview will only be used in the personal study of the researcher and will not be used for any business activities. The interview is estimated to last about 50~60 minutes.

SECTION 1 QUESTION ABOUT POLICIES

Questions based on the answers of the internet survey:

1. According to the internet survey answers, there isn't any group/team or specified person who is in charge of mainland Chinese tourist in the department. Could you specify the reasons?

2. According to the internet survey answers, there are contents related to tourism in Chinese language in the official website of the government. Is it translated by people or by automatic translation service? And why do you choose this method?

3. What effect or influence do you expect through webpages in Chinese or other foreign

languages?

4. Do you have any plan in expanding the contents of tourism in Chinese language? And why?

5. According to the internet survey question about the willingness in attracting tourist from six different countries and regions, you answered as followings: South Korea: normal; Taiwan: normal; Mainland China: normal; United States: normal; Hong Kong: normal; Thailand: normal. Why did you choose "normal" for Mainland China?

6. According to the internet survey answers, you don't have any specified policy for the mainland Chinese tourists until this moment. However, if it is possible, what kind of policies would you like to make and why?

The following are the new questions about tourism policies:

7. Have you signed any agreements with the municipalities or provincial governments in Mainland China in order to develop bilateral tourism? On the other hand, have you considered to establish relationship of sister cities with any municipality in Mainland China? Why?

8. Do you have any tourism association or organization in the city? What is its nature, for example, NGO, NPO etc.? What kind of activities do they carry out towards mainland Chinese tourists?

9. What was the budget allocated in tourism related business activities for the year of 2013? What is the proportion between the budget allocated in domestic tourists and foreign tourists? Among the foreign tourists, how much budget was allocated for mainland Chinese tourists?

10. What is the current situation of the supply and demand of Chinese-speaking guides in

your city? If it is not sufficient, what kind of efforts have you made or what ideas do you have to increase the number of Chinese-speaking tourists?

11. What kind of effect do you expect if the number of Chinese-speaking guides increases? Or what effect will it bring in attracting the mainland Chinese tourists?

12. At the moment, the Kyushu Kanko Suishin Kiko (Kyushu Tourism Development Association) is improving positively the training of Kyushu Asia Tourism Island Special Zone Guide-interpreters. Would you hire these special zone guides? On the other hand, what kind of efforts and contribution have you made to carry out this policy?

SECTION 2 QUESTIONS ABOUT PROMOTION ACTIVITIES

Questions based on the answers of the internet survey:

1. According to the internet survey answers, it is mentioned that until now the government has never carried any promotion activity for the mainland Chinese tourists. What is the reason for this? Have you ever carried out any promotion activity for tourists from other countries or regions?

2. According to the internet survey answers, it is mentioned that the government is considering carrying out joint promotion event in Japan. If it could be realized, what kind of contents and style would you use to attract the attention of mainland Chinese tourists? What are the key points of your promotions?

3. According to the internet survey answers, it is mentioned that the government is considering making PR pamphlets, guidebooks for mainland Chinese tourists. What aspects would you emphasize in these materials and why?

The following are the new questions about promotion activities:

4. What kind of promotion activities have you carried out for tourists from other countries? Could you specify any activity which can also be applied to Mainland China?

5. Have you ever considered using the specialty of your city or the concept of medical tourism, green tourism or hot spring tourism to attract mainland Chinese tourists?

6. Have you ever thought about the niche market for special tourists? For example, tours for history maniacs, environment education tours etc. What kind of niche market do you think is suitable for mainland Chinese market?

7. Have you ever carried out any promotion activity through regional collaboration for mainland Chinese tourists? If yes, could you specify them? If no, do you have such plans?

8. It is known that Oita Prefecture has established its office in Shanghai. If you have the plan to make more efforts in inbound tourism in the future, what kind of promotion activities would you carry out for mainland Chinese tourists through the Shanghai office?

THIS IS THE END OF THE INTERVIEW,

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR COOPERATION!