

A consideration of the concept of “omotenashi” in regards to inbound tourism

~A case study of Wakkanai City~

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● 要約

この研究は、「ICT 教育及び研究シーズを活用した観光施設の多言語化の検討（黒木・佐賀, 2016）と連携した研究として、稚内のインバウンド観光における“おもてなし”のあり方を検討する。この研究は中国語圏の観光客を対象とし（台湾、香港、中国本土、その他）、稚内への観光動機を明確にすることを目的として、アンケート調査を行う。また、筆者も共同研究者として参画した「インバウンドを意識した観光施設づくり（黒木ほか, 2015）」の補足充実のため、ノシャップ水族館ガイドブックの中国版（繁体字と簡体字）を作成する。

アンケート調査にて、15 件の有効回答が得られた。その中、台湾は最も多く（46%）、香港は 36% を占め、中国本土は 18% であった。回答者の 73% は 20 代と 40 代であり、稚内へ訪れる観光客はより若い年齢層であることが分かった。80% の回答者は稚内の自然風景を目的に訪れているため、以前の買い物とは異なる動機と分かった。交通手段については北海道までは飛行機が圧倒的に多く（90%）、特に新千歳空港を利用する回答が多かったが、帯広や旭川空港を利用する回答者も少なくはないため、今後、地方から稚内へのアクセス情報を整える必要性が重要であると考えられる。稚内での交通手段についてはレンタカーが最も多かった（60%）。その中、中国本土の免許証は日本では通用できないと思われていたが、過半数はレンタカーで移動するという回答から、今後における中国本土の観光客もレンタカーの利用需求が増えていくと考えられる。稚内の情報入手についてはインターネットから知ったという回答が最も多かったが（36%）、中国本土と台湾、香港とは異なると分かった。中国本土の観光客は、SNS やサイトの口コミなどといった旅行情報に関する専門性の低いメディアから稚内の情報を入手したという回答が多く、台湾や香港の観光客は旅行雑誌やガイドブックなどといった旅行専門雑誌などにより、または HP（観光協会）というオフィシャルサイトから情報を入手する傾向が見られた。この結果から、地域外の観光客に対して妥当な専門メディアを用い、情報発信した方が効果的であると分かった。特に、中国本土には SNS などやサイトの口コミによる宣伝、台湾や香港には旅行会社や旅行雑誌などによる宣伝を行うのが効果的と思われる。この研究を通じて、自然風景は稚内の最も人気の要因であり、それを踏まえ、今後は多様なツアーを開発し、地域にあった適切なメディアで宣伝を行うことにより、稚内のインバウンド観光の発展につながると考えられる。

● キーワード

Inbound tourism、Travel motivation、Chinese guidebook

1. Introduction

1.1 Background of inbound tourism in Wakkanai City

The number of inbound tourists to Wakkanai has maintained sustained growth since 2010. Until 2015, the amount of inbound tourists reached 9,000, among which nearly 70% of those were from Asian countries. Furthermore, over 80 percent of Asian tourists were from Taiwan, Hong Kong and Mainland China (Wakkanai City, 2015).

However, as there is a lack of essential information about inbound tourism in regards to travel patterns, travel motivation, means of transportation and tourist's visiting expectations, it is hard to fully grasp degree of satisfaction which might hamper tourists from receiving "omotenashi" during the trip.

1.2 Collaboration with Noshappu Aquarium

During the project of "multi-language promotion under the increasing trend of inbound tourism" (Gao and Kuroki, 2015), by utilizing linguistic resources that the university possesses, an aquarium guidebook in Russian and English were completed and put into use. The guidebook is considered as a preliminary achievement of improving the connection between the aquarium and university for facility improvement and inbound tourism development.

1.3 Study objective

In order to achieve sustainable tourism development in Wakkanai City, it is important to understand the motivation and expectations of tourists visiting Wakkanai. Therefore, this study is based on a questionnaire survey, targeting inbound tourists, particularly those from the Chinese speaking regions of Taiwan, Hong Kong and Mainland China. By inquiring about the means of transportation, travel motivation and satisfaction level regarding visitors from different regions, we can give constructive suggestions for improving the tourism service in the future.

In addition, in a continuous collaboration with Noshappu Aquarium after the project started in 2015, the production of the aquarium guidebook in Chinese is another study objective to provide available information for tourists to ensure an enjoyable travel experience.

2. Methodology

In order to achieve the study objectives described above, this study consists of two sections. In order to gather as many respondents as possible, giveaways were provided to those who complete the survey.

The first section includes a placement questionnaire survey. While the second section includes the production of an aquarium guidebook in Chinese, which is based on the outcome of "multi-language promotion under the increasing trend of inbound tourism" (Gao and Kuroki, 2015).

2.1 Questionnaire survey

2.1.1 Questionnaire content

The questionnaire targets visitors from Chinese speaking regions and consider travel patterns such as information source, means of transportation and travel motivation of visitors from regions like Taiwan and Hong Kong are different from those from Mainland of China, questionnaire is designed as below.

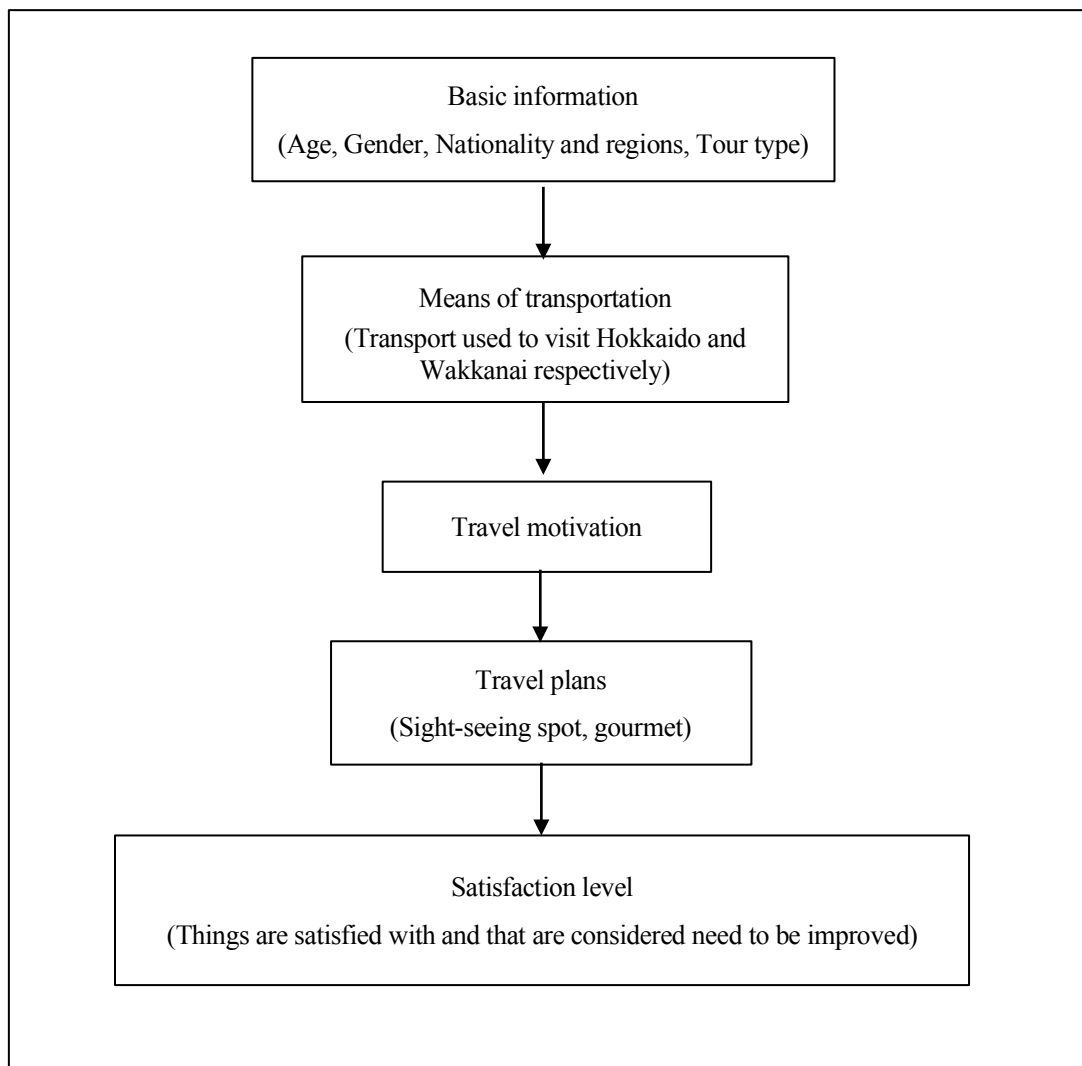


Figure 2.1 Flow chart of the questionnaire design.

2.1.2 Research methodology

A method of placement survey is adopted due to a style of staying and repeated visits, which is being promoted in Wakkanai City. The questionnaire survey is a collaborative work with the Wakkanai Tourism Association and Wakkanai Ryokan and Hotel Association. The questionnaire mainly focuses on collecting basic data about tourists who have visited Wakkanai regarding their trip motivation, transportation, information resource and level of satisfaction during the trip.

2.1.3 Research site

Seven different types of hotels were selected, including Kokumin-shukusha Hyosetsuso, Hotel Misono, Wakkanai Sun Hotel, Hotel Saharin, Wakkanai Grand Hotel, Pension ALMERIA and ANA Crowne Plaza Wakkanai, with their locations shown in Figure 2.2. Six out of seven are located close to JR Wakkanai Station or JR Mimami Wakkanai Station, while Pension ALMERIA, which is popular among backpackers and other kind of foreign visitors, is located on the route to Cape Soya



Figure 2.2 Location of the Hotels and Ryokan. Source: Google Zerin,2016.

2.1.3 Survey procedure

The questionnaire was conducted in the summer (August to September, 2016), which is the high-season for Wakkanai tourism. A total of 300 questionnaires were prepared (Simplified Chinese 90, Traditional Chinese 210 respectively) and distributed as shown in Table 1. The questionnaire was collected once at the end of August, and Hotel Misono was found that not as many foreign came as expected. Therefore, ten of its questionnaires in Simplified Chinese were instead received by Pension ALMERIA, which accommodated comparatively more visitors. The change is remarked as “*” in the Table 1.

Table 1. Distribution of questionnaire depends on Hotels and Ryokan

Number	Hotel and Ryokan	Simplified Chinese	Traditional Chinese
1	Kokumin-shukusha Hyosetsuso	20	20
2	Hotel Misono	10 (*0)	10
3	Wakkanai Sun Hotel	10	10
4	Hotel Saharin	10	10
5	Wakkanai Grand Hotel	20	10
6	Pension ALMERIA	10(*20)	10
7	ANA Crown Plaza Wakkanai	130	20
Total		210	90

2.2 Guidebook Production

Based on the previous work in 2015, the guidebook was designed in both Simplified and Traditional Chinese. The data used in the previous work was translated and updated to reflect new fish in the aquarium and new data provided by Noshappu Aquarium.

In contrast with other aquariums, most exhibits at Noshappu Aquarium are ornamental fish or fish whose main habitat is cold water. Considering the differences in culture and life style, some of the fish are unknown to visitors from Mainland China. Therefore, rather than only explaining the ecology and environment of fish, the Chinese version adopted a different way to describe the exhibits, such as showing cooking recipe, raising method, etc. Furthermore, Chinese version was designed by an international student.

3 Result and Discussion

In this chapter, the result of questionnaire and guidebook is discussed. Based upon the results of the questionnaire, suggestions and recommendation are given to the further development of tourism in Wakkanai City.

3.1 Result of questionnaire

3.1.1 Demographic

Basic demographic questions about gender, age, nationality and region (Taiwan, Hong Kong, Mainland of China and the others) and the type of tour were asked.

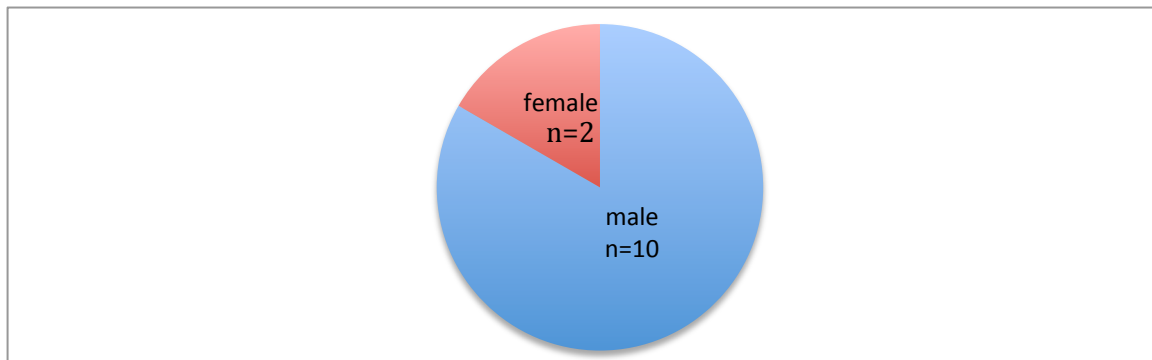


Figure 3.1 Gender of respondents

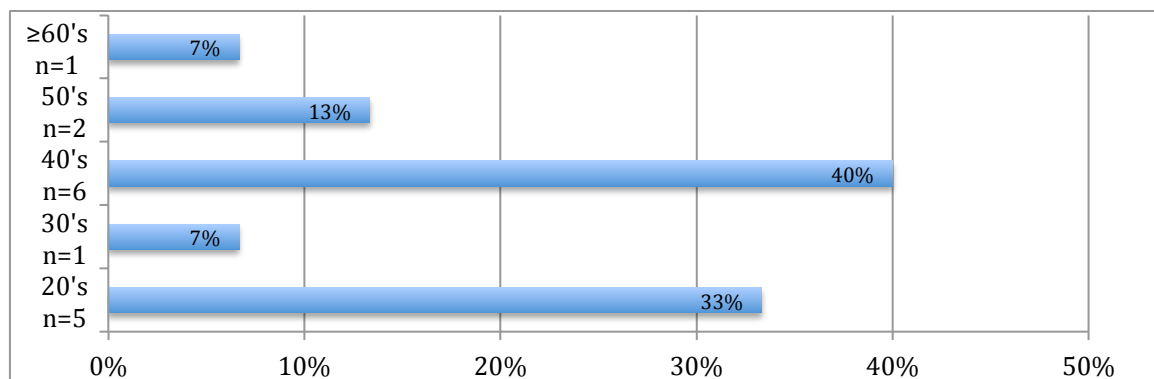


Figure 3.2 Age of respondents

A total number of 15 respondents were collected and 12 out of 15 respondents were considered valid in regards to the inquiry of gender. Ten (83%) of the respondents are male and two (17%) are female (Figure 3.1). Figure 3.2 shows the respondents' age. More than half of the respondents are in their middle age (53%), and 33% of those were youth in their 20's. Respondents in their 30's, 60's or over 60's comprises 7% respectively. All of the respondents were individual visitors.

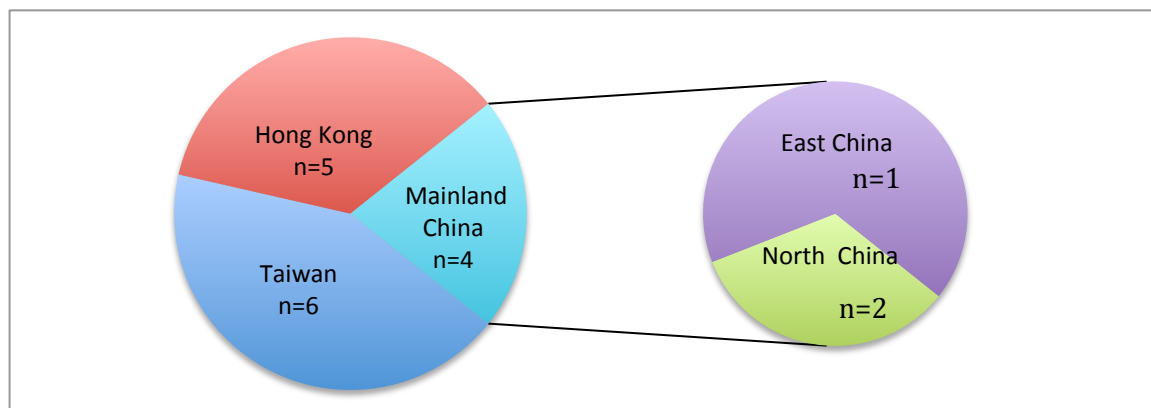


Figure 3.3 Nationality and regions of respondents

Figure 3.3 shows the nationality and region of origin of the respondents. The majority of the respondents are from Taiwan (43%), with Hong Kong second (36%), Mainland China third (21%). Among respondents from Mainland China, 14% was from East China (city as Shanghai, Zhejiang and etc.) while 7% is from North China (city as Beijing and Tianjin, etc.).

3.1.2 Means of transportation to Hokkaido

Figure 3.4 illustrates the means of transportation. Two-third (66.7%) of the respondents chose major airlines such ANA or JAL when coming to Hokkaido while the remaining third (26.7%) chose LCC. Chitose Airport in Sapporo was found to be most used by visitors, while other airport such as Obihiro, Asahigawa, Wakkanai, etc. were also used. Other transportation such as train (JR) and rental cars were also found to be used as a means of transportation.

In terms of the variety of transportation among different regions, figure 3.5 indicates that both respondents from Mainland China and regions of Hong Kong and Taiwan tended to use airlines when coming to Hokkaido. Other transportation such as rental cars were used by respondents from Taiwan and Hong Kong, and the train (JR) was found to be used by respondents from Mainland China.

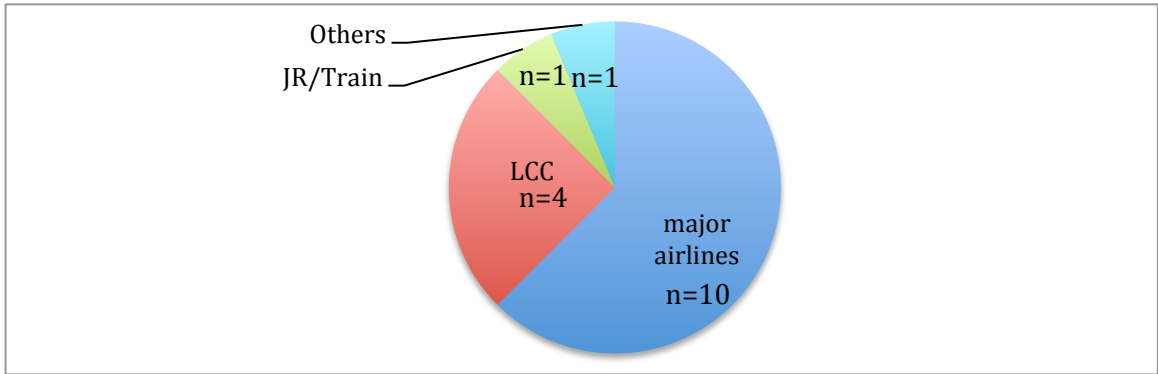


Figure 3.4 Means of Transportation

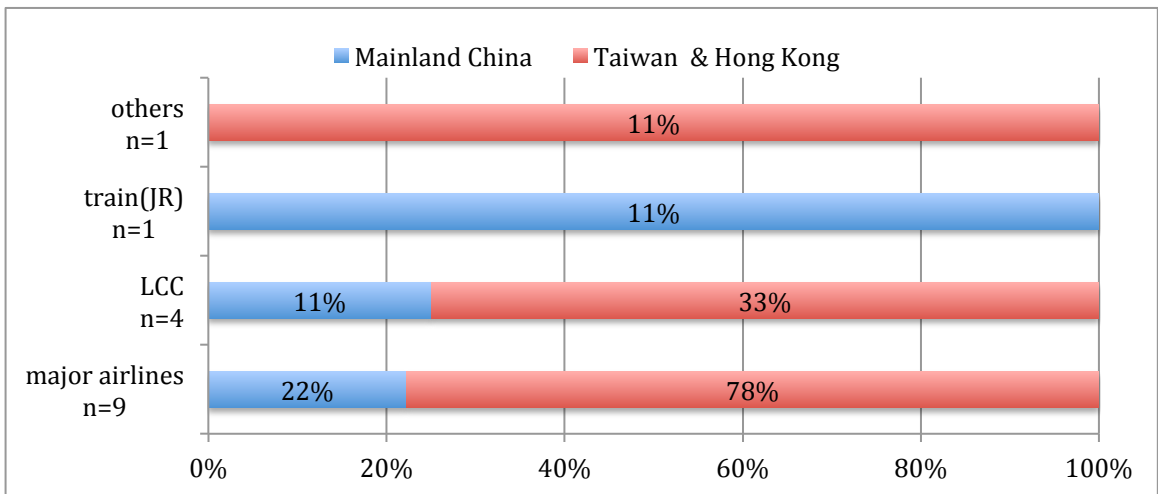


Figure 3.5 Variations in Means of Transportation

3.1.3 Information Source

In regards to information source about Wakkanai city, a majority of the respondents (86.7%) claim they decided to come to Wakkanai before arriving in Japan, however, 13.3% of the respondents decided to come after arrival. As shown in figure 3.6, internet such as online travel agency or website is the most used media (36%). However, traditional paper media such as travel magazines or guidebooks are used (29% of each). In addition, some respondents obtained information through official website or friends recommendations.

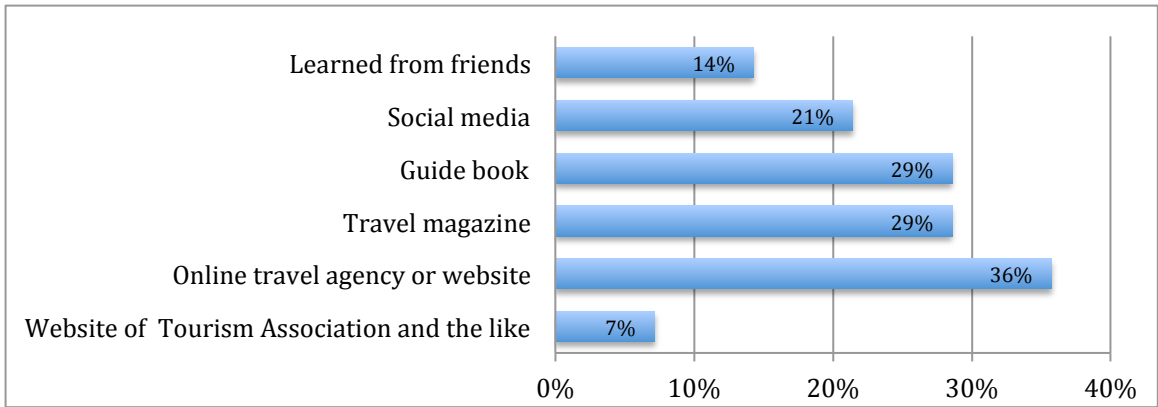


Figure 3.6 Information Source

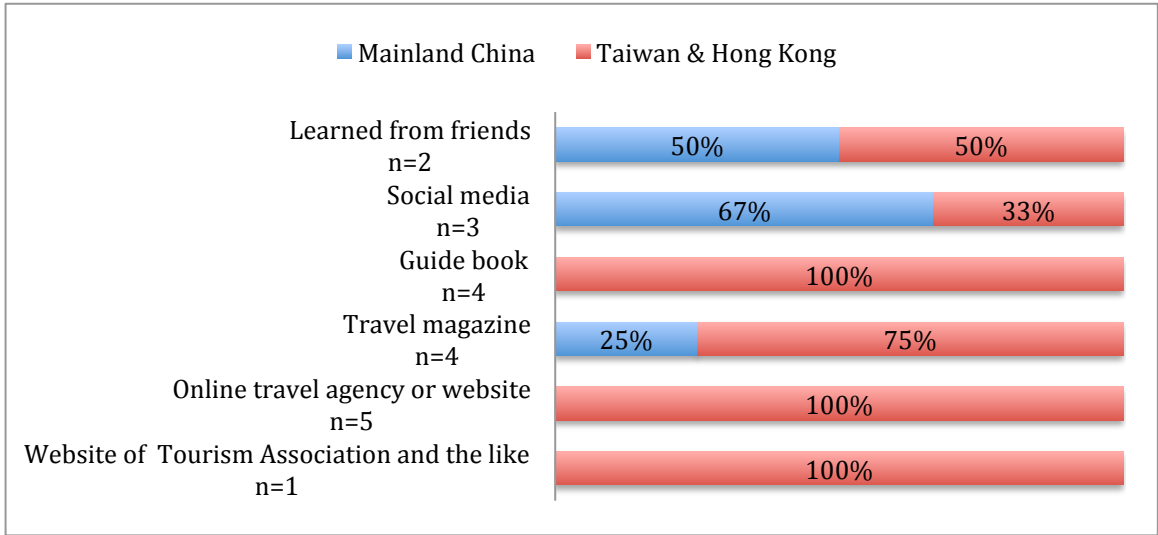


Figure 3.7 Variations in Information Source

As it is known that certain types of social media are unavailable in Mainland China, different media used in Mainland China and regions of Hong Kong and Taiwan were taken into consideration. Figure 3.7 shows the result of variations of information between respondents from Mainland China, Taiwan and Hong Kong. First, it indicates that firstly, visitors from Taiwan and Hong Kong tend to search through more diverse information sources than those from Mainland China. Second, while looking up information, visitors from Mainland China tend to use media which usually obtains information that is general, while those from Taiwan and Hong Kong tend to look up information specific to the travel destination via media of guidebook and official website.

3.1.4 Travel Motivations

Figure 3.8 shows that most of the respondents (80%) came to Wakkanai for its scenery and landmarks (40%). Factors of cuisine and friends' recommendation were also found in the answer which takes up 33% and 13.3% respectively.

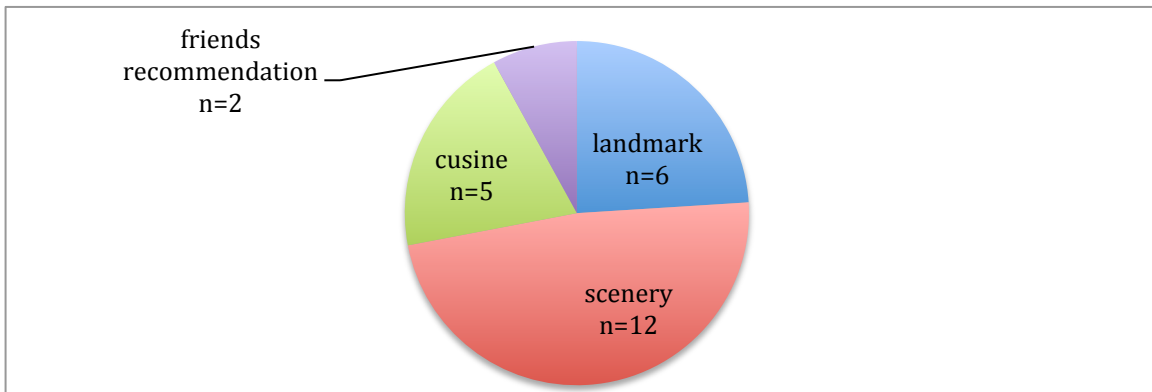


Figure 3.8 Travel Motivations

Although shopping is considered as one of the most attractive motivations for Chinese tourists in recent years, the option of “shopping” was not found among the answers. However, scenery and landmarks turned out to be the most attractive of Wakkanai City. Due to its special geographic location, Wakkanai possesses a unique landscape that differs from traditional images people usually have of Japan. Besides, Wakkanai is also famous for its fishing industry that allows easy access to inexpensive and fresh seafood.

Most of the respondents claim they spend more than one day in Wakkanai. Nearly half of the respondents spent more than two nights and 40% of them stayed overnight, with only 13.3% of the them spending one day.

Figure 3.9 illustrates the sightseeing plan of respondents. As the landmark of Wakkanai City, Cape Soya was the most popular spot. The Islands of Rishiri and Rebun and Wakkanai Port Northern Break Water Dome show the same popularity among respondents from Mainland China and Taiwan and Hong Kong, each with 45%. Wakkanai Park, Hokumon Shrine and Lake Onuma Bird House were also chosen but with less popularity. In addition, hot springs, the cultural heritage site “former seto house” and Cape Noshappu were chosen only by respondents from Taiwan and Hong Kong, while sarobetsu Mire was chosen only by those from Mainland China.

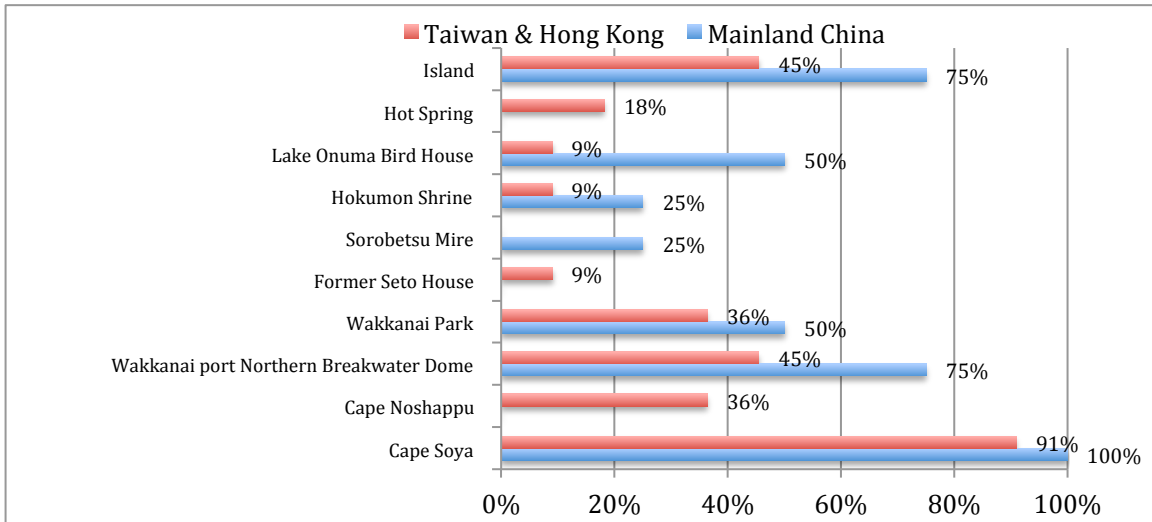


Figure 3.9 sightseeing place

3.1.5 Transportation within Wakkanai City

Figure 3.10 shows transportation used during their trip in Wakkanai City. Respondents used rental cars (60%), public transport such as bus or walking (27%) and taxis and motorcycles (7%) to travel within Wakkanai City. Due to drivers license regulations, it was predicted that rental cars would not be an option for visitors from Mainland China in most cases, however, it was interesting to find that 22% of rental car users were from Mainland China. A possibility is that respondents had driving experience overseas or acquired an international drivers license outside Mainland China.

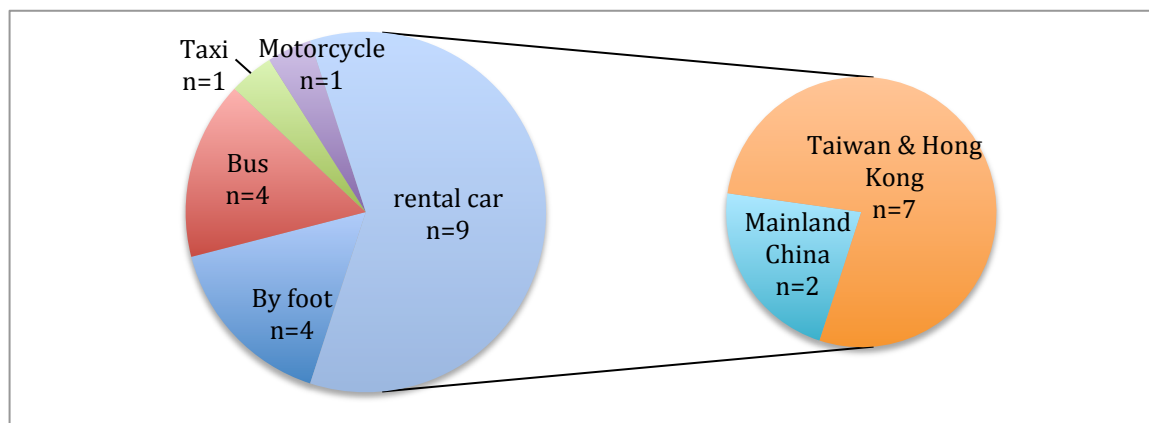


Figure 3.10 Transportation Within Wakkanai City

3.1.5 Satisfaction Level

As shown in figure 3.11 respondents from both regions were most satisfied with the scenery (100%). Cuisine, culture and service come second, third, and fourth, respectively. after that. 27% of respondents from Taiwan and Hong Kong claim they were satisfied with shopping while no evaluation was given by those from Mainland of China. Words of enjoyment from interacting with hotel hosts were expressed in the free statement part of the questionnaire, which indicates that personal interactions may have a positive impact on visitors.

In regards to areas for further improvement is shown in figure 3.12 and includes availability of credit card, foreign language, wi-fi and road signs. Besides, the mention of “food” was found in the free statement section and considered an area to be improved.

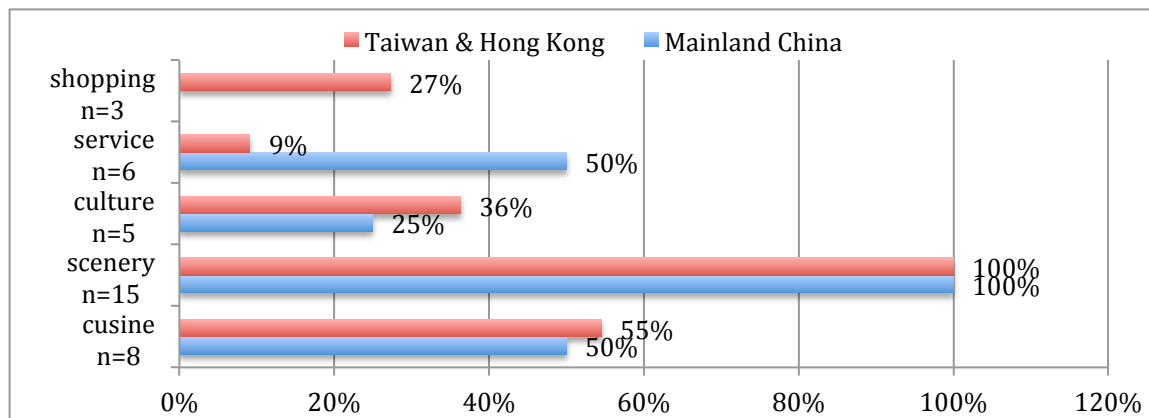


Figure 3.11 Satisfaction Level

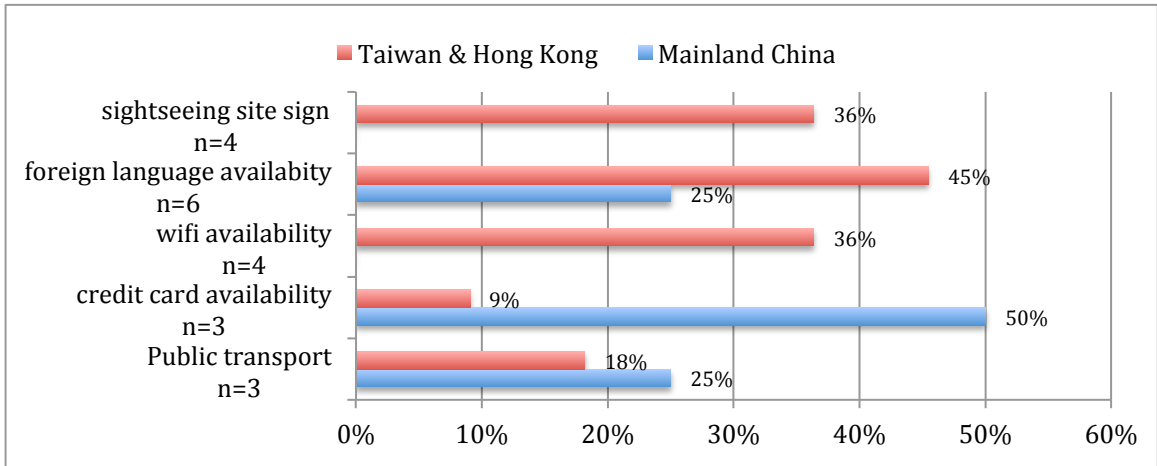


Figure 3.12 Further Improvement

Figure 3.13 shows the results of the question regarding to the tour type of interest if able to visit Wakkanai again. It illustrates that most of the respondents prefer an Island tour (47%) as their first choice. The second preferred tour was a winter tour (36%) as respondent’s first choice. The least preferred was the culture tour in which 79% of the respondents voted as tour they would least like to experience. It is interesting to find that the island tour to Rishiri and Rebun, which is a popular domestic sightseeing destination, was chosen as the second lowest tour that inbound tourist were interested in. It can be implied from the aspect of travel expectations that overseas tourists may have different expectations compared with domestic tourists. Or, it may simply be due to lack of awareness to Rishiri and Rebun Island.

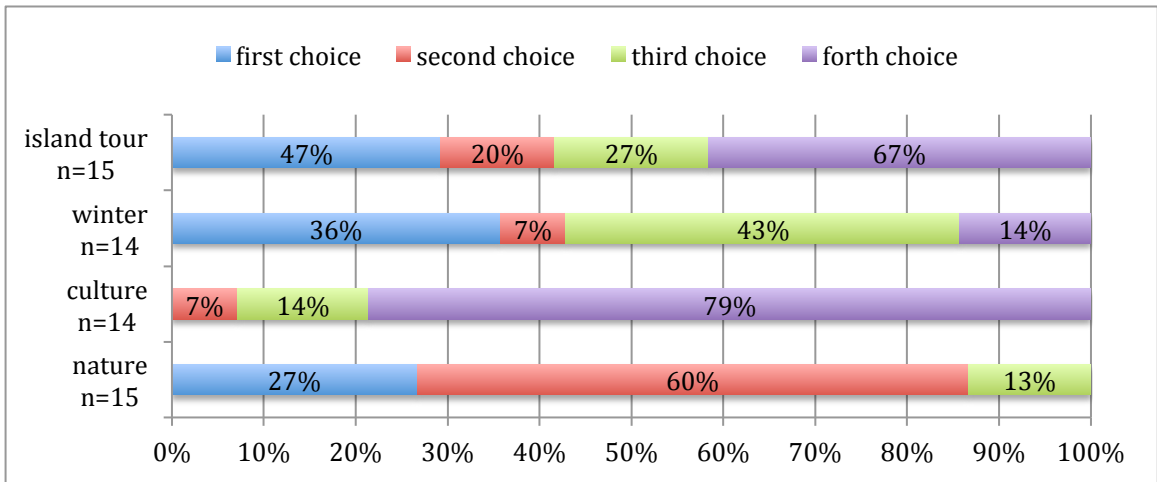


Figure 3.13 Interested Tour Type

3.2 Aquarium guidebook in Chinese

Based upon the guidebook of 2015, new data was added to the Chinese version (both simple and traditional Chinese). Compared with the old version, considering most Chinese speaking people are unfamiliar with exhibitions of northern cold seawater habitats, the guidebook was made by describing the exhibit’s ecological character and recipe of edible fish. However, some of the exhibits are unable to be found in Chinese therefore

they are not included in the guidebook. In order to obtain a broad opinion about the attractiveness of the aquarium, two field trips were arranged (16th and 19th December, 2016) for international students and as a result, the design of guidebook was made based on international students' impressions of the aquarium.

3.3 Discussion

Only 15 valid respondents were collected, which makes the result circumscribed. Further research is expected to be conducted.

As illustrated in figure 3.6 and 3.7, online travel agencies or websites, travel magazines and guidebooks are the most used media to obtain information, however, visitors from different regions tend to possess different preferences. Visitors from Taiwan and Hong Kong tend to obtain information through a variety of media, and, also tend to search through official websites such as the homepage of Tourism Association or guidebook. Additionally, visitors from Mainland China tend to obtain information through a more personal means such as social media (SNS) or simply learn from friends.

Differing from the typical Chinese tourist, "shopping" is not considered as the main reason to visit Wakkanai. Instead, the motivation of visit is scenery or landmarks. Cape Soya is the most popular sight-seeing destination among visitors from both regions. Rishiri and Rebun Island, Lake Onuma Bird House, Wakkanai Park Wakkanai Port Northern Breakwater Dome are also popular among visitors from Mainland China, while Former Seto House, Cape Noshappu and Hot Spring are popular among those from Taiwan and Hong Kong.

In terms of transportation within Wakkanai City, rental cars are the most common means of transportation. Due to driver license regulations, it was assumed that rental cars would not be available for visitors from Mainland China, however, it was interesting to find that two out of nine rental car users are from Mainland China. It indicates that due to individual background differences, it is no longer practical to think in this way of categorization.

For further improvement, most of respondents from Mainland China commented that credit car and foreign language availability as well as public transport need to be improved. However, as those from Taiwan and Hong Kong tend to use rental to get around Wakkanai City, foreign language availability, sight seeing sign and wi-fi availability are mentioned.

Finally, as mentioned above, because scenery is the highest motivating factor to visit Wakkanai, the island tours to Rishiri and Rebun are the most popular tours if visiting Wakkanai again, meanwhile, Island tour is also the second least tour type respondents claim to willing to participate. Considering these results and the current tour package combining Wakkanai City and the Islands, a tour package with more variety needs to be created in order to meet the different requirement. When looking at tourism development of Wakkanai City in the long-term, more information about Wakkanai's history through social and paper media such as guidebooks and travel magazines are needed to improve tourists knowledge and interest in Wakkanai City.

4 Conclusion and Recommendation

The first objective of this study is to understand the motivation and expectation of inbound tourists from Mainland China, Taiwan and Hong Kong. The result described in the previous chapters demonstrates that a majority of visitors to Wakkanai City are middle-aged people or people in their 20's. Among them, visitors from Taiwan and Hong Kong remain to be the most abundant. Visitors from both regions tend to fly with major airlines when coming to Hokkaido, and while New Chitose Airport acts as the main point of entry, local airports such as Obihiro and Asahigawa are also used. The key findings of this study are that instead of shopping, scenery and natural landmarks are the key motivation of tourists from both regions to visit Wakkanai City.

Another key finding of this study is the information source used by tourists from different regions varies. Tourist from Taiwan and Hong Kong use social media and official media. These media are usually used to obtain relatively intensive and specialized information towards a person's travel destination. Therefore, the dispatch of information through both social and paper media is needed. While visitors from Mainland China tend to rely on friends reviews and social media, these contain less specialized information towards travel destination. It indicates that to attract those from Mainland China, other than using official media, social media reviews should be the first priority. Since Island tour is the most popular tour type, reviews regarding to those types of tours are considered to be important.

In terms of means of transportation, in general, rental cars are the most used method, especially among visitors from Taiwan and Hong Kong. However, half of the respondents from Mainland China also claim to use rental cars. Therefore, information in regards to means of transportation for tourists from different regions shows no significant differences.

Finally, as mentioned previously that scenery is the main motivation for tourists to visit Wakkanai City, tourists preference from different regions vary. It implies that when targeting at different tourists, reviews or the emphasis of travel destination varies. In the meantime, it is imperative to provide more various tour packages in order to meet the costumers' needs.

The second objective of this study is to design a Chinese guidebook. Taking into consideration the interests of tourists, instead of only describing fish itself, cooking recipe are also introduced for the first time.

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● 英文要約

As a part the project of “university relevance towards the solution of regional problems” (Kuroki, 2016), this study focus at inbound tourism development. One of the study objectives is to produce aquarium guidebook in Chinese. The other one, which is also the most important one is conducting questionnaire survey targets at Chinese speaking regions which is the main source of inbound tourist in Wakkanai. It is considered fundamentally important to clarify their travel motivation, information source, means of transportation and their level of satisfaction. Based upon the result, recommendation was made in order to provide Japanese style “omotenashi” to visitors and furthermore, contributes to inbound tourism development.

A total of 15 respondents are collected, nearly half (46%) of them are from Taiwan and 36% are from Hong Kong and rest of those are from China Mainland. Most of the respondents are the young or middle-aged people at their 40's. Although most of the respondents came to Hokkaido by taking major airlines through New Chitose Airport, airport located at Asahigawa and Obihiro were also used. Besides, other transportation such as LCC and train (JR) are used as well. Regards to the means of transportation within Wakkanai City, rental car are the most used method, bus and by foot came to the next. One of the key findings of this study is that some respondents from China Mainland also claim to use rental car to get around Wakkanai. It is considered due to personal experience. It indicates the need of rental car for visitors from China Mainland may increase in the future. Another key finding is that information source between respondents from different regions differs. Visitors from Taiwan and Hong Kong tend to look up information through variety of media, among which, official media (official website and guidebook) are act as an important information source. On the other hand, respondents from China Mainland mainly reply on friend review or social media. In terms of travel motivation, it is clear that nature resource such as scenery and landmark are the main reason respondents came to Wakkanai. Nevertheless, depending on different regions, preference of sight-seeing spot varies. It is considered due to respondents obtained information from different type of source, as a result, visitors from China Mainland tend to visit place that are popular on social media, while those from Taiwan and Hong Kong tend to visit place that are introduced through official website or travel magazine. Each respondent claim to satisfied with the scenery during the trip and half of them are satisfied with cuisine, which indicates that nature resource remain to be the most attractiveness of Wakkanai. In addition, half respondents from China Mainland considered it is necessary to improve credit card availability in the future in order to enhance the degree of satisfaction. Meanwhile, foreign language and wi-fi availability and sight-seeing site sign are mentioned by those from Taiwan and Hong Kong.

Translation of guidebook into Chinese was conducted by author, besides, for convey the attractiveness of the aquarium from a different perspective, field trip for international student was arranged on December 16th and 19th, 2016. Based on the impression of visiting aquarium, the cover page of the guidebook was designed by international student.