

**Meeting, Incentive, Convention, Exhibition (MICE) Tourism
Development in Japan:
Case studies from Kyushu scoping in Fukuoka, Kumamoto and Beppu
City**

by

PARK Ri Sil

51214612

September 2016

Master's Thesis Presented to Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Science (International Cooperation Policy)
Division of Tourism and Hospitality

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Glory to God who has been the guardian of my life always.

First of all, I would like to express the deepest gratitude especially for my Supervisor and Professors in Tourism and Hospitality Division who were thoughtfully teaching, guiding and helping my studies and research in various aspects. Through teachings from them, I was able to learn and expand deeper interests towards Tourism studies which have changed my life a lot.

In order to complete this research, it would be impossible if there were no helps and contributions from my interviewees and all of organizations who provided the most appropriate and helpful information and data.

Additionally, as a recipient of MEXT scholarship (国費外国人留学生奨学生) from Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (文部科学省) in Japan for 2 years in Graduate School, I also would like to express my gratitude for their financial support since it motivated me to focus more on studies.

Finally, I would like to say “Thank you” to my family and friends who have been praying and supporting me always. Having all of these precious people made me to move on any difficulties in my life.

Lastly, I would like to express my gratitude to Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University where I have studied from undergraduate to graduate school and Beppu City where I have been living for 6 years since 2010. It is definitely one of the unforgettable moments in my life.

*“The world is a book, and those who don't travel only read one page”
by St. Augustine*

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT.....	1
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	2
LIST OF TABLES.....	4
LIST OF FIGURES.....	4
LIST OF IMAGES.....	5
ABSTRACT.....	6
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION.....	8-12
1.1 Research Background.....	8
1.2 The scope of research.....	9
1.3 The significance of research.....	12
1.4 Research objectives and questions.....	12
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW.....	13-28
2.1 Development of Event Tourism.....	13
2.2 Significance of Event Tourism.....	14
2.3 Types of Event Tourism.....	17
2.4 MICE Tourism.....	18
2.5 Japan as a MICE destination.....	19
2.5.1 Current situations of MICE market in Japan.....	24
2.5.2 Stakeholder analysis of MICE tourism in Japan	28
CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.....	29-32
3.1 Theoretical Framework.....	30
3.2 Methods of data collection.....	32
CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS.....	33-60
4.1 MICE Tourism in Fukuoka City.....	33

4.1.1 Stakeholder Analysis.....	35
4.1.2 Major MICE facilities	39
4.1.3 Summary of interviews.....	42
4.2 MICE Tourism in Kumamoto City.....	49
4.2.1 Stakeholder Analysis	50
4.2.2 Summary of interviews.....	52
4.3 Potentials of MICE Tourism in Beppu City.....	56
4.3.1 Summary of interviews.....	58
 CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS.....	 61-72
5.1 SWOT Analysis.....	61
5.2 SWOT Analysis of Japan in general as a MICE destination	62
5.2.1 Strengths.....	62
5.2.2 Weaknesses.....	64
5.2.3 Opportunities.....	65
5.2.4 Threats.....	66
5.3 SWOT Analysis of Kyushu as a MICE destination	68-72
5.3.1 Strengths.....	68
5.3.2 Weaknesses.....	69
5.3.3 Opportunities.....	71
5.3.4 Threats.....	71
 CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION AND LIMITATIONS OF RESEARCH.....	 73-75
6.1 Conclusion.....	73
6.2 Limitations.....	74
 REFERENCES.....	 76-81

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: The components of MICE

Table 2: The Components of Global City Competitiveness Index

Table 3: The Global City Competitiveness Index Score for Japan and major cities in Asia Pacific region

Table 4: Changes in number of fairs and exhibitions

Table 5: Stakeholder analysis in MICE tourism in Japan

Table 6: Methods of data collection

Table 7: List of Interviewees

Table 8: Organization structure of Fukuoka Tourism Convention Bureau

Table 9: Comparison of international conventions hosting in cities in Japan

Table 10: Summary of interviews in Fukuoka City

Table 11: Number of events and participation number of MICE events in Kyushu

Table 12: Number of events and participation number of MICE events in Kumamoto City

Table 13: Summary of interviews in Kumamoto City

Table 14: The number of international conventions held in Beppu and Oita City

Table 15: Summary of interviews in Beppu City

Table 16: Number of meetings per country and per city in Asia Pacific & Middle east region

Table 17: Level of significance for success factors of MICE and Event management

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Types of Event Tourism

Figure 2: Impacts by hosting MICE

Figure 3: Change in number of international conferences held worldwide by region

Figure 4: Number of international conferences held in major countries in Asia Pacific region from 1991 to 2013

Figure 5: Change in Japan's market share in the number of holding internal conferences among Asia Pacific region

Figure 6: Research framework

Figure 7: Proportion of industries in Fukuoka City

Figure 8: Number of international conferences in Fukuoka City

Figure 9: Public stakeholder relationship in MICE industry in Fukuoka City

Figure 10: Proportion of industries in Kumamoto City

Figure 11: The organizational structure of Kumamoto International Convention Tourism Bureau

Figure 12: SWOT Analysis of Japan and Kyushu as a MICE destination

LIST OF IMAGES

Image 1: Map of Japan

Image 2: Map of Kyushu

Image 3: Map of Japan

Image 4: Fukuoka International Congress Center

Image 5: Marinemesse Fukuoka

Image 6: Fukuoka Kokusai Center

Image 7: Fukuoka Sunpalace Hotel & Hall

Image 8: The accessibility to Fukuoka City

Image 9: Transportation system within Fukuoka City

Image 10: Examples of street festivals in Fukuoka City

Image 11: Imaginary overview of Kumamoto Castle Hall

Image 12: Kumamoto Castle

Image 13: The accessibility to Fukuoka City

ABSTRACT

Tourism is the activities of people travelling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes (UNWTO, 1997). Under the umbrella of tourism, there are various kinds of tourism industries and MICE (Meetings, Incentive travels, Conventions, Exhibitions) tourism can be categorized as the part of business tourism. According to the definitions of MICE by Thailand Convention & Exhibition Bureau, “A meeting is the coming together of a group of people to discuss or exchange information. In some regions, meetings may be seen as a small-scale conference by others”. “Incentive travels include leisure trips emphasizing pleasure and excitement and which may appear to have little or no connection to business”. “Conventions are events where the primary activity of the attendees is to attend educational sessions, participate in meetings and discussions, socialize, or attend other organized events”. “Exhibitions can generally be portrayed as ‘presentations of products and services to an invited audience with the object of inducing a sale or informing the visitors”. MICE Industry has positive impacts both on economy and society considering its direct revenue, seasonality control and employment, Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), spurring of technology and innovation, new ideas, knowledge and insight and local business climate as well (Thailand Convention & Exhibition Bureau, 2012).

The rapid growth of MICE industry resulted high competitiveness in world market and in fact, Japan used to be one of the countries that was in leading position of MICE industry in Asia and it is still emphasizing the development of MICE tourism all over in Japan especially aiming after Tokyo Olympic in 2020. As the country has turned into “Tourism Nation”, a lot of tourism policies have been newly declared and the central

government is giving more attention to tourism industry considering its impacts on the economy and globalization of the nation as well. From the central government, the importance of tourism has been spread out to the local level and it also prevents the centralization of metropolitan areas as tourist destinations (Japan Tourism Agency, 2014).

Generally this research described the current situations of MICE tourism in Japan in general and Kyushu in particular and analyzed the potentials and challenges for further improvements. Among several areas in Kyushu, case studies from three cities were introduced that were Fukuoka City, Kumamoto City and Beppu City. The qualitative methods used included data analysis, in-depth interviews and direct and participatory observations. Overall, I was able to recognize how and why Japan has been emphasizing the importance of MICE tourism as one of its national tourism policies and its application to regional development as well. Japan is expecting to use the multiplier effects of MICE tourism to enhance the tourism industry in general especially by hosting Tokyo Olympic in 2020.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research Background

Tourism is the activities of people travelling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes (UNWTO, 1997). Under the umbrella of tourism, there are various kinds of tourism industries and MICE (Meetings, Incentive travels, Conventions, Exhibitions) tourism can be categorized as the part of business tourism. According to the definitions of Thailand Convention & Exhibition Bureau, “A meeting is the coming together of a group of people to discuss or exchange information. In some regions, meetings may be seen as a small-scale conference by others”. “Incentive travels include leisure trips emphasizing pleasure and excitement and which may appear to have little or no connection to business”. “Conventions are events where the primary activity of the attendees is to attend educational sessions, participate in meetings and discussions, socialize, or attend other organized events”. “Exhibitions can generally be portrayed as ‘presentations of products and services to an invited audience with the object of inducing a sale or informing the visitors” (Thailand Convention & Exhibition Bureau, 2012). MICE Industry have positive impacts both on economy and society considering its direct revenue, seasonality control and employment, Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), spurring of technology and innovation, new ideas, knowledge and insight and local business climate as well (Thailand Convention & Exhibition Bureau, 2012).

According to The Economic Significance of Meetings to the US Economy, only 43% of the direct spending of MICE went to travel and tourism commodities such as food & beverage and air transportation. The remainder, 57%, went to meeting commodities such as

venue rental, meeting planning and production. MICE events have proven to be very useful in terms of bringing new ideas, knowledge and insights to a country, service providers and attendees and it has become one channel for information or knowledge to spread wider and faster especially in this era of globalization. The MICE industry can also influence the business climate of local business, which in turn, can directly influence the strategic direction of certain industries. Moreover, growth in the industry can also help to improve local business in their procurement and manufacturing standards. Thus, considering all of benefits, a lot of tourist destinations try to utilize MICE industry as the tool for diversifying tourist attractions or rejuvenating tourist destinations that are facing the mature stage already (Thailand Convention & Exhibition Bureau, 2012).

As the result, the rapid growth of MICE industry resulted high competitiveness in the world market and in fact, Japan used to be one of the countries that was in the leading position of MICE industry in Asia where and it is still emphasizing the development of MICE tourism all over in Japan especially after Tokyo Olympic in 2020. As the country has turned into “Tourism Nation”, a lot of tourism policies have been newly declared and the central government is putting more attentions to tourism industry considering its impacts on the economy and globalization of the nation as well. From central government, the importance of tourism has been spread out to the local level and it also prevents the centralization of metropolitan areas as tourist destinations (Japan Tourism Agency, 2014).

1.2 The scope of research

On June in 2013, in order to strengthen the competitiveness of Japan’s MICE industry, the government has selected the five cities to be “Global MICE strategical cities”

and two cities to be “Global MICE enhancement cities”. Since MICE industry is internationally becoming more competitive, it was essential for Japan to put more efforts in promotion activities to compete with other MICE destinations. Thus, the cities with high potentials were selected at first and they are Tokyo, Yokohama, Kyoto, Kobe, Fukuoka, Osaka, and Nagoya. They are aiming to be the world’s top levels of MICE destinations where can represent Japan in general (Japan Tourism Agency, 2014).



Image 1: Map of Japan (Wordtravels, 2016)

Interestingly, as it is shown in the map, the areas selected for global MICE cities are all located in the Honshu area that is the main island of Japan except Fukuoka in Kyushu. Although there are more populated cities in upper part of Honshu Island such as Sendai and Sapporo, Fukuoka was selected since the outcomes and efforts done by the city were significantly improved. Since the development of MICE tourism in Fukuoka is exclusively active in Japan and leading the MICE market of Kyushu, it can bring out opportunity for whole areas all over in Kyushu to be influenced by Fukuoka City.

Therefore this research aims to describe the current situations of MICE tourism in Japan in general and Kyushu in particular and analyze the potentials and challenges for further improvements. Among several areas in Kyushu, case studies from three cities will be introduced that are Fukuoka City, Kumamoto City and Beppu City. These cities were chosen after considering their locations and sizes of the areas. All of these cities are located within 2 to 3 hours away from each other by car and they have many other ways of accessibility. Fukuoka City represents the large-size city with population of 1.4 million people (Fukuoka City Official Website, 2016), Kumamoto City represents the middle-size city with population of around 740,000 people (Kumamoto City Official Website, 2016) and lastly Beppu City represents the small-size city with the population of around 120,000 people (Beppu City Official Website, 2016). By having different city sizes in case study, this research can be more generalized to apply this concept to other cities as well. Also it is possible to identify different data from comparing the different city sizes.



Image 2: Map of Kyushu
(International Tourism Center of Japan, 2012)



Image 3: Map of Japan (Wordtravels, 2016)

1.3 Research objectives and questions

The objective of this research is to understand the general situations of MICE tourism and to analyze the potentials and challenges for further improvements in Japan and three cities from Kyushu. In order to fulfill the research objectives, the following research questions are determined.

1. How MICE tourism in Japan and in each city has been developed until now?
2. What are the current situations of MICE tourism in Japan and in each city?
3. Who are the major stakeholders of MICE tourism as suppliers in Japan and in each city?
4. What are the potentials and challenges of MICE tourism in Japan and in each city?

1.4 The significance of research

Although the issue of MICE tourism in Japan was emphasized and mentioned as one of main tourism policies, research or report have rarely done so far especially in English. Usually the information or data were only published in Japanese and therefore, there were limitations of conducting the research for foreign researchers. However, in order to spread out the awareness of MICE tourism in Japan to the world, it is important to conduct market research and publish academic papers in English as well. Therefore, this research is significant since it discusses the general and current issue of MICE tourism especially from the perspective of suppliers in Japan and including the small case studies from Kyushu as well that can lead to local city development. It also provides the general analysis for those who are actually involved in MICE tourism and shares the information to academic field for those who have interests in tourism industries in Japan.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Development of Event Tourism

According to Getz (Getz, 2008), the growth of event tourism in recent years has been ‘spectacular’ as destinations realize the potential of events to raise their profile in an ever-increasing competitive global tourism industry. The volume and range of events and festivals around the world at any one time has reached over-whelming levels. In fact, the root of event tourism has originated from various special occasions in different cultures since ancient times.

Among the most significant events that are continuing until now, Olympic Games might be the most well-known example of event tourism which has started from around mid-700BC and continued more than 1,000years until when it was re-launched in 1896 with the first modern Olympic Games in Athens under the umbrellas of the International Olympic Committee (IOC). Indeed, the ideas of festivals and events were massively increased in the newly industrialized world in the 19th century and the concepts of world fair have later become known as expositions (expos). The first international expo which attracted over 6 million visitors named, “The Great Exhibition of the Work and Industry of all Nations”, was held in London in 1851. When this event resulted in such a great success, other countries also started to organize similar kinds of events. One of the most popular examples is ‘The Paris Exhibition of 1889’ which turned to create the land mark of France, the Eiffel Tower.

As the market of these international events is growing, it has led to the need of greater professionalization in order to avoid conflicts of interests among host destinations and to manage the issues of operating the events. As a result, Bureau International des

Expositions (BIE) was created in 1928 and started its activity in 1931. It was established by a diplomatic international convention to regulate the frequency and quality of non-commercial international exhibitions officially organized by a nation and to guarantee the quality of Expos and protect the rights of their organizers and participants. Currently, 169 countries are members of the BIE. (Bureau International des Expositions Official Website, 2016) This move has established other professional bodies such as the International Association of Exhibitions and Events (IAEE) in 1928, the International Festivals and Events Association (IFAE) in 1956, and the International Congress and Conventions Association (ICCA) in 1963, all of which now have worldwide coverage and significant membership (Getz, 2010).

In the early 20th century, the number of world fairs and expos reached a peak and the following events continued to attract significant interest and capital expenditures. The Seville's 1992 Expo attracted 41 million visitors and 80 million visitors at Shanghai's Expo in 2010. (Getz, 2010) Shanghai New International Expo Centre was built in 2001 with 17 exhibition halls totaling 200,000sqm of column-free, ground-level space and outdoor exhibit space of more than 100,000sqm and almost 5 million visitors attend over 100 international trade shows each year (Shanghai New International Exhibition Center Official Website, 2016).

2.2 Significance of Event Tourism

As events performed and contributed significant roles from national to local levels to host destinations, the applications of hosting events has been widely adopted by tourism professionals to raise the awareness and appeal of destinations for tourism and economic

development strategies. In fact, much of the academic literature and range of policy documents have already proved that hosting events can play a key role in building more attractive and successful destinations both in industrialized and developing countries. The power of event tourism is not only producing positive economic impacts to host destinations but also creating the brand image of the destination since events create a special appeal for the visitor, while the often celebratory atmosphere of events allows visitors and local residents alike to experience the destination beyond the 'everyday' (Getz, 2010).

Considering the development of event strategies as the perspective of public sectors, it usually aims to attract non-residents to the community with the expectation that their spending will contribute significantly to the local community since extensive public sector investment in many locations worldwide already proved that the development of event tourism provided direct benefits to the host area from tangible elements such as inward investment to more subjective outcomes such as improving civic pride (Getz, 2010).

Furthermore, for tourism organizations, hosting events can bring out wider benefits in terms of developing and expanding the visitor market, encouraging repeat visits who are stimulated by an initial visit to attend an event, increasing off-peak appeal and volumes of tourist trips and thus, these can reduce the problems of seasonality for the tourism industry, create new products, attractions and finally it will result in the expansion of destination portfolio, encouraging visitors to spend more time and more money in a destination and create a new image and brand for destinations and therefore, it provides a stimuli for development in embryonic tourism destination or repositioning and reimagining to fuel rejuvenation in a more mature market (Getz, 2010).

Getz (Getz, 1997) adds to this the importance of bringing a destination to life through events (described as ‘animating it’), with the aim of connecting the attractions and tourism capacity to promote better utilization. Essentially, the idea of building awareness and interest in a destination, adding value, generating economic benefits and improving the tourist experience are core elements of interest for destination marketing organizations worldwide. Event development also assists in justifying public sector spending on destination infrastructure, environmental regeneration and social initiatives (Page and Cornell 2009).

Moreover, events generate strong economic and social benefits, and the events industry is being increasingly recognized as a professional entity worldwide (Bowdin, 2001). Several academic literatures discussed the positive impacts of hosting events on stakeholders, local environment, the economy and industry of the host area (Bowdin, 2001; Gelan, 2003; Masterman, 2004).

For local and regional economy, events have economic impacts in terms of increasing employment, investment and public finances policy since it creates new source of income into the local economy. Tourism destination managers are increasingly looking at events as an important mechanism for enhancing tourism development in their regions. Events have the potential to attract visitors and their associated expenditure that stimulates local economic activity through linkages of tourism with other sectors of the economy (Felsenstein & Fleischer, 2003) (Dwyer, Forsyth, & Spurr, 2005). Events are being used as the tool for increasing the visitation, reducing the seasonality of tourism flow and enhancing destination development as well.

2.3 Types of Event Tourism

Getz (Getz, 2008) mentioned, “The events are spatial, temporal phenomenon and each is unique because of the interactions among the setting, people, and management systems including design elements and the program”. The most authentic point of events is that the atmosphere of the event has never been the same and it requires the direct participant of visitors since they have to ‘be there’ to enjoy the unique experiences. Getz defined different types of event tourism and there are 8 different types of events as they are shown in the figure below. The types of events are categorized according to their different characteristics and features. Under the main categories of 8 different types of event tourism, more specified kinds of events are divided as the sub-category in each type. (Getz, 2005)

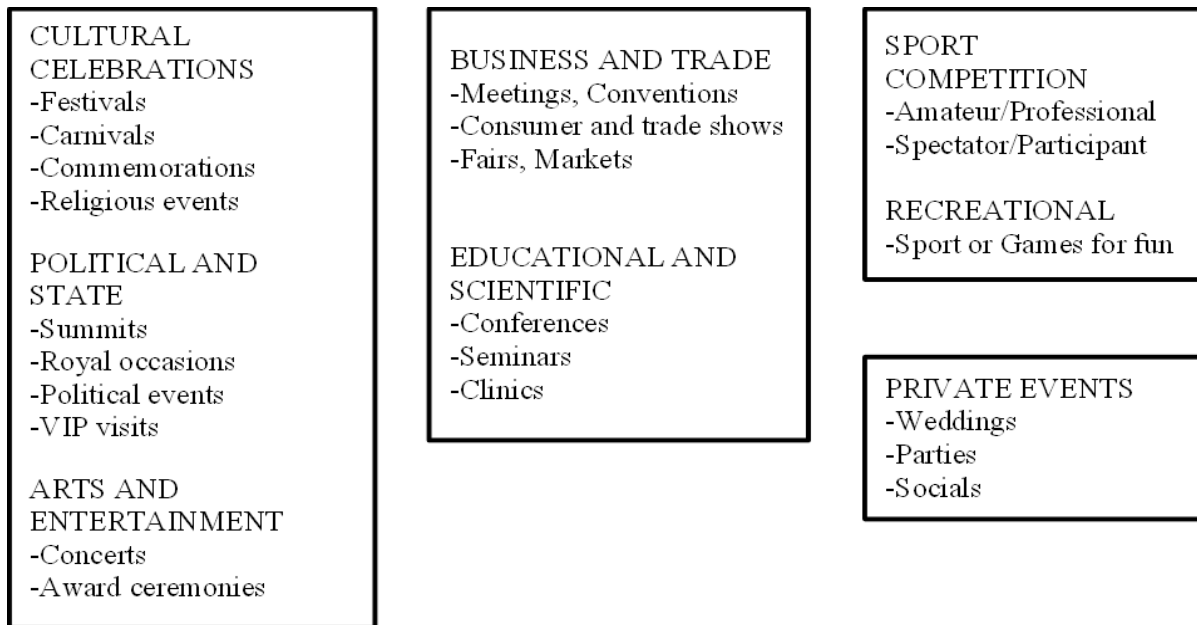


Figure 1: Types of Event Tourism (Getz, 2005)

2.4 MICE Tourism

Since the range and market size of event tourism is expanding progressively, separate forms of tourism are produced and MICE tourism can be the example of them. MICE (Meeting, Incentive, Convention and Exhibition) sector consists of related diverse meetings, incentives, conventions and exhibitions activities including conferences, congresses and trade shows. This sector has been regarded as one of the most dynamic and important sector of the tourism industry that focuses on business activities rather than leisure (Hamid & Ismail & Fuza & Ahmad, 2012).

Table 1: The components of MICE (Shediac & Nasr & Assy, 2014)

Event type	Description	Examples
Meetings	Gatherings open only to employees or representatives of a specific organization. They are typically small in scale — often not much bigger than the 10 person minimum to qualify as a MICE event — and oriented around a specific business function.	A meeting that a car manufacturer may hold off-site to discuss its plan for launching a significant new product. Board of directors meetings held off-site also fit into this category.
Incentives	Events typically held to reward employees for excellent performance	An all-expenses-paid trip to Monte Carlo that a leading global company may offer to its 100 highest-producing salespeople
Conventions	Get-togethers that are focused on sharing expertise or exchanging ideas. There are actually three types. Congresses allow delegates or members of an association to convene for a specific purpose. Corporate conferences let companies convey messages, share best practices, or open a debate. Non-corporate conferences serve the same function as corporate conferences but have different stakeholders, such as government policymakers.	The 26th Congress of the International Association of Individual Psychology, held in Paris in July 2014, was an example of a congress. A leadership forum for a company would be an example of a corporate conference. The 3 rd GCC Government Social Media Summit (held in Dubai in September 2014) was an example of a non-corporate conference.
Exhibitions	A show of products and services for a specific industry. Business-to-business (B2B) exhibitions are usually by invitation only and give professionals the chance to gather information and do some networking. Business-to-consumer (B2C) exhibitions are open to all and give companies a chance to showcase their products.	CeBIT, the computer-industry show in Hannover, Germany, is an example of a B2B exhibition; the Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas is an example of a B2C exhibition

It has been cited that within tourism, meetings and conventions are one of the fastest growing segments (Weber & Ladkin, 2003). Among several reasons given, the main reason is being the economic benefits for the destination and community as well as improving the destination image (Opperman 1996). As the presence of conventions center, it makes delegates spend more economically, stay longer and not solely spending on hotel and restaurant but on leisure activities such as retail, events, and visits to local attractions such as museums and theaters (Clark, 2004). However, some researchers commented that an economic study by itself may only provide a limited overview of the economic benefits of a convention for the area and should be examined within the context of noneconomic factors such as social, environmental, cultural and destination image impacts (Morgan & Condliffe, 2006).

The MICE industry now spans the globe with increasing competition from established and emerging markets, which has given greater need to address and consolidate several strategic issues to remain competitive (Weber & Ladkin, 2003). Factors highlighted were marketing, infrastructure, human resource management, and service quality issues (International Congress and Convention Association, 2016).

2.5 Japan as a MICE destination

Japan MICE tourism has actively begun since 2009 when MICE Promotion Action Plan was announced and when the campaign of Japan MICE year was started in 2010. Also, when the Tourism Nation Promotion Basic Plan was edited in 2012, the goal was set to increase by 50% of the number of international conferences and to become the largest host country in Asia. It was also mentioned in Japan's Revitalization Strategy that Japan is now

aiming to be Asia's No.1 position of international convention host country by 2030. From now on, a higher interest towards MICE is expected and the importance will be emphasized more since the central government recognized MICE as one of the important tools for the economic revitalization. In fact, MICE tourism market is already full of competitiveness globally and a lot of countries are active in promoting and marketing activities. However, Japan is comparatively behind those countries in terms of marketing activities and the strategies or actions taken by Japan are still in behind of global standard which result in slow development compared to other competitor countries. In order to recognize the problem and strengthen the weaknesses of Japan MICE, new committee was established in 2012 by JTA (Japan Tourism Agency) which is named "MICE Global Enhancement Committee" that includes several teams with different roles (Japan Tourism Agency, 2013).

There are three main reasons why Japan is emphasizing the importance of MICE that are high potentials of raising economic impacts, the creation of business opportunities, and the increase in awareness and competency of the cities.

Initially, the financial consumption made by MICE organizers and participants have direct impacts on the economy of the local municipality and the amount of consumption are comparatively higher than how much ordinary tourists spend in terms of accommodation, restaurants, and extra tourism activities. Also, MICE visitors usually tend to stay for longer periods than ordinary tourists. For instance, as the result of hosting the convention in Kobe City in 2009, the direct economic effect to the city was 92 billion yen which was about 30% of whole profit of tourism industry of the city. Moreover, from having Tokyo Big Sight (Tokyo International Exhibition Center) and Pacific Yokohama,

the economic outcome was 460 billion yen to Tokyo Metro areas and 69 billion yen to Yokohama City (Japan Tourism Agency, 2014).

Secondly, through hosting MICE, it is possible to create networks among various key players of business organizations worldwide and provide the opportunities of starting up new business or innovation as well. Since MICE allows exchanges and interactions, the convention venue is full of sharing new information of business ideas and products especially in the case of MICE where business corporations mainly participate. For the case of conferences, scholars or researchers can share the result of their recent research, new ideas of technologies, and review the current situation of their research field. As a result of holding MICE, participants can have face-to-face exchange activities which can result mutual trust for building the network relationship (Japan Tourism Agency, 2014).

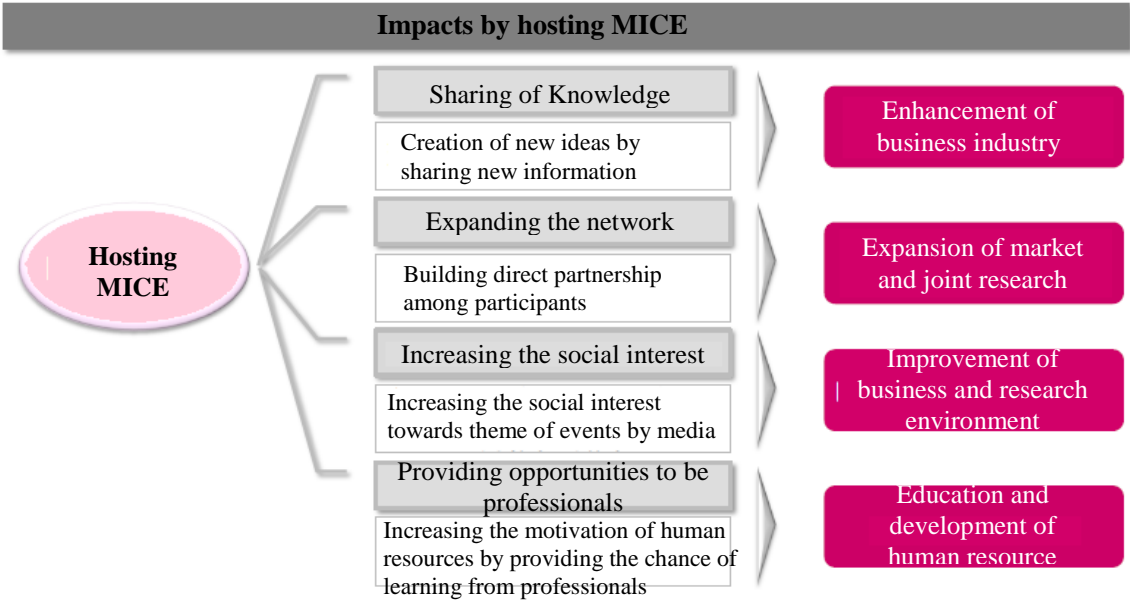


Figure 2: Impacts by hosting MICE (JTA, 2014)

The figure 2 is created by Japan Tourism Agency to explain the impacts of hosting MICE in Japan. As hosting MICE, Japan expects to share knowledge to enhance the business industry, to expand the network for joint research activities, to increase the social interest for improvement of business and research environment and to provide opportunities to be professional for education and development of human resources.

Thirdly, by hosting MICE, it is also related with increasing the competency of host nation or the city since information exchange activities and network creation allows the host destination to improve its competency. In fact, Singapore and Australia are the typical examples of MICE destinations where emphasize and use MICE as the tool of economic growth strategy. Several researches already evaluated that hosting MICE can bring out positive economic effects and increase the competency of the host destinations. Thus, it is essential for Japan to recognize the importance and necessity of MICE in order to use it as the tool for economic growth strategy. It also provides the opportunity to promote Japan brand through different forms of activities such as after convention tours (Japan Tourism Agency, 2014).

According to the Global City Competitiveness Index, the number of hosting international congress and conventions determine 2% of global appeal factors which is certainly important factor to be considered even comparing with other criteria's proportions.

Table 2: The Components of Global City Competitiveness Index
(Citi Group & The Economist Newspaper, 2012)

Factors (total of 100%)	Criteria
Economic strength: 30%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ GDP (PPP): 7.5% ▪ GDP per capita (PPP): 3.0% ▪ Growth rate of city GDP: 12.5%
Physical capital: 10%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Quality of infrastructure: 4.3% ▪ Quality of public transportation: 1.4%

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Quality of telecommunication: 4.3%
Financial maturity: 10%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Size of finance industry: 10%
Institutional effectiveness: 15%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Autonomy of local government system: 4.3% ▪ Efficiency of government: 4.3% ▪ Legal system: 2.1%
Social and cultural character: 5%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cultural vitality: 2.0% ▪ Openness and diversity: 1.0% ▪ Freedom of expression: 1.0%
Human capital: 15%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Entrepreneurship desire and capacity of accepting risk: 3.8% ▪ Population growth rate: 1.9% ▪ Population of labor force: 1.2%
Environment and natural hazards: 5%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Risk of disasters: 1.7% ▪ Environment management: 3.3%
Global appeal: 10%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Number of HQ in Fortune 500 firms: 2.0% ▪ Number of international airports: 2.0% ▪ Number of hosting international congress and conventions: 2.0% ▪ Number of international universities: 2.0% ▪ Number of international think tank: 2.0%

However, the table below shows the scores and comparison between Japan and some of other countries in Asia Pacific region. Comparing the overall scores of cities in Japan with other cities, they scored high considering the sizes and popularity of the destinations but there was a huge gap in global appeal score between Tokyo and other cities such as Osaka, Nagoya, Fukuoka. It can refer that the cities have high potentials and competency in other factors but they are lack of global appealing points yet.

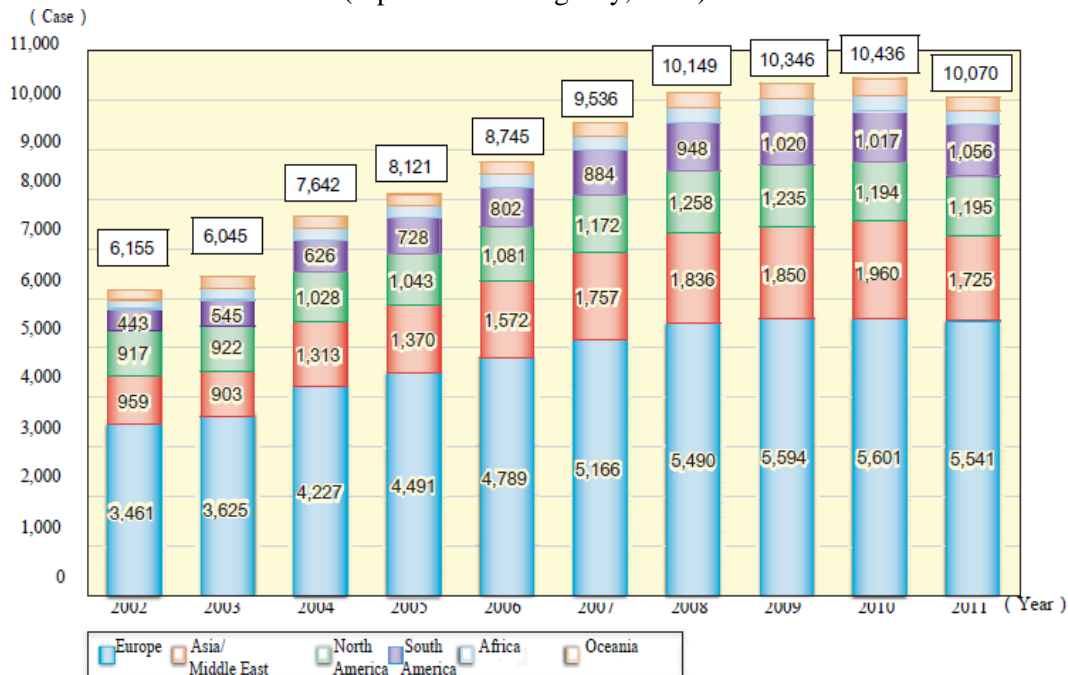
Table 3: The Global City Competitiveness Index Score for Japan and major cities in Asia Pacific region (Citi Group & The Economist Newspaper, 2012)

	Overall score	Global appeal score
Singapore	70.0	43.2
Tokyo	68.0	44.4
Sydney	63.1	25.5
Seoul	60.5	30.6
Shanghai	55.2	22.6
Osaka	52.9	11.4
Nagoya	52.3	5.1
Fukuoka	47.7	2.6

2.5.1 Current situations of MICE market in Japan

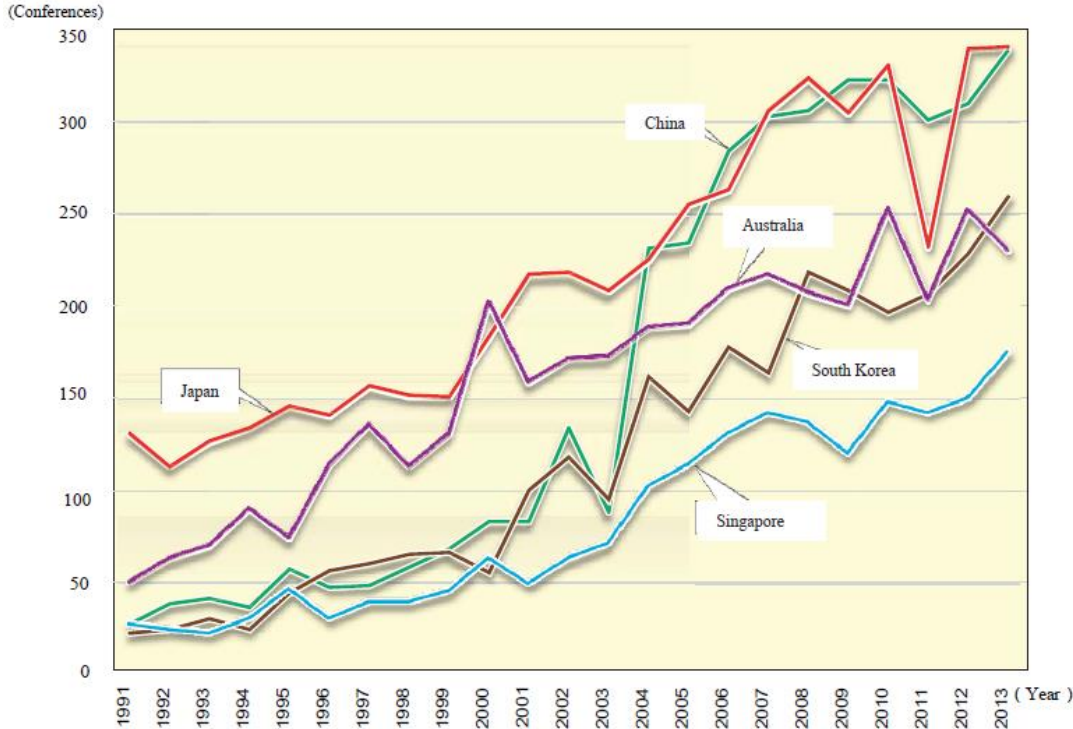
Japan used to be the leading and most developed country of MICE in 1990s. Generally, the number of international congresses held in Japan was increasing except during the period of Lehman Shock. Actually it has been increasing steadily for 10 years and it is also expected to increase continuously. However, as the economic development in Asian countries has been increased rapidly, Japan had to face the new competitors from other nations especially with Singapore and South Korea. Considering the geographical trend, Asia Pacific is one of the most growing MICE destinations followed by South American regions. Among Asia Pacific countries, the leading countries of hosting international congress are Singapore, Beijing, Seoul, Taipei, and Kuala Lumpur. The graph below shows the Change in the Number of International Conferences Held Worldwide and by Region from 2002 to 2011. As shown, the number of international conferences held in Europe has been decreased while the number in Asia and Middle East is increasing (Japan Tourism Agency, 2013).

Figure 3: Change in number of international conferences held worldwide by region (Japan Tourism Agency, 2013)



According to ICCA (International Congress and Convention Association), since the effect of the earthquake in 2011, the number of international congress in Japan was ranked 13th in worldwide, and 2nd in Asia region which was after China. Considering the city ranking, there was no city from Japan in the list of top 10 and the highest ranked city from Japan was Tokyo which was 41st in world rankings and 11th in Asia Pacific region. The graph below shows the Number of International Conferences Held in Major Countries in Asia-Pacific from 1991 to 2013 and it can be easily seen that how other countries are rapidly increasing especially China and South Korea.

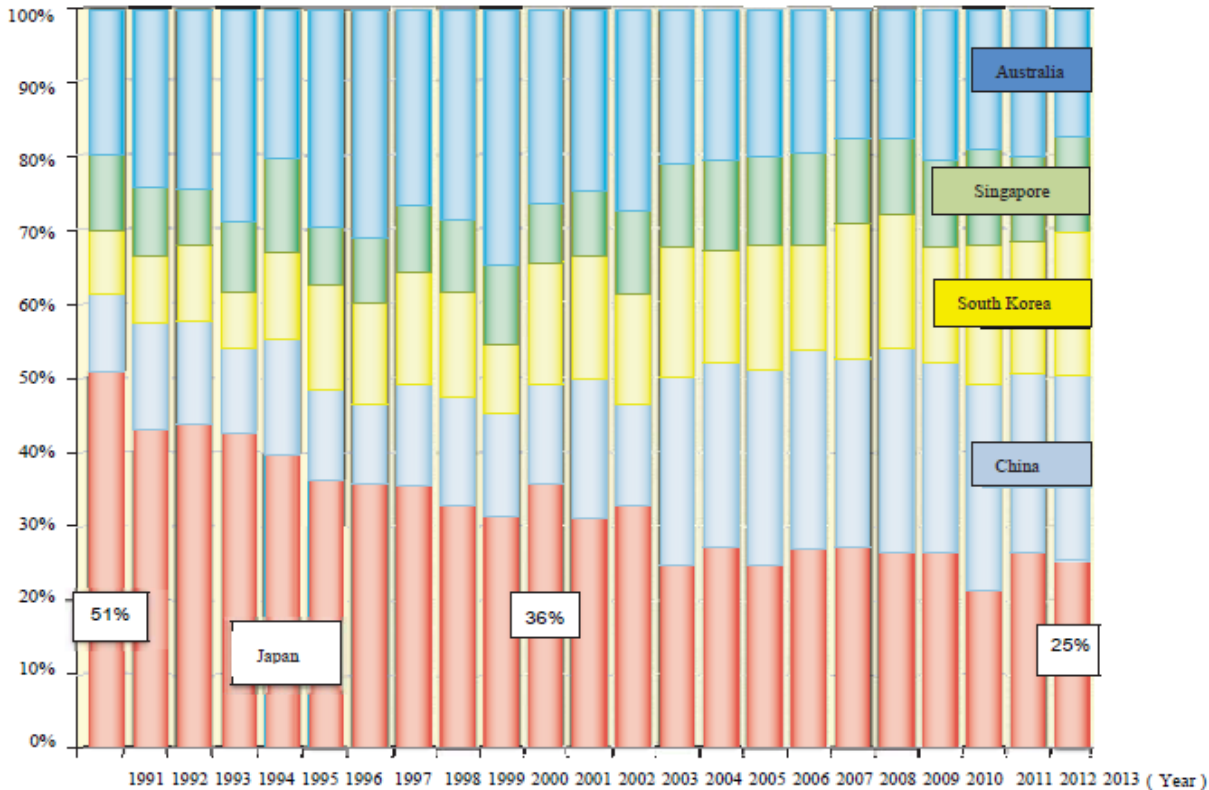
Figure 4: Number of International Conferences held in Major Countries in Asia-Pacific from 1991 to 2013 (Japan Tourism Agency, 2013)



Furthermore, regarding the market share of among the leading countries in the Asia Pacific region (Japan, China, South Korea, Singapore, Australia), Japan used to take more

than half of its whole market shares in 1991. However, it has been decreasing continuously and it even dropped more especially in 2011. Although Japan has been putting a lot of efforts to increase the number of events, the events in other competitor countries such as China, South Korea and Singapore are exceedingly increasing that leads Japan to have lower comparative advantages. Another graph also shows how the market share of Japan has been dropping from 1991 to 2013. The graph refers to Change in Japan's Share in the Number of International Conferences Held in Major Countries in the Asia-Pacific Region from 1991 to 2013 (Japan Tourism Agency, 2013).

Figure 5: Change in Japan’s market share in the number of holding internal conferences among Asia Pacific region (Japan Tourism Agency, 2013)



Furthermore, the table below also proves the rapid growth of exhibition market in China. From 2001 to 2010, the number of exhibitions in China has increased by 3 times while the

number in Japan is decreasing. In addition to a huge growth of Chinese market, Hong Kong and South Korea are also following with stable growth in number of holding events.

Table 4: Changes in number of fairs and exhibitions in Asian countries
(Japan External Trade Organization, 2011)

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Japan	1,109	991	574	516	528	692	721	621	603	611
China	1,840	2,027	3,298	2,467	3,800	4,320	4,270	4,490	4,920	5,400
Hong Kong	67	67	67	68	66	92	95	110	118	118
South Korea	221	248	268	300	336	353	354	409	422	479

2.5.2 Stakeholder analysis of MICE tourism in Japan

As the supplier-side stakeholders in MICE industry in Japan, there are both public and private organizations or corporations that have their own roles. Basically, public organizations are responsible in developing the promotional strategies and activities based on tourism policy, spreading out information to various stakeholders and making networks among them. According to different regions, some of Convention Bureau and Tourism Associations were part of governmental organizations but some others are private as well. The common roles of them are to manage and operate the actual events with other private stakeholders. Usually private sectors consist of tourism entrepreneurs who are dealing with tourism businesses directly with customers (Japan Tourism Agency, 2013).

Table 5: List of stakeholders in MICE industry in Japan
(Japan Tourism Agency 2013)

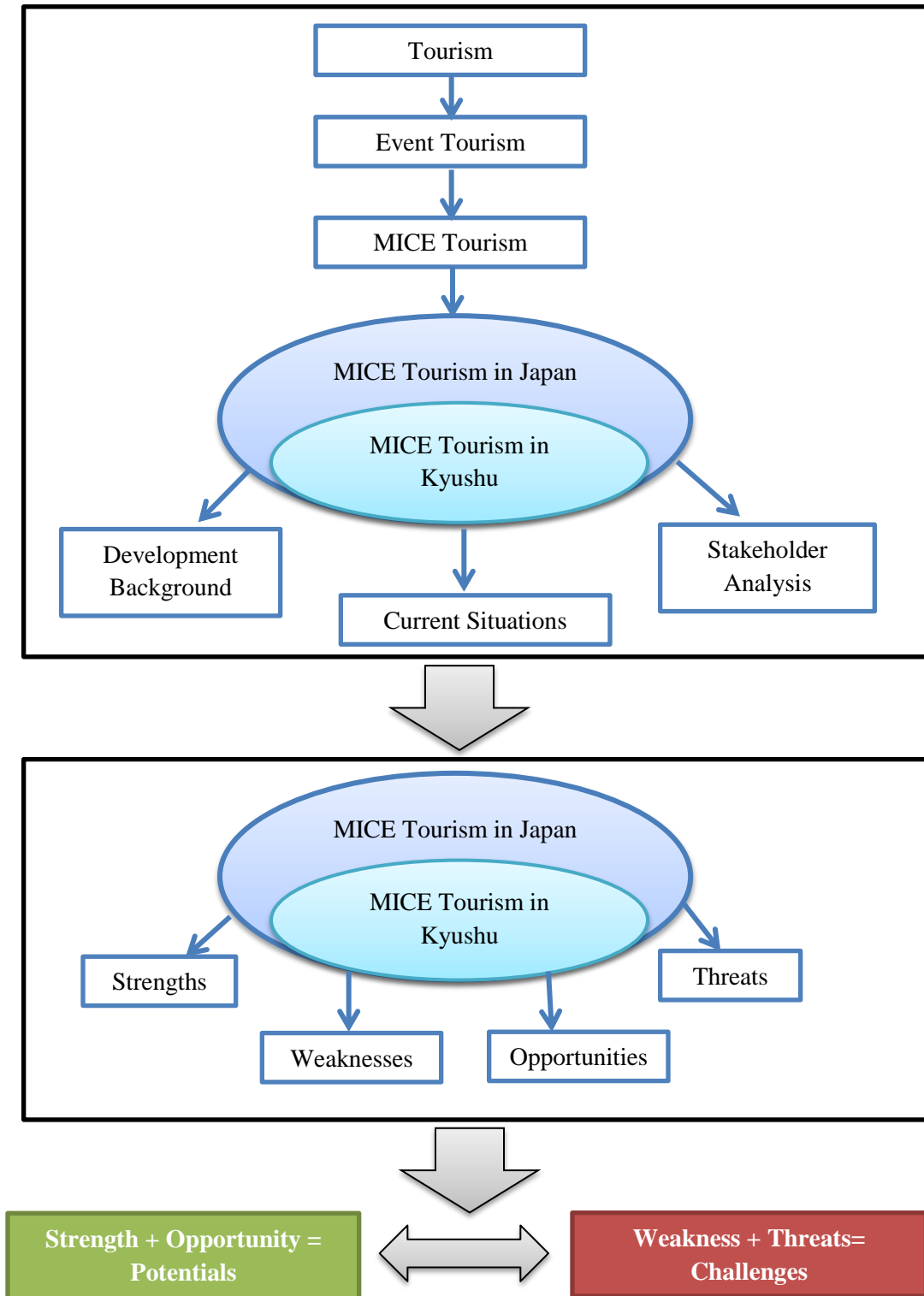
	Organizations	Main roles
Public	(a) Central government, Japan National Tourism Organization (JNTO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Network management among all stakeholders ▪ Gathering the information about international conventions ▪ Providing the information for promotional activities ▪ Practicing the programs for promotional activities
	(b) Local government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Providing the information for promotional activities ▪ Offering the permission of using facilities ▪ Asking for cooperation of local entrepreneurs ▪ Financial support for hosting events
Public and/or Private	(c) Convention Bureau, Tourism Associations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Promotional activities ▪ Publishing documents for promotional activities ▪ Publishing information about local tourism activities ▪ Management of inspectors ▪ Organizing the operation process
	(d) Convention centers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Adjusting the reservation systems ▪ Proposing the cost of using facilities ▪ Management of inspectors
Private	(e) Local economy industry (the Chamber of Commerce & Industry, any other industrial organizations)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Financial support ▪ Development of welcoming business ▪ Producing local souvenir for promotional activities
	(f) PCO (Professional Conference Organizer)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Data collection of international conventions, promotional consulting activities, publishing the promotional documents ▪ Producing promotional booth, operational services
	(g) Hotels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Organizing the reservation system ▪ Adjusting the special cost for conventions ▪ Cooperation in usage of facilities in peak seasons

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework shows the structure and flow of this research. Initially, it starts with brief explanation of tourism, event tourism and MICE tourism in general. Then the research focuses on MICE tourism in Japan in general and it even scopes into three different cities in Kyushu. In order to answer the research questions and identify the research objectives, development background, current situations and stakeholders of MICE tourism in Japan has been discussed by review of various literatures. In addition, some of original data or information is gathered by various research methodologies including data analysis, in-depth interview and observations. Overall, all of gathered data are analyzed by SWOT analysis and through the analysis; potentials and challenges of MICE tourism in Japan and in Kyushu are concluded.

Figure 6: Research framework (Park, 2016)



3.2 Methods of data collection

In this research, qualitative research methods were used which were document analysis, in-depth interview and observation.

Table 6: Methods of data collection

Methods	Contents
1. Document analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reviewing tourism policy papers published by public organizations ▪ Public reports ▪ Meeting reports ▪ Textbooks ▪ Journals ▪ Newspaper articles ▪ Brochures ▪ Any other forms of data received from interviewees
2. In-depth interview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Local government ▪ Convention Bureau ▪ Tourism associations ▪ Convention, Event organizers ▪ Host community entrepreneurs ▪ Tourist information center
3. Observation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Direct and participant observation

For document analysis, reviewing tourism policy papers published by public organizations was the main source of data. In addition to those documents, a lot of public reports, meeting reports, textbooks, journals, newspaper articles, brochures and any other forms of data received from interviewees that are related with research topic were used and some parts were translated by the author if they are necessary. For the method of in-depth interview, the total number of interviewees was 17 people and the length of interviews were around one hour and the contents of interviews were fully recorded from the beginning to the end. Although the structure of 10 questions were sent by email in advance before visiting the interviewees, way of responding and explaining the answers were more natural since it was not just asking and answering back as the order of the questions. As a result, I was able to understand more deeply about the situations since interviewees were more

opened than expected and it allowed discussing and sharing a lot of hidden ideas. The interviewees are only from the public stakeholders since this research is more focusing on the perspective of tourism policy development in each city and how it will be potential for the future. Lastly, for observation methods, both direct and participant observations were used. For direct observation, the author participated several meetings organized by major stakeholders in tourism industry in Japan and was able to understand the current issues of industry by directly observing the meeting. Furthermore, the author has also participated meetings several times as a MICE event organizer in Beppu City and was able to understand the general system of organizing the events in the city and with other cities as well. Therefore, in order to gather the enough amount of data for analysis, each method was equally used throughout the period of gathering data.

Table 7: List of Interviewees

Location	Interviewee Number	Organization	Position
Fukuoka	1	Fukuoka Convention & Visitors Bureau	Executive Director
	2	Fukuoka City Government	Assistant Director
	3	Fukuoka City Government	Employee
	4	Fukuoka Convention Center	Employee
	5	Tourist Information Center	Manager
Kumamoto	1	Kumamoto International Convention and Tourism Bureau	Manager
	2	Kumamoto International Convention and Tourism Bureau	Employee
	3	Kumamoto City Government	Chief
	4	Kumamoto City Government	Employee
Beppu	1	Beppu City Government	Mayor
	2	Beppu City Government	Chief
	3	Beppu City Government	Employee
	4	Oita Prefectural Tourism Association (Tourism Oita)	Director
	5	Oita Prefectural Tourism Association (Tourism Oita)	Chief
	6	Beppu International Convention Center (B-con Plaza)	Employee
	7	Sakura Travel Agency	Director
	8	Beppuwan Royal Hotel	Manager

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

4.1 MICE Tourism in Fukuoka City

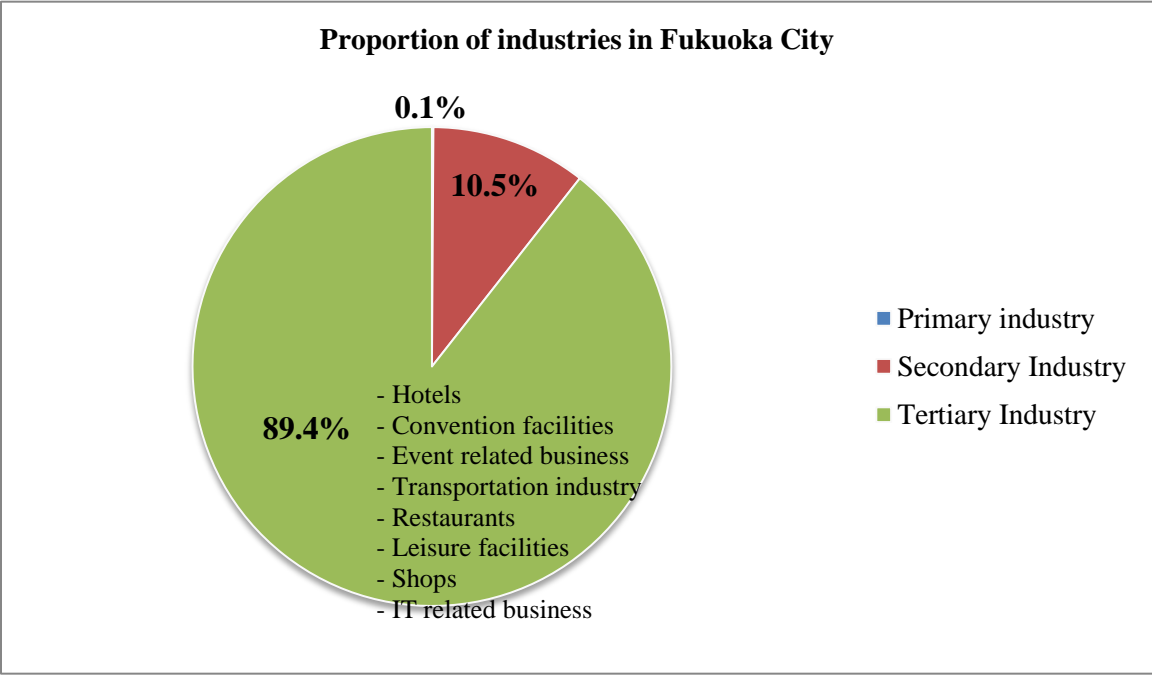
Fukuoka City lies on the northern coast of Kyushu, the southernmost of the four main islands of Japan. The population of the city is approximately 1.4 million people in 2016, making it the 8th largest city in Japan. Being the closest major city in Japan to the Korean Peninsula and China, Fukuoka has from ancient times been a gateway for economic and cultural exchanges with its Asian neighbors. On the basis of these historical and geographical links, the city is working hard on many levels to strengthen its relationships with the rest of Asia, towards the goal of becoming a “focal point for the exchange of Asia” (Fukuoka City Official Website, 2016).

Major cities in East Asia are within 2,000km of Fukuoka and there are many direct flights from overseas to Fukuoka and it is the city in East Asia that can hold international conferences in which foreign attendees can participate in one-day events and return home the same day. Furthermore, Fukuoka is one of the major cities around the world that has the best access from the airport to the city center. It takes only 5 minutes from Fukuoka Airport to JR Hakata Station, the city’s central station, by metro, while it takes 10 minutes from the airport to Tenjin, the center of the city. The airport, conference facilities and the downtown area are all located within a 2.5km radius of each other, while various facilities such as shrines and temples, a seaside resort and the latest shopping facilities are concentrated in the downtown area which means that it is compact city of both Japan’s traditions and innovation (Fukuoka Convention & Visitors Bureau, 2015).

In fact, it is one of the global MICE cities in Japan that was selected by Japan Tourism Agency (JTA) with Tokyo, Yokohama, Kyoto and Kobe. According to the data

from Fukuoka Directive Council (FDC), Fukuoka is mostly depended on tertiary industry which occupies 89.4% of whole industries in the city.

Figure 7: Proportion of industries in Fukuoka City (Fukuoka Directive Council, 2014)



Additionally, the calculation proved that the economic effect from hosting international convention or events is 54,000yen per person while the economic effect of general tourist is 33,000yen per person. Thus, Fukuoka city as depending mostly on tertiary industry, it was obviously tended to focus on MICE tourism for expanding the economic effects to the city. In order to increase the size of MICE tourism market, Fukuoka city has been putting a lot of efforts (Fukuoka City Hall, 2016).

4.1.1 Stakeholder Analysis

In Fukuoka city, there are three major public stakeholders who are mainly involved as the supplier of MICE tourism. They are Fukuoka City MICE administration department, Fukuoka Tourism Convention Bureau and Fukuoka Convention Center.

- Fukuoka City government (MICE administration department)

This department is mainly involved in administrative works which is the bridge with the central government for sharing information and networks with other cities as well. It also deals with policy planning and managing the maintenance plan of facilities. Additionally, it also should plan various kinds of promotional activities for making the symbol or brand image of Fukuoka in general. Currently, the strength of the department is job rotation in every three years. Since the officers are rotated to different places in every three years, they can share more information from other cities and make new connections with other cities or organizations as well. However, it might be the cause of weakness since it is difficult to train to be MICE professionals within three years and once they are adjusted with their positions, they have to rotate the job again. But they have some fixed positions for those who are significantly professional in MICE (Fukuoka Interviewee 2 & 3, 2016).

- Fukuoka Convention and Visitors Bureau

In 1994, the Fukuoka Convention and Visitors Bureau became a public-managed foundation that is merged with Fukuoka Tourism Association established in 1947 and Fukuoka Convention Bureau established in 1987. The main role of the organization is to support every aspect of tourism related activities which include promotional activities,

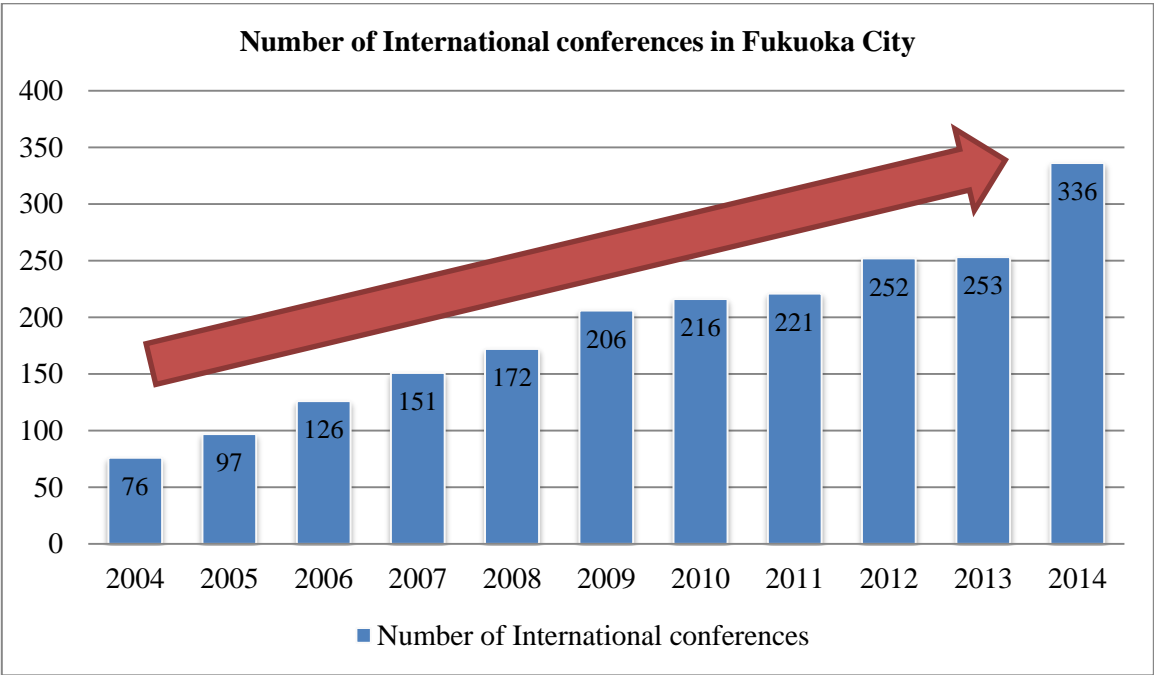
sharing of information and cooperation with tourism entrepreneurs in the city. In order to promote the tourism of Fukuoka City in general and to enhance MICE tourism, there are several divisions in the organization and the specialized department for MICE tourism promotions named Meeting Place Fukuoka (MPF). There are two main departments in Bureau which are general affairs department and Meeting Place Fukuoka (MPF). In total, there are 31 members with 2 boards of directors. In general affairs department, there are divisions of general planning, promotion planning, promotion and marketing and tourism promotion. In Meeting Place Fukuoka (MPF) department, there are three divisions which are marketing, management and manager of Tokyo branch office.

Table 8: Organizational structure of Fukuoka Tourism Convention Bureau

Department	Divisions	Roles
General affairs department	General planning (3 people)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Management of budgets and human resources
	Promotion planning (3 people)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Promotions and information sharing for tourism and conventions
	Promotion and Marketing (4 people)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Support for tourism, event activities ▪ Management of tourism environment ▪ Development of tourism products
	Tourism promotion (3 people)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Tourism promotions including school trips
Meeting Place Fukuoka (MPF) department	Marketing (10 people)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Convention research and promotional activities for domestic and international market ▪ Promotional activities for meetings and incentives both for domestic and international market
	Management (6 people)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Development of products and services ▪ Support for hosting events ▪ Business coordinators
	Manager of Tokyo branch office (1 person)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Information sharing from central government, foreign embassies, and any other related organizations

The organizational structure of the Meeting Place Fukuoka (MPF) was enhanced in order to promote the efforts to host more conferences and events in the city, and the MPF will provide total support, from finding a venue, accepting inspections, to offering information after conventions. They promise organizer satisfaction with their one-stop services provided by a team of professionals on travel, transportation, and planning and management of conventions. As the result of intensive efforts done by Bureau, the graph below shows how the number of international conferences in Fukuoka City has increased from 2004 to 2014. Comparing the numbers in 2004, it has increased by 4.4 times in 2014 (Fukuoka Interviewee 1, 2016).

Figure 8: Growing number of international conferences held in Fukuoka City (Fukuoka City Hall, 2015)



With rapid growth, the number of international conferences held in Fukuoka has been continuously Japan’s second largest for 6 years since 2009.

Table 9: Comparison of International Convention hosting in cities in Japan
(Japan National Tourism Organization, 2014)

Year	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th
2014	Tokyo (543)	Fukuoka (336)	Kyoto (202)	Yokohama (200)	Nagoya (163)
2013	Tokyo (531)	Fukuoka (253)	Yokohama (226)	Kyoto (176)	Osaka (172)
2012	Tokyo (500)	Fukuoka (252)	Kyoto (196)	Yokohama (191)	Osaka (140)
2011	Tokyo (470)	Fukuoka (221)	Yokohama (169)	Kyoto (137)	Nagoya (112)
2010	Tokyo (491)	Fukuoka (216)	Yokohama (174)	Kyoto (155)	Nagoya (122)
2009	Tokyo (497)	Fukuoka (206)	Yokohama (179)	Kyoto (164)	Nagoya (124)

■ Fukuoka Convention Center

Fukuoka Convention Center owns “Fukuoka Kokusai Center” and currently manages “Marinemesse Fukuoka” and “Fukuoka International Congress Center” at the same time. The permanent property is 200 million yen and 175 million yen is supported by Fukuoka City. There are 36 members with 2 boards of directors. The main role is to manage the convention facilities with whole operational management but there are professional staffs in sales department who are actively promoting with target to universities, corporations, and organizations in the city. At the same time, they are also trying to provide the high quality service to visitors in order to increase in number of repeating visitors. According to the Local Government Act (No.244-2), there are assigned managers for public facilities and “Marinemesse Fukuoka” and “Fukuoka International Congress Center” are owned by Fukuoka City but they have been managed by Fukuoka Convention Center since 2006 and will be continued until 2018. However, there are possibilities that these facilities might be managed and operated by other public or private

organizations after 2018 and if it is happened, a lot of issues regarding the management and human resources system will be occurred that might cause negative effects to whole MICE industry including other stakeholders since they are all interrelated. Therefore, in order to keep the authority of the facilities, Fukuoka Convention Center should put more efforts to bring out improved outcomes with building up know-how knowledges in operational management of events held in these facilities (Fukuoka Interviewee 4 & 5, 2016).

4.1.2 Major MICE facilities in Fukuoka City

The major facilities of MICE in Fukuoka City are named Fukuoka International Congress Center, Marinemesse Fukuoka, Fukuoka Kokusai Center, and Fukuoka Sunpalace Hotel & Hall. The area with these four convention facilities is known as the “Convention Zone” and is a top-tier complex convention zone in Japan. The environment and performances are the best in Kyushu making it perfect for any sort of event such as conferences, international meetings, exhibitions, concerts, sports competitions etc. where masses of people can visit. Each facility continues to progress in satisfying users in both service and equipment aspects (Fukuoka Convention & Visitors Bureau, 2015).

■ Fukuoka International Congress Center

Built in 2003, this is the newest facility that is a versatile center with five floors of areas able to accommodate any sort of conventional requirement such as flexible meeting room by altering the sliding walls, an organizer’s office for smooth management, interpretation booths corresponding up to 6 languages, complete video equipment and

others. Furthermore, through the partnership with Marinemesse Fukuoka, the applications of the facilities can be maximized (Fukuoka Convention & Visitors Bureau, 2015).

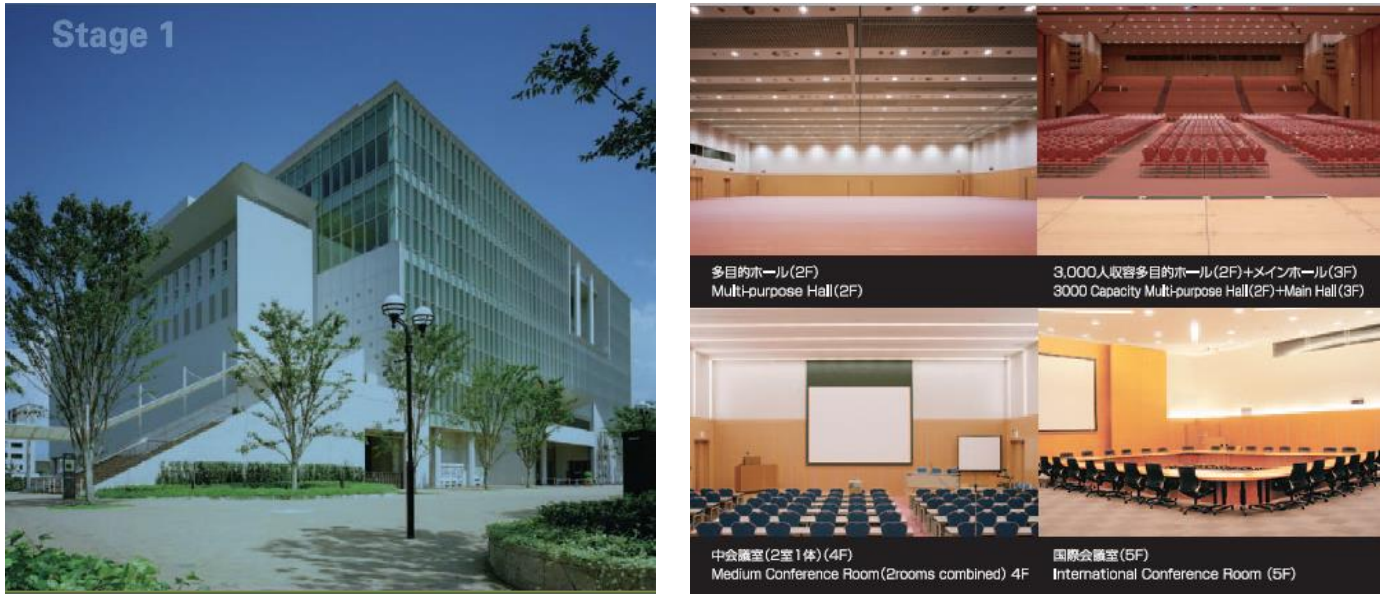


Image 4: Fukuoka International Congress Center (Fukuoka Convention & Visitors Bureau, 2016)

■ Marinemesse Fukuoka

The building is designed with the image of seagulls flying from Hakata Bay to the world. It is the most unique design in the convention zone. The multi-purpose exhibition room with a colonnade lobby has a capacity of 15,000 people. This multi-purpose facility's various exhibition, arena, hall, and convention functions are the attractiveness of the venue. There are also four large and small meeting rooms, a glass walled resting area named "Ocean Mall" and an outside exhibition space called "Exhibition Park" (Fukuoka Convention & Visitors Bureau, 2015).



Image 5: Marinemesse Fukuoka (Fukuoka Convention & Visitors Bureau, 2016)

■ Fukuoka Kokusai Center

The facility has supported Fukuoka’s convention scene for over 30 years since its establishment in 1981. Renovated in 2004, it has been further improved in its ability to accommodate various convention needs. With sustainability improved comfortability, the facility can accommodate large scale exhibitions, conventions, sporting events and concerts. The high potential is proven by its previous achievements.



Image 6: Fukuoka Kokusai Center (Fukuoka Convention & Visitors Bureau, 2016)

■ Fukuoka Sunpalace Hotel & Hall

A landmark in the Hakata Bay Area, the dignified white structure stands by the shining sea and starry night. The large hall with 2,316 seats is recognized as being one of the best facilities in Japan due to its size and excellent, available equipment. With a hotel, large and small banquet halls, meeting rooms, and restaurants this facility can accommodate any sort of gathering and meetings (Fukuoka Convention & Visitors Bureau, 2015).



Image 7: Fukuoka Sunpalace Hotel & Hall
(Fukuoka Convention & Visitors Bureau, 2016)



4.1.3 Summary of interviews in Fukuoka City

Overall the interviews from Fukuoka City are summarized into the table as shown below. The sources of data are originally from the in-depth interview with 1 Executive Director from Fukuoka Convention & Visitors Bureau, 2 employees from Fukuoka City Government MICE department, 1 employee at Fukuoka Convention center and public documents provided by interviewees and various informal interviews with tourism industry

employees, entrepreneurs and the observation results by attending the annual meeting of Kyushu Economy Association about MICE industry in Fukuoka City.

Table 10: Summary of interviews in Fukuoka City

	Fukuoka City
Reasons of emphasizing MICE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Support from the Government ▪ Economic impacts ▪ Creation of business network and cultural exchange (globalization)
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hosting more than 50 international conventions, 75 domestic conventions every year with more than 1,000 participants by 2020 ▪ Becoming Top 50 MICE city by 2020 (currently at ICCA world ranking of 164th) ▪ Be able to offer the high quality of service with global standard
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Has already achieved to be the leading position ▪ Accessibility from other Asian Countries ▪ Accessibility within the city (it is compact city) ▪ Unique venue, festivals ▪ Collaboration among various stakeholders such as City government, Fukuoka Convention & Visitors Bureau, Fukuoka Convention Center, Fukuoka Directive Council, MICE Ambassadors
Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lack of facilities ▪ Lack of professional human resources ▪ Still having low reputation worldwide ▪ Cooperation with other areas in Kyushu

According to the respondents from the interviews and public documents, there are clear reasons why Fukuoka is emphasizing MICE tourism. Basically, since it has been selected one of “Global MICE Cities” in Japan from the central government and it is the only city from Kyushu Island, the city believes that development of MICE in Fukuoka can also be connected to the improvement of economy in Kyushu. Additionally, it is explained earlier, the main source of economic effects in Fukuoka city is depended on tertiary industry that is mostly based on tourism-related industries. Thus, the city is putting more efforts to increase the market size with more active promotional activities. As the increase in number of visitors especially through MICE tourism, it can expect not only economic

impacts in short-term but also in terms of expanding the networks with more number of other regions and countries in long-term aspect. Once the events held in the city, there are various participants and related visitors are gathered at one place and they create and share information and networks which is also connected to the globalization of the city. Therefore, to become more developed city of MICE tourism, Fukuoka City has clear objectives which are; aiming to host more than 50 international conventions and 75 domestic conventions every year with more than 1,000 participants by 2020, to become Top 50 MICE city by 2020 (currently at ICCA world ranking of 164th), and to be able to offer the higher quality of service with global standards. The global standards generally refer to the improvement in language barriers, communication environment such as Wi-Fi services and information sharing system. Since Fukuoka city has been achieved to be leading position of MICE tourism in Japan and in Kyushu, it has various potentials from now on. Basically it is advantageous in terms of geographical location as it is close to other Asia countries.

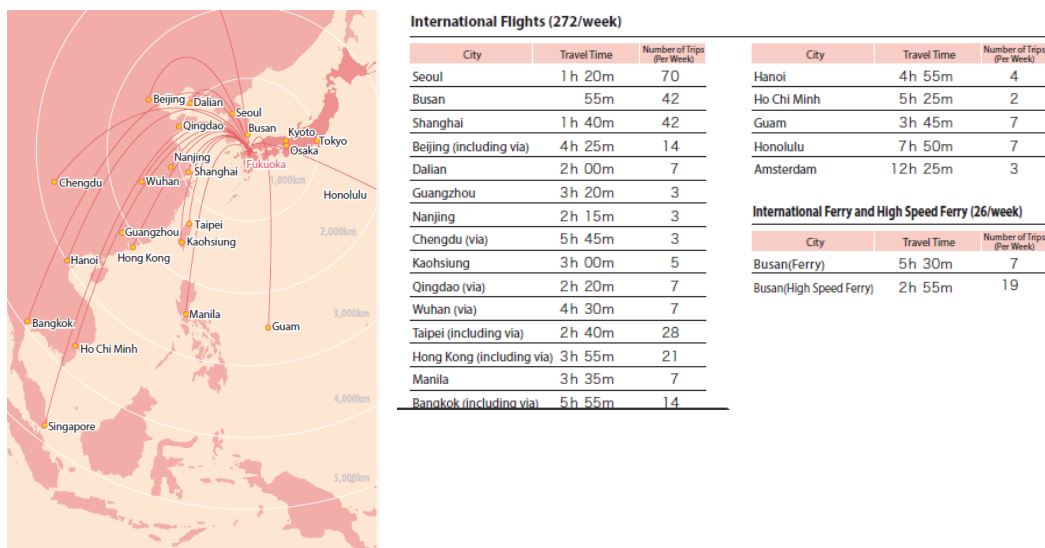


Image 8: The accessibility to Fukuoka City (Fukuoka Convention & Visitors Bureau, 2016)

Additionally, the accessibility within the city is also convenient since it is the compact city as shown below. With easy accessibility within the city, the visitors can easily enjoy various activities in one compact area which is not often provided by other cities.

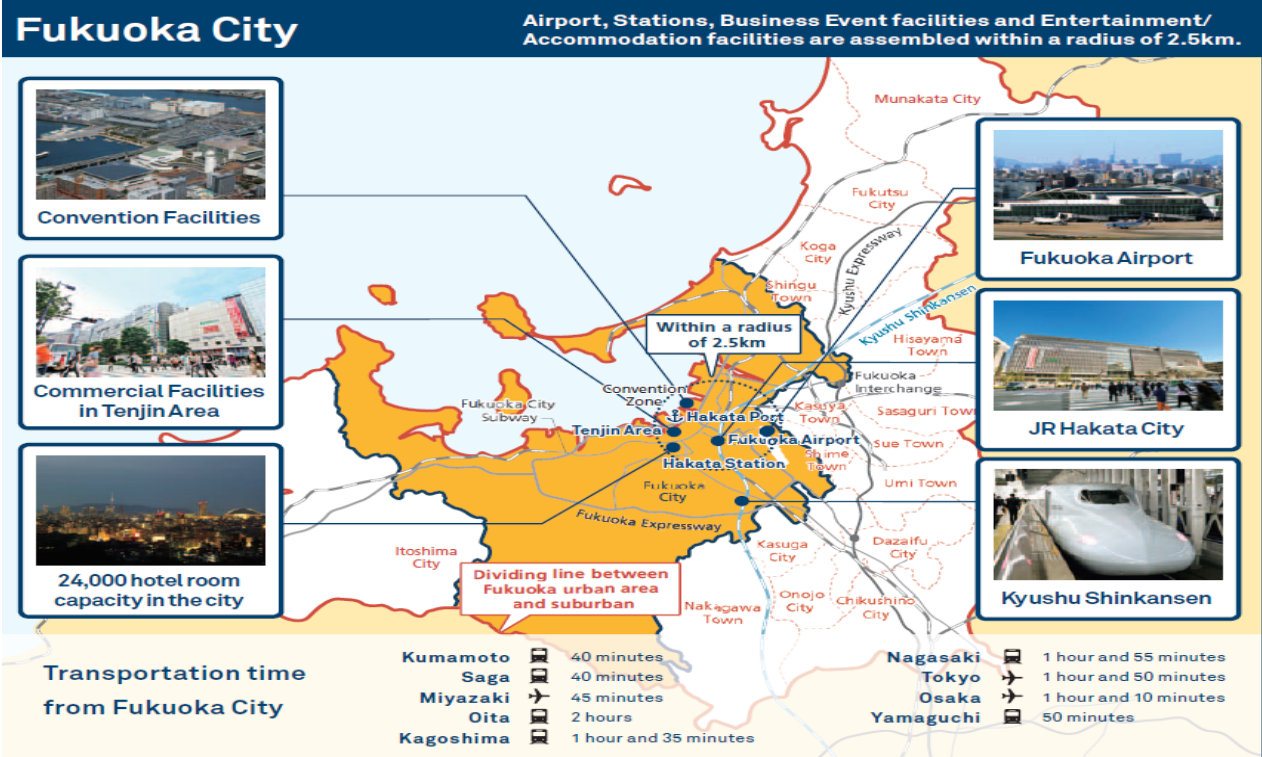


Image 9: Transportation system within Fukuoka City (Fukuoka Convention & Visitors Bureau, 2016)

Moreover, in order to attract more attention from visitors, Fukuoka city is also developing the system of organizing unique venues such as parties at shopping arcades, on the streets, bayside at port areas, at the cruise, at fishing restaurant, at sake brewery, at Noh theater, at museums, and so on.



Image 10: Examples of street festivals in Fukuoka City (Fukuoka Convention & Visitors Bureau, 2016)

Most importantly, Fukuoka City has strong connections among main stakeholders who are the suppliers of MICE tourism in the city. The key players are City government, Tourism Convention Bureau, Fukuoka Convention Center, Fukuoka Directive Council, and 10 of MICE Ambassadors assigned by the city as well. According to the interviews from all of them, they all mentioned that they have strong connections and try to update the information as soon as possible whenever they have some issues to discuss and share.

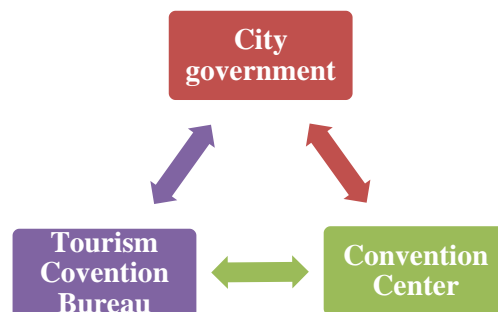


Figure 9: Public stakeholder relationship in MICE industry in Fukuoka City (Park, 2016)

Although each organization has their own roles, they try to cooperate as much as possible and even rotating the staffs whenever they need to exchange for some specific time or occasions. Since Fukuoka has realized its responsibility for Kyushu in general, they also try to collaborate with other destinations in Kyushu as well. Whenever it publishes brochures or pamphlets, it always includes general promotion of the whole Kyushu area and encourages visits to other places in Kyushu through Fukuoka since it believes that they are the “gate” of Kyushu. However, one of the city government officers mentioned that some of other cities are not really cooperative but they are more competitive, thus, it is actually more difficult to cooperate domestically rather than internationally.

Though Fukuoka has been successful so far, it still has challenges and more factors to be improved on. Since the demand in MICE tourism in Fukuoka is increasing, they have started to realize the lack of MICE venues and accommodation facilities. The general director of Fukuoka Tourism Convention Bureau commented that they sometimes need to refuse the requests since all of venues are already full of reservation or the requests do not meet the needs of their current situations. Usually the requests are monopolized for the venues of major MICE facilities in port area but the venues are mostly full of reservation for mega events. As a result, they try to introduce other facilities in universities and hotels in the city but the requests are usually rejected since the quality of the service and convenience is different between those MICE venues and ordinary universities or hotels. Thus, in order to respond to the market demand, Fukuoka City is considering to construct new facilities as MICE venues. Adds to the lack of facilities, Fukuoka is also facing the lack of human resources especially in those who are professional in MICE field. Even though the market size is increasing rapidly, there are still only few number of people who

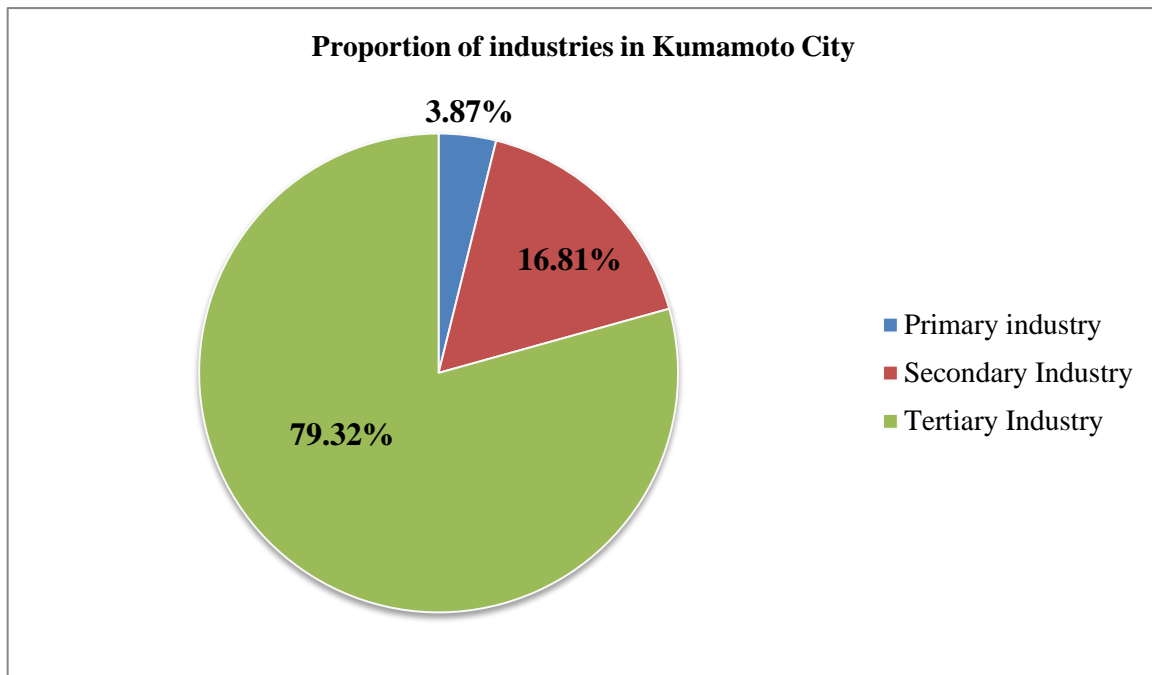
have professional knowledge and experience for MICE industry which makes them to take more time to educate the human resources. It also refers that the reputation of MICE market is still low in general while only few professionals in tourism industry are aware of it. Hence, the lack of human resources results out lower quality of service or less global standard service comparing other competitor cities in Singapore or Seoul.

4.2 MICE tourism in Kumamoto City

Kumamoto City is located in the center of Kyushu where is well-known as the city with beautiful, clean water and is adjacent to the Mount Aso. It has population of 740,139 people based on data in 2014 and the city has become an important branch point of Kyushu tourism, with access beginning from the sky at the airport, being at center of the Shinkansen (bullet train) route between Fukuoka and Kagoshima, taking the car or bus to Aso and Takamori, there is also the ferry to the Nagasaki and Shimabara district, and a cross-express to Oita as well (Kumamoto City Government Official Website, 2016).

As shown in the graph below, the main industry in Kumamoto city is based on tertiary industry as like Fukuoka City but it has more proportions in primary and secondary industries as well.

Figure 10: Proportion of industries in Kumamoto City (Kumamoto City, 2014)



In case of Kumamoto City, the emphasis on the development of MICE tourism has begun since 2009 when Kumamoto City 6th edition of general plan for tourism city making was published. It was basically influenced by the rapid growth of tourism industries in Kyushu with Asian regions and Kumamoto city also decided to actively promote for hosting conventions. In order to have organized infrastructures, the city declared the “Kumamoto City Convention City Basic Plan” in 2012 and “Kumamoto City MICE facilities maintenance Basic Plan” in 2014.

Considering the ranking in holding the international conventions per city in Japan, Kumamoto City was ranked 15th in 2007, 18th in 2008, 23rd in 2009, 57th in 2010, and 21st in 2011. (Japan National Tourism Organization, 2012) Compared to Fukuoka City, it is still behind the rankings and it is even decreasing in number of events and participants.

Table 11: Number of events and participants of MICE tourism in Kyushu areas
(Kumamoto City Hall, 2014)

	2009		2010		2011	
	No. of events	No. of participants	No. of events	No. of participants	No. of events	No. of participants
Kitakyushu	192	117,450	199	130,779	166	143,727
Fukuoka	1,742	3,835,822	1,824	3,977,000	1,885	4,001,076
Nagasaki	1,034	369,368	1,047	362,067	1,022	336,968
Miyazaki	187	187,581	166	292,164	181	218,116
Kagoshima	145	55,601	149	56,320	209	84,418
Kumamoto	308	140,839	270	101,934	300	124,459

4.2.1 Stakeholder Analysis

In Kumamoto City, there are two main public stakeholders in MICE industry who are City government and Kumamoto International Convention and Tourism Bureau.

■ Kumamoto City government

In city government, there are various divisions that are in charge of MICE related works and there are separate divisions for MICE promotion, Tourism promotion and Sports promotion. Comparing the size of the city with Fukuoka, Kumamoto City has more specialized functions in each division which shows the effort of city government to enhance MICE tourism for the city. The main roles of MICE promotion division are to manage and operate the whole processes involved in all kinds of MICE with Convention Bureau while Tourism promotion division is mostly focused on general tourism activities and creating and branding the city image in general. As shown in the table below, Kumamoto has been attracted as sports tourism destinations thus, the city has assigned the special division only for sports tourism promotions (Kumamoto Interviewee 3 & 4, 2016).

Table 12: Number of events and participants of MICE tourism in Kumamoto City (Kumamoto City Government, 2014)

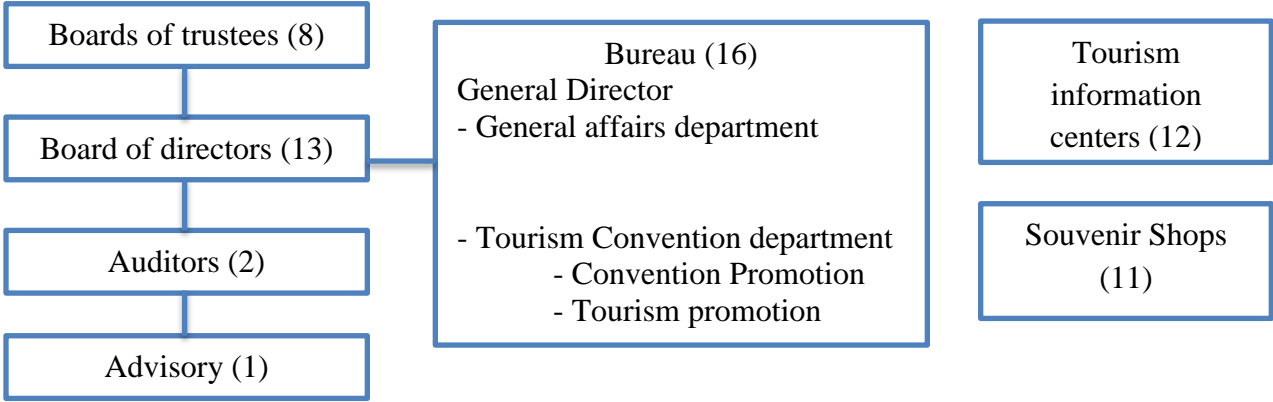
	2008		2009		2010		2011		2012	
	No. of events	%	No. of events	%	No. of events	%	No. of events	%	No. of events	%
Academia	79	21.6	64	20.8	61	22.6	71	23.7	76	27.7
Organizations	149	40.7	120	39.0	84	31.1	103	34.3	68	24.8
Sports	138	37.7	124	40.2	122	45.2	126	42.0	130	47.5
Others	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	1.1	0	0.0	0	0.0
Total	366	100	308	100	270	100	300	100	274	100
No. of participants	152,671		140,839		101,934		124,459		134,485	
	-		+ 11,832		+ 38,905		- 22,525		- 10,026	

■ Kumamoto International Convention and Tourism Bureau

Historically, Kumamoto City Tourism Association was established in 1965 but it was substituted by Kumamoto International Convention Association in 1991 and finally

became Kumamoto International Convention and Tourism Bureau in 2005. The main purpose of organization is to improve the tourism industry using the existing resources of the city and to revitalize the city economy through tourism especially in MICE tourism. Additionally, it is also expected to make the city to be the place for cultural exchanges and mutual understanding in globalized society (Kumamoto Interviewee 1 & 2, 2016).

Figure 11: The organizational structure of Kumamoto International Convention and Tourism Bureau
(Kumamoto International Convention and Tourism Bureau, 2016)



4.2.2 Summary of interviews in Kumamoto City

Overall the finding from Kumamoto City is summarized into the table as shown below. The sources of data are originally from the in-depth interview with 2 employees from Kumamoto International Convention and Tourism Bureau, 2 employees from Kumamoto City Government MICE department, and public documents provided by interviewees and various informal interviews with tourism industry employees, and entrepreneurs.

Table 13: Summary of interviews in Kumamoto City

	Kumamoto City
Reasons of emphasizing MICE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Has been active in promoting sports related MICE events ▪ Economic impacts ▪ Increasing tourists from overseas ▪ Globalization of the city
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Economic growth ▪ Increase the number of visitors ▪ Energize the city atmosphere ▪ City branding (aiming to be selected as Global MICE city)
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cooperation among main stakeholders such as city government, Kumamoto International Convention and Tourism Bureau, MICE Ambassadors ▪ Existing facilities (34 convention facilities, 7 sports event facilities) ▪ Completion of Kumamoto Castle Hall by 2018 ▪ Tourist attractions in historical places ▪ Located in the center of Kyushu
Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No clear statistical objectives yet ▪ Lack of professional human resources ▪ Weak awareness of MICE ▪ Still having low reputation domestically and internationally ▪ Damage in destination image by the recent great earthquake

According to the respondents from interviews, there are several reasons why Kumamoto is emphasizing the importance of MICE tourism for the city. In fact, Kumamoto has been one of the most well-known destinations domestically for hosting sport events and it has been encouraging the city to be more promoted for targeting international markets as well. Similar to Fukuoka City, it also expects the positive economic outcomes through MICE industry and increasing the number of international tourists at the same time. As the interchange population increases through MICE industry, it will also lead to the globalization and activation of the city atmosphere. As other local cities in Japan have been facing the issues of young population decline, Kumamoto is also experiencing the same issue which makes them to rely on tourism industries to increase the number of interchange

population in the city. Although Kumamoto is currently at a lower rank as a MICE destination, they are improving in terms of organizing infrastructures and aiming to be selected as a Global MICE city like Fukuoka. For the strengths of Kumamoto City, it has the cooperative relationship among major public stakeholders consist of City government, Kumamoto International Convention and Tourism Bureau and MICE ambassadors appointed by the city. Similar to Fukuoka, Kumamoto is also trying to share the information among stakeholders as much as possible and aiming the same objectives with active promotional activities. Although the city does not have mega-size of MICE facilities yet, there are a lot of existing facilities including 34 conventions venues and 7 sport events venues. Additionally, the new facility named “Kumamoto Castle Hall” will be completed by 2018 where will have event and exhibition halls, multipurpose halls, meetings rooms and main halls. Additionally, the hotel and resident areas, shops and restaurants will also be available and located next to the event building (Kumamoto City Hall Official Website, 2016).



Image 11: Imaginary overview of Kumamoto Castle Hall
(Kumamoto City Hall Official Website, 2016)

Furthermore, Kumamoto is already one of the popular cities in Japan by the presence of Kumamoto Castle which is located in the center of the city that was built 400 years ago,

one of three of Japan's lords castles. Thus, the downtown areas in the city are structured around surrounding areas of the castle.



Image 12: Kumamoto Castle (Kumamoto City Hall Official Website, 2016)

Lastly, considering the geographical location of Kumamoto city, it is located at the center of Kyushu which is only 30 minutes away from Fukuoka city by Kyushu Shinkansen (bullet-train). It also has convenient accessibility to other cities in Kyushu by train or buses.

On the other hand, there are still a lot of challenges to overcome to be a global MICE destination. Unlike Fukuoka, Kumamoto does not have any clear statistical objectives yet and strategies for them as well. In fact, the reason why it is difficult to establish specific objectives is that the reputation and knowledge about MICE is still low and the lack of human resources. Although the city emphasizes the necessity of MICE, it takes time for establishing certain infrastructures to provide high quality of service. Most importantly, as the effect of a great earthquake recently happened in Kumamoto, the image of destination got damaged severely. Thus, the recovery of the city should be prioritized for this moment.

4.3 Potentials of MICE Tourism in Beppu City

Beppu is located in the central part of Oita Prefecture with the population of around 120,000 people. It is the second largest city in the prefecture and well-known for Onsen (hot springs) and natural environment surrounded by Mt.Tsurumi and the rest of Tsurumi volcanoes. Beppu is ranked as the first in gush volume in Japan and is also in a high rank in the world in the number of sources and the variety of chemical properties. In fact, the city was selected as “International Tourism Hot Spring Cultural City.” Beppu Onsen consists of eight hot spring areas including Beppu Onsen, Kankaiji, Kamegawa, Shibaseki, Kannawa, Myoban, Horita and Hamawaki, which are collectively called “Beppu Hatto”. In addition, there are many other modern spa resorts also supplied from the rich sources in those areas (Japan National Tourism Organization, 2016).

According to the interview with Beppu City Mayor, and employees in the tourism department of City Government, it was able to figure out that Beppu City tries to diversify its tourism industry and increase more number of tourists. Since Beppu has already known as one of the popular Onsen destinations in Japan, the numbers of domestic and international tourists are keeping stable but the city starts to put more efforts in other types of tourism besides Onsen tourism. Thus, although there are many improvements should be made from now on, the city considers MICE tourism as one of their potentials.

Table 14: The number of International Conventions in Beppu City and Oita City
(Japan National Tourism Organization, 2013)

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Beppu City	3	1	0	5	2	1	5	3	4	2
Oita City	1	0	0	0	2	0	1	1	1	0

In Beppu City, there are three major stakeholders who are actively promoting MICE tourism and they are Prefectural and City Government, Beppu International Convention Center (B-Con Plaza) and Oita Prefectural Tourism Association (Tourism Oita).

■ Oita Prefectural Government and Beppu City Government

In order to promote MICE tourism in Beppu City, both Oita Prefectural Government and Beppu City Government are involved. Since Beppu is the second largest city in Oita Prefecture and is the source of attracting large number of tourists, both governments are trying to develop and improve the infrastructure systems. In the Oita Prefectural Office, there is Department of Tourism Promotion and division of MICE Promotion as well. Since it is the part of prefectural office, they manage the general frameworks of MICE Tourism in Oita Prefecture and try to promote all of the areas equally. In Beppu City Hall, there is Department of Onsen Tourism and there are various divisions under the Department such as the Division of Tourism and Culture Promotion and MICE Promotion. Comparing to Fukuoka and Kumamoto, it is not yet organized infrastructure and less active in promotional activities but it still considers MICE tourism as one of the potentials using the resources from Onsen as well (Beppu Interviewee 1 & 2 & 3, 2016).

■ Beppu International Convention Center (B-Con Plaza)

Beppu International Convention Center also known as B-Con Plaza is one of the largest in western Japan with a convention hall that can accommodate up to 8,000 people. The quality of facilities can cover both for domestic and international events including various kinds of meetings, conferences, conventions, and concerts. Regarding the provider of service, there is professional convention organizer located in B-Con Plaza who mainly

organize and operate most of events held in B-Con Plaza and Beppu Arena. (B-Con Plaza Official Website, 2016)

■ Oita Prefectural Tourism Association (Tourism Oita)

Tourism Oita is organization that has the role of managing the tourism promotional activities for all cities in Oita Prefecture. The organization mainly aims to increase the number of tourists to Oita Prefecture by providing various tourist attractions both for domestic and international visitors. As increasing the number of tourists, it is expected to be vitalized or energized the atmosphere of whole prefecture. Thus, Tourism Oita works with each city government while sharing the information as much as possible (Tourism Oita, 2016).

4.3.1 Summary of interviews in Beppu City

Based on the interviews with Beppu City Mayor, City Hall officers, Officers in B-Con Plaza, Tourism Oita Officers and direct observations from working in MICE events in Beppu, it was able to summarize the findings as shown below.

Table 15: Summary of interviews in Beppu city

	Beppu City
Reasons of emphasizing MICE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Economic impacts ▪ Community development ▪ Increasing the number of tourists
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Change in destination image ▪ Economic growth ▪ Energize the city atmosphere
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ High reputation as tourist destination ▪ Presence of existing potentials
Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Weak awareness of MICE ▪ Lack of professional human resources ▪ Lack of promotion strategies, clear objectives ▪ Quality of services ▪ Cooperation among stakeholders

Generally, all of the interviewees have commented common reasons of emphasizing MICE tourism in Beppu City. As the central government of Japan emphasizes the importance and benefits of MICE tourism, the city government also started to realize its benefits and tried to promote the city with using the existing resources. Similar with Fukuoka and Kumamoto, it also aims to bring out positive economic impacts which can relate to community development as well. Additionally, since MICE tourism is another type of tourism from Onsen tourism, the city aims to diversify its tourism attractions rather than only focusing on Onsen tourism which has already reached to the mature stage. As other local cities in Japan have been experiencing, the young population is decreasing in Beppu as well. Thus, MICE tourism can also help the city to invite more human resources by hosting the events. Currently, there are some strengths of Beppu City as a MICE destination since it already has a high reputation as a tourist destination in general. Although the size of the city is much smaller than Fukuoka and Kumamoto, the reputation or image of the city has been already established since long time ago from the existing resources of Onsen spots. Also, there are existing facilities including the network with the international university located in the city as well.

However, there are more challenges for Beppu city to bring out better outcomes. Firstly, although the city government and stakeholders in tourism industry are trying to promote MICE tourism for the city, the awareness towards MICE tourism is still low and it lacks of human resources who have knowledge or experience in MICE related works. Therefore, it is still difficult to set up the clear objectives and promotional strategies. According to the interviewee from Tourism Oita, he mentioned that they don't know what they should do and how to start for developing MICE tourism. Certainly, all of them know

the importance and benefits of MICE tourism for the city and prefecture but the infrastructure is not yet settled and they want professionals to train them and start the projects with them. Although there is a professional convention organizer in B-Con Plaza, the quality of the service is still behind the global standard especially in terms of language issues. In fact, the presence of an international university in Beppu city named Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University is the major source of foreign human resources. By having networks with the professors and officers from the university, it can be more active in promotional activities and it can also improve the service quality. Moreover, Beppu city still has a lack of cooperation among supplier-side stakeholders in terms of communication flow and division of work. Although they share the information through regular meetings, the roles of each stakeholder is not clearly divided and they still need to establish a separate head management system that can control and manage the whole MICE industry of the city if they want to specialize MICE tourism.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

5.1 SWOT Analysis

Based on the findings from document analysis, in-depth interviews and observations, the collected information was analyzed through SWOT (Strength, Weakness, Opportunity, Threat) analysis since it is the most common tool of analyzing the internal and external environments. Many consider SWOT analysis to be one of the most effective tools in the analysis of marketing data and information. Also, it is a simple, straightforward framework that provides direction and serves as a catalyst for the development of valuable marketing plans. Internally, the framework addresses strengths and weaknesses while external factors assess the opportunities and threats (Ferrell & Hartline, 2013). Through using SWOT analysis for findings in this research, it was able to understand more deeply about the internal and external environments of MICE tourism in Japan and to find common characteristics of MICE tourism in Japan in general and in Kyushu in particular. Thus, the Figure has been originally developed by the author that shows SWOT analysis of MICE tourism in Japan in general and some particular features only found in Kyushu.

Strengths		Weaknesses	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Development of various industries, research fields ▪ Security, high service quality ▪ Attractiveness in culture and tourism activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Geographical location (closer to other Asian countries) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Marketing and Promotion activities ▪ Language barriers ▪ WiFi services ▪ Image of being expensive for living costs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Low reputation ▪ Lack of cooperation ▪ Accessibility ▪ No clear objectives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Development of Asian MICE industries ▪ Attentions on Japanese culture, technologies ▪ Increasing the reputation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reputation of Fukuoka City ▪ High interests in MICE from various cities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Destination image ▪ Increase in number of competitors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ High competitiveness in Asia Pacific market ▪ Natural disaster
Opportunities		Threats	

Figure 12: SWOT Analysis of MICE tourism in Kyushu and in Japan in general (Park, 2016)

5.2 SWOT Analysis of Japan in general as a MICE destination

5.2.1 Strengths

According to the data from Japan Tourism Agency (2014) and responds from the interviewees, there were several common strengths of Japan as a MICE destination. Firstly, Japan has developed various industries and already achieved in fundamental systems of academic fields in terms of number of professionals, research centers and any other research facilities. There also various different kinds of leading Japanese companies worldwide that already have high brand loyalty and positive reputation from customers. As a result, Japan can host various kinds of different MICE events with the cooperation from those corporations and institutions. Additionally, Japan has high standard regarding the issue of security and service quality. The public security is especially safe in Japan which

was proved by Global peace index. Japan has been the safest countries in Asia according to the data and it has ranked top 10 safest countries in the world. (Institute for Economics and Peace, 2014) Considering service quality, Japan is popular for providing the high quality of hospitality services, materials and foods. The term “Omotenashi” refers to the art of selfless hospitality that is a cornerstone of Japanese culture. To welcome someone into your home or establishment and be able to anticipate their every need is seen as a privilege for the host, and working in a service industry is regarded with the utmost seriousness and respect. There are no menial tasks if the result ensures a great experience for a guest (Spivock, 2015). Moreover, Japan has high level educational systems which mean that they have more highly educated human resources who can work in MICE industry and more desired workforces in the future as well. Also, the time management in Japan is very strict and well-organized thus, it can be definitely beneficial when organizing events and managing the meetings with guests. Lastly, the transportation system in Japan is highly developed and easily accessible to any places within Japan with high quality of different transportation services including the airplanes, trains, buses and cars. Moreover, Japan is authentic, attractive and unique in terms of culture and tourism activities. Although the country is one of the developed nations, the balance between of preservation and development were kept well and especially the natural environment has been preserved well. Also anywhere in Japan, the traditional culture or custom has been preserved well such as its shrines, temples, food cultures, and Onsen (hot springs). On the other side, the culture of animation and fashion has also been developed and a lot of tourists enjoy using the products of Japanese brands.

5.2.2 Weaknesses

Firstly, the weakness of Japan as a MICE destination is the issue of marketing and promotions activities. According to the responses from interviewees, they commonly mentioned that they are less active in promotional activities compared to other competitors such as Singapore, South Korea and China. One of the reasons why they are less active is due to language barriers. Still a lot of promotional websites and information contain less amount of information in English and other languages. For instance, in official websites, brochures, and pamphlets, they have very helpful information written in Japanese but much less in English or even not at all sometimes. Also, even people who are working in MICE industry lack fluency in foreign languages compared to other Asia Pacific countries that frequently use English as their first and second language. In addition, although Japan has a highly developed in IT industry, it still has low quality WiFi service which has become one of the necessary factors when hosting MICE events. Although it is creating and increasingly spreading out WiFi spots, there should be more systematically improved and the process of accessing to WiFi network should be simpler than current methods. For example, when trying to use smartphones, instead of simply accessing to free WiFi networks, most current systems require downloading applications first. Also the process of downloading those applications is complicated and confusing especially for foreign visitors. Therefore, it should enlarge the free WiFi spots where tourists can easily access from their smartphones and laptops. Moreover, Japan has also its reputation of being expensive and having high living costs. As a result, it might influence the consumption patterns of visitors. For instance, when organizing MICE events, since it might have higher cost than other

countries, it can be lack of comparative advantage considering the cost of organizing the events.

5.2.3 Opportunities

Besides the strengths, there are also some external opportunities for Japan as a MICE destination. Generally development of MICE tourism in Asian markets is increasing and enlarging thus, a lot of event organizers and participants have started to put more attentions in Asian markets. Since Japan is one of economically leading countries in Asia, it can promote its potentials as a MICE destination with its existing strengths. Most importantly, as mentioned in strengths of Japan, it has high attentions in cultures and technologies from various countries. The brand loyalty of “Made in Japan” can provide a more reliable image for visitors. It can also refer that Japan has high potential of hosting MICE events that are related with technologies so that it can spread out the networks more widely than now. Lastly, since Japan is hosting Olympic Games in 2020, it is getting more attention from all over the world. In fact, the target number of inbound tourists was 20 million by 2020 but it was almost achieved by 2015 and the government has set the new goal to attract 40 million by 2020. This data can be the evidence as proving the successful outcomes so far and more potentials for the future. Even after hosting Olympic Games, Japan is expecting more of new visitors to come and increasing the number of repeating visitors as well through MICE tourism.

5.2.4 Threats

On the other hand, as MICE market in Asia Pacific region is getting more competitive, it is fact that the market share of Japan is decreasing and examples of major competitors are Singapore, South Korea, China and Australia.

■ Singapore

In the case of Singapore, it was able to be the leading MICE destination among Asia Pacific countries since the central government has planned the goal of being MICE destination to invite the private investment from overseas. The promotion activities are active especially in the field of finance, biomedical and healthcare, environment and energy industries as the government has the strategical idea which expect to have industrial development in those fields through hosting MICE. The Ministry of Trade and Industry of Singapore and Singapore Tourism Board have the strong connections to work for MICE industry which also leads to enough financial support for it. Moreover, Singapore has high functional facilities for MICE such as Suntec Singapore and Marina Bay Sands which also have easy accessibility from the airport. Considering both soft and hard ware sides, Singapore has high competitiveness to be MICE destination.

■ South Korea

South Korea has the purpose in the strategical growth of the convention field and under the national policy, “International Congress Industry Development Basic Plan” was declared in 2006. In addition, “Exhibition Industry Development Law” was declared in 2008 which proved the fact that government is strategically emphasizing the importance of MICE. As a result, MICE has been used as the tool for the economic development plan

especially in Seoul City and it focuses more on MICE in renewable energy and natural resources fields. In terms of facilities, KINTEX (Korea International Exhibition Center) and COEX (Convention & Exhibition) are the widely known places that can handle large sized events. In terms of managing human resources in MICE industry, Convention Bureau consists of various departments in charge of different kinds of MICE fields and trying to be more professional when organizing the events.

■ China

In China, the development of MICE industry has been increased rapidly especially in Shanghai, Beijing, and Guangzhou and exhibition business is mainly held among other MICE industries. The main purpose of holding exhibition is to expand the business chances throughout China and to invite more people from overseas. Since China is advantageous in terms of enlarging the size of the event, Shanghai Motor Show was able to become one of the largest automobile exhibitions in the world. In order to satisfy the needs of the exhibition market, China is responding quickly and many other new exhibition centers were built up. Shanghai New International Expo Center (SNIEC) is one of the most well-known examples which has become the No.1 in the world in 2014 with an over 70 percent occupancy rate. SNIEC was built with the cooperation with three German Exhibition operating firms who are Deutsche Messe, Messe Duesseldorf, and Messe Munchen and governmental firm in Shanghai City (Shanghai New International Expo Center Official Website, 2016).

■ Australia

In 1995, “A National Strategy for the Meetings, Incentives, Conventions and Exhibitions Industry” was arranged and “National Business Events Strategy for Australia 2020” was set in 2008. Australian government has been focusing on MICE industry from early stage and as a result, Sydney and Melbourne have already got attentions as being global MICE destinations. For Sydney, the main fields of MICE are about green technology, tourism, and digital industry. The city also created the MICE international network system named “Future Convention Cities Initiative” with Seoul and London to share the information and know-how from each other.

Lastly, one of the most threatened threats to Japan is the existence of frequent natural disasters such as tsunami and earthquake and these threats are unavoidable. Although Japan has a quick and efficient system of dealing with natural disasters, it is impossible to prevent them in advance. Thus, it brings negative impacts to the destination image. Although it has the reputation of being a safe country, the presence of frequent natural disasters is threatening the visitor’s perceptions whether they decide to visit or not.

5.3 SWOT Analysis of Kyushu as a MICE destination

5.3.1 Strengths of Kyushu

Besides the common strengths mentioned above, particularly Kyushu has its strength in geographical location since it is closer to other neighbor Asian countries. As shown in the Image below, Fukuoka City is located at most western part of Kyushu which has the nearest accessibility to other neighboring countries and it even has various international flights. Thus, using the current increasing number of tourists from China,

South Korea, and others from Southeast Asian countries, it can promote MICE tourism as another attraction for business travelers. Since it is geographically close, the frequency of events can be held more often and it is also convenient for visitors for their trips.

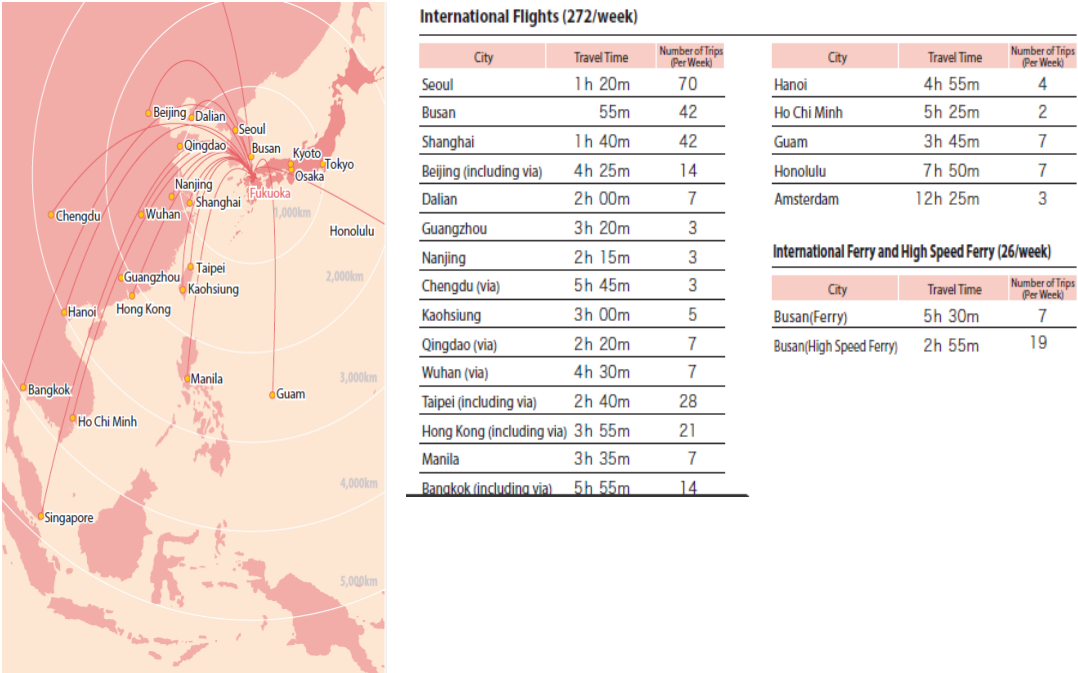


Image 13: The accessibility to Fukuoka City (Fukuoka Convention & Visitors Bureau)

5.3.2 Weaknesses of Kyushu

Except for the common weaknesses mentioned above, Kyushu has other weaknesses such as not being popular, accessibility from Tokyo, lack of cooperation among suppliers, and lack of objectives as well. Since Kyushu Island is located at the most southern part of Japan, it is far from capital city Tokyo which results in low reputation to visitors. Also the nationalities of foreign visitors are currently monopolized by Asian countries. For those people who come to Japan as their first time, they mostly prefer to visit metropolitan areas that are located close to Tokyo or Osaka. Then, the flight time from Tokyo to Fukuoka is around 1 hour 30minutes which even takes longer than the flight time

from Seoul, South Korea to Fukuoka. Furthermore, from the interviews in three different cities in Fukuoka, Kumamoto and Beppu, it was able to understand that they are lack of cooperation among stakeholders of MICE industry in Kyushu. There was existence of competitiveness among different cities in Kyushu Islands and they prefer to promote the city individually rather than promoting as Kyushu in general. However, since Fukuoka is the leading destination, they are trying to be the “gate” of Kyushu and promote all of areas in Kyushu equally. Among Tourism Associations and Convention Bureau, they have regular meetings and share the information as much as possible but the level of exchanging information is still limited. Moreover, according to the research done by Yusoff & Ismail & Rahman in 2015, (Yusoff & Ismail & Rahman 2015) the most significant success factor of MICE and Event Management is having the clear objectives. Nevertheless, a lot of cities in Kyushu besides Fukuoka do not have clear objectives to be MICE destinations. They have general ideas and expected outcomes from MICE industry but they don’t know how to set the clear objectives in detailed yet. In fact, there are also still less people who are aware of MICE tourism and have professional knowledge or experience so far. Thus, management of human resources is the most necessary factor for Kyushu now.

Table 16: Level of significance for success factors of MICE and Event Management (Yusoff & Ismail & Rahman 2015)

Success Factors	Mean Score Level of Significance	Index for of	Rank based on Mean Index Score	Level of Significance based on Cut-Off Value
Clear Objectives	5.87		1	
Location of Venue	5.53		2	
Financial Resources	5.47		3	<i>Very Significant</i>
Code Of Conduct	5.47		3	
Marketing And Promotion	5.40		4	
Sponsorship of Event	5.33		5	

5.3.3 Opportunities of Kyushu

Adding to the general opportunities mentioned above, Kyushu has its potentials since Fukuoka has already established its leading position in MICE tourism in Japan. With the high popularity of Fukuoka, visitors to Fukuoka can be encouraged to visit other cities all over in Kyushu. Also, when Fukuoka City is promoting its destination, it always tries to emphasize the whole Kyushu area and try to encourage visitors to visit other areas as well. In terms of accessibility within Kyushu, JR Kyushu (Japan Railway) and Kyushu Shinkansen provide several different travel courses with reasonable price tickets to foreign visitors. Thus, Fukuoka can be used as the “door” of Kyushu to enhance the tourism industry in general and MICE tourism as well. Furthermore, a lot of cities in Kyushu actually have great interest towards the development and enhancement of MICE tourism so many city governments include MICE tourism as one of their tourism policy plans. In addition, even small cities already have existing facilities for MICE tourism like in Beppu city. It means that they have already become aware of the importance and necessity of MICE tourism but they don't have organized infrastructures yet. Therefore, if the cities start to become more active in their promotional activities and development of human resources, there are potentials of growth in MICE industry all over in Kyushu.

5.3.4 Threats of Kyushu

As mentioned above for general threats, there is increase in number of competitors from neighboring countries and even among cities within Kyushu. Thus, each city should have find and emphasize their own destination authenticity and try to distinguish themselves with other cities. However, the destination image of Kyushu is recently

damaged by the Great Kumamoto Earthquake happened in April, 2016. It has been recognized as one of the safe places in Japan so far, but due to the recent earthquake, the tourism industry is facing a downturn and the number of tourists has rapidly decreased. Therefore, it will take some time to recover the image of the destinations and rebuild the infrastructure as well.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION AND LIMITATIONS OF RESEARCH

6.1 Conclusion

Through discussing and analyzing the situations of MICE tourism in Japan with case studies from Kyushu, it could be shown that MICE tourism has high potentials in destination development in Japan in general, and Kyushu is particular but Japan has lack of comparative advantages in some factors compared to other competitor countries. Although Japan has been facing the decrease in market share, it is still trying to keep the market position which was shown by the statistic that it was ranked as No.1 city in number of hosting meetings in Asia Pacific & Middle east region and 7th in world ranking. Interestingly, when the data was compared per city, Tokyo was 6th in Asia Pacific ranking and 22nd in world ranking. But, it was able to figure out that Japan has the most diversified cities from large cities to small cities while other countries are still centralized only in metropolitan areas. For instance, according to data published by ICCA in 2014, there are 15 Japanese cities listed in the ranking of number of meetings per city in Asia Pacific & Middle east region while other competitors such as China has 12 cities, South Korea has 6 cities and Australia has 8 cities.

Table 17: Number of meetings per country and per city in Asia Pacific & Middle east region (International Congress and Convention Association, 2014)

Rank	Country	# Meetings	Rank	City	# Meetings
1	Japan	337	1	Singapore	142
2	China-P.R.	332	2	Beijing	104
3	Australia	260	3	Seoul	99
4	Republic of Korea	222	4	Hong Kong	98
5	Chinese Taipei	145	5	Taipei	92
6	Singapore	142	6	Tokyo	90
7	Malaysia	133	7	Sydney	82
8	Thailand	118	8	Kuala Lumpur	79
9	India	116	9	Bangkok, Shanghai	73
10	Hong Kong, China-P.R.	98	10	Melbourne	61

At the same time, Japan has lack of comparative advantages comparing with neighboring countries. According to the research about critical success factors of MICE and Event Management (Yusoff & Ismail & Rahman 2015), there are six factors which were proved to be the most significant success factors for MICE and Event management: clear objectives, location of venue, financial resources, code of conduct, marketing and promotion and sponsorship of event. However, through this research about MICE industry in Japan, it could figure out that the cities in Japan that are trying to enhance MICE tourism are still lack of clear objectives and marketing and promotion comparing other neighboring countries in Asia Pacific region.

Overall, through this research about MICE tourism development in Japan with case studies from Kyushu, it was able to recognize how and why Japan has been emphasizing the importance of MICE tourism as one of its national tourism policies and its application to regional development as well. Japan is expecting to use the multiplier effects of MICE tourism to enhance the tourism industry in general especially by hosting Tokyo Olympic in 2020.

6.2 Limitations

There were three major limitations found when conducting this research. Firstly, the process of data interpretation was the most challenging process. Since most data, information and interviews were only available in Japanese language, there might be missing information or inappropriate translation as well. Although the author was able to communicate in Japanese, there were some obstacles since most of public documents have advanced vocabulary with uncommon expressions. In addition, after conducting the in-

depth interview, the author might have missed some information even during the process of transcribing and translating.

Furthermore, since only three cities from Kyushu were selected as case studies, it is difficult to generalize the idea for other areas in Kyushu as well. Although there are reasons why only three cities were selected, the research could have been more accurate if all of cities in Kyushu were included. However, it can lead to future research as the comparative study of MICE tourism in Kyushu for example. Moreover, further research can also be related with crisis management in Kumamoto City. Since the earthquake just happened recently after research was already done, it was impossible to edit the content of Kumamoto City. Therefore, with all of improvements mentioned above, the author is planning to conduct research continuously and trying to contribute more to the tourism industry and research fields in MICE tourism.

REFERENCES

- Berger, A. A. (2010). *Tourism in Japan: An Ethno-Semiotic analysis*. United Kingdom: Channel View Publications.
- Bureau International des Expositions (BIE) Official Website. Retrieved from <http://www.bie-paris.org/site/en/bie/our-history>
- Beppu International Convention Center. (2014). Retrieved from <http://www.b-conplaza.jp/english/>
- Bowdin, G., McDonnell, I., Allen, J., & O'Toole, W. (2001). *Events Management*. Oxford, England: Butterworth-Heinemann.
- Bowen, G. A. (2013). Document analysis as a qualitative research method. *Qualitative Research Journal*. doi:10.3316/QRJ0902027
- Butler, R. (2006). *The tourism area life cycle*. Clevedon: Channel View Publications.
- Carlos, S.L., & Crossley, J. (n.d.). *Las Vegas Versus Macao as Diversified Travel Destinations*. *Journal of Tourism Insights*, 5(1). Article 5. Retrieved from <http://dx.doi.org/10.9707/2328-0824.1042>
- Clark, J.D. (2004). Considering a convention center: Ten questions communities will confront. *Journal of Convention and Event Tourism*, 6(1/2), 5-21.
- Chon, K. S. (2012). *The Routledge handbook of tourism research*. United States: Routledge Member of the Taylor and Francis Group.
- Dwyer, L., Forsyth, P., & Spurr, R. (2005). Estimating the impacts of special events on the economy. *Journal of Travel Research*, 43, 351-359.
- Dwyer, L. /, Gill, A., & Seetaram, N. (Eds.). (2012). *Handbook of research methods in tourism: Quantitative and qualitative approaches*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing.
- Faulkner, B. (2002). *Rejuvenating a Maturing Tourist Destination The Case of the Gold Coast*. Retrieved from <http://SustainableTourism.Publisher-Site.com>
- Felsenstein, D., & Fleischer, A. (2003). Local festivals and tourism promotion: The role of public assistance and visitor expenditure. *Journal of Travel Research*, 41, 365-392.
- Ferrell, O. C., & Hartline, M. D. (2010). *Marketing strategy* (5th ed.). United States: South-Western Cengage Learning.
- Getz, D. (1997). *Event Management and Event Tourism*, New York: Cognizant Communications Corp.

Fukuoka City Government. (2013). *Tourism Promotion Strategies of Fukuoka City in 2013 (福岡 観光・集客戦略 2013)*. Retrieved from www.city.fukuoka.lg.jp/data/open/.../keizai_houkoku_sankou.pdf

Fukuoka Convention and Visitors Bureau Official Website. (2014). Retrieved from <http://www.welcome-fukuoka.or.jp/english/396.html>

Getz, D. (2008). 'Event Tourism: Definition, Evolution, and Research', *Tourism Management* 29(3):403-428.

Gelan, A. (2003). The British Open; local economic impacts. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 30, 406-425.

Hamid, M., & Ismail, N., & Fuza, Z., & Ahmad, K. (2012). Sustainable tourism development practices of MICE venue provider in East Coast Region, Peninsula Malaysia. *Current Issues in Hospitality and Tourism Research and Innovations – Zainal et al (eds)*.

Hyde, K. F., Ryan, C., & Woodside, A. G. (Eds.). (2012). *Field guide to case study research in tourism, hospitality and leisure*. United Kingdom: Emerald Group Publishing.

Institute for Economics and Peace. (2014). *The Global Peace Index 2014*. Retrieved from economicsandpeace.org/wp-content/.../2014-Global-Peace-Index-REPORT_0-1.pdf

International Congress and Convention Association (ICCA). (2013). *A Modern History of International Association Meetings*. Retrieved from <http://www.iccaworld.com/>

International Congress and Convention Association (ICCA). (2015). *ICCA Statistics Report*. Retrieved from <http://www.iccaworld.com/>

Japan Tourism Agency (JTA). (2013). "In order to improve the country competency in Japan (我が国の MICE 国際競争力の強化に向けて)". Public report. Retrieved from <http://www.mlit.go.jp/kankocho/siryou/index.html>

Japan Tourism Agency (JTA). (2014). *International Convention Promotion Guidebook*. Retrieved from <http://www.mlit.go.jp/kankocho/siryou/index.html>

Japan Tourism Agency (JTA). (2014). *White Paper on Tourism in Japan: The tourism Situation in FY2013*. Retrieved from <http://www.mlit.go.jp/common/001064757.pdf>

Japan National Tourism Organization Official Website. (2014). <http://www.jnto.go.jp/eng/location/regional/oita/beppu.html>

Kida, S. (2014). *Recent Progress in Tourism Policy in Japan - Policies for Economic and Social Return*. Retrieved from 44th Tourism Working Group Meeting at APEC 2014. Presentation slides.

Korea Culture and Tourism Institute (KCTI). (2015). *Tourism policies and trends of Japan: Target of 20million foreign visitors to Japan*. 51(1). Pp 1-13. Retrieved from www.kcti.re.kr

Kumamoto City Government. (2014). *Kumamoto City MICE Facilities Maintenance Basic Plan (熊本市MICE施設整備基本計画)*. Retrieved from https://www.city.kumamoto.jp/common/UploadFileDsp.aspx?c_id=5&id=5107&sub_id=1&flid=30729

Kumamoto City Government. (2014). *Kumamoto Tourism Promotional Strategies*. Retrieved from <https://www.city.kumamoto.jp>

Kumamoto City Official Website. (2014). Retrieved from <http://www.manyou-kumamoto.jp/en/plan-your-visit-main/plan-your-visit-main.html>

Mack, N., Woodson, C., International, H., Agency, & Development, I. (2005). *Qualitative research methods a data collector's field guide*. Research Triangle Park, NC: Family Health International.

Mackellar, J. (2006). Conventions, festivals, and tourism: Exploring the network that binds. *Journal of Convention and Event Tourism*, 8(2), 45-56.

Mariani, M. M., Baggio, R., & Buhalis, D. (Eds.). (2014). *Tourism management, marketing, and development: Volume I: The importance of networks and ICTs*. United Kingdom: Palgrave Macmillan.

Smith, S. L. J. (2010). *Practical tourism research (CABI tourism texts)*. Cambridge, MA: CAB International.

Masterman, G. (2004). *Strategic sports event management. An International approach*. Oxford, England: Butterworth-Heinemann.

McCornac, D., & Zhang, R. (2014). Japan's International Tourism Challenge. Retrieved from <http://thediplomat.com/2014/10/japans-international-tourism-challenge/>

Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry. (2012). *Cool Japan Strategy (Modified version of the Interim Report submitted to the Cool Japan Advisory Council)*. Presentation slides.

Mizuho Research Institute. (2014). *Evaluation of Abenomics for 1st year*. Retrieved from <http://www.mizuho-ri.co.jp/english/report/index.html>

Morgan, A., & Condliffe, S. (2006). Measuring the economic impacts of convention centers and event tourism: A discussion of the key issues. *Journal of Convention and Event Tourism*, 8(4), 81-100

OECD (2014). "Japan" in *OECD Tourism Trends and Policies 2014*. OECD Publishing. Retrieved from <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/tour-2014-25-en>

Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development. (2002). NATIONAL TOURISM POLICY REVIEW OF JAPAN

Ota, M. (2010). *Current situations and future of MICE in Japan*. Convention Research Institute.

Oita Prefectural Government. (2013). *Oita Prefecture Tourism Promotional Strategies (大分県ツーリズム戦略)*. Retrieved from www.pref.oita.jp/uploaded/life/1017158_1115524_misc.pdf

Opperman, M. (1996). Convention destination images: Analysis of association meeting planner's perceptions. *Tourism Management*, 17(3), 175-182

Opperman, M., & Chon, K.-S. (1997). Convention participation decision-making process. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 24(1), 178-191.

Page, S.J. and Connell, J. (2009). *Tourism: A Modern Synthesis*, 3rd edition, London: Cengage Learning

Page, S. J., & Connell, J. (Eds.). (2009). *Event tourism: V. 1 The Evolution of Event Tourism: Concepts and Approaches*. United Kingdom: Routledge.

Page, S. J., & Connell, J. (Eds.). (2009). *Event tourism: V. 2 Effects, Role and Significance*. United Kingdom: Routledge.

Page, S. J., & Connell, J. (Eds.). (2009). *Event tourism: V. 3 Event Tourism and Destinations: Case Studies and Best Practice*. United Kingdom: Routledge.

Page, S. J., & Connell, J. (Eds.). (2009). *Event tourism: V. 4 Managing Event Operations*. United Kingdom: Routledge.

Pearce, D. G. (2012). *Frameworks for tourism research*. Wallingford, Oxfordshire: CABI.

Papatheodorou, A. (Ed.). (2006). *Managing tourism destinations*. United Kingdom: Edward Elgar Publishing.

Prime Minister of Japan and his cabinet. (2014). *Japan Revitalization Strategy 2014*. Retrieved from www.kantei.go.jp/jp/singi/keizaisaisei/pdf/honbunEN.pdf

Radzi, S. M., Bakhtiar, M. F. S., & Mohi, Z. (Eds.). (2014). *Theory and practice in hospitality and tourism research*. United Kingdom: CRC Press.

Scott, N., Baggio, R., & Cooper, C. (2008). *Network analysis and tourism: From theory to practice*. United Kingdom: Channel View Publications.

Shanghai New International Exhibition Center (SNIEC) Official Website. (2014).

Retrieved from http://www.sniec.net/about_aboutsniec.php

Shediak, R., Nasr, A., & Assy, G. (2014). *Playing to win in the meetings industry game*.

Retrieved from www.strategyand.pwc.com

Spivock, J. (2015, September 29). *Omotenashi: The secret of Japanese service*. Retrieved June 14, 2016, from Carousel, <http://sparksheet.com/omotenashi-secret-of-japanese-service/>

Swarbrooke, J., & Horner, S. (2001). *Business travel and tourism*. Oxford: A Butterworth-Heinemann Title.

Thailand Convention & Exhibition Bureau. (2012). *Introduction to MICE Industry*.

Tourism Nation Promotion Basic Plan. (2012). Retrieved from *Article 10, paragraph (4) of the Tourism Nation Promotion Basic Law (Act No.117 of 2006)*. Translated version.

United Nations World Tourism Organization. (1997). *International Tourism: A Global Perspective (English version)*.

United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO). (2007). *A practical guide to tourism destination management*. Madrid: World Tourism Organization.

United Nation World Tourism Organization (UNWTO). (2014). *Global Report on the Meetings Industry*. Madrid: World Tourism Organization. Retrieved from [http://www.imexhibitions.com/media/350548/UNWTO_meetingsindustry_am_report%20\(2\).pdf](http://www.imexhibitions.com/media/350548/UNWTO_meetingsindustry_am_report%20(2).pdf)

University of Technology, Sydney. (2010). *A Scoping Study of Business Events: Beyond Tourism Benefits*. Retrieved from <https://www.businesseventssydney.com.au/media/1366/beyond-tourism-benefits.pdf>

Wan Yusoff, W. Z., Ismail, M. F., Rahman, I. A., & Gwamna, E. S. (2015). Critical success factors (CSFs) of meeting, incentive, convention and exhibition (MICE) event management. *Advanced Science Letters*, 21(5), 1317–1320. doi:10.1166/asl.2015.6014

Wang, Y. (2011). *Destination marketing and management: Theories and applications*. Cambridge, MA: CABI Publishing.

Weber, K., & Ladkin, A. (2003). The convention industry in Australia and the United Kingdom: Key issues and competitive forces. *Journal of Travel Research*, 42, 125-132.

World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC). (2014). *Travel & Tourism Economic Impact 2014 Japan*. Retrieved from www.wttc.org

Yeoman, I., & Rebecca, T. L. Y. (2012). *2050 - tomorrow's tourism*. Buffalo: Channel View Publications.