

## Tourism Inventory of Okayama Prefecture: An Analysis on Main Sightseeing Spots in terms of the Number of Tourists

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At the early stage of this paper, Okayama prefecture was analyzed by the author focusing on the tendency of main sightseeing-areas based on the number of tourists for three decades (Ichiminami, 2002). In this study, the main sightseeing spots in Okayama pref. are also examined and the developments are explained in a more detailed and updated perspective by extending over current features and the number of tourists. One of the important reasons in a significant increase in tourists in Okayama is the opening of the highways, the bullet train and cross-linking of the Seto Ohashi Bridge. At the same time, there are some waves in the increase or decrease of the tourist trends appearing from several vital developments such as environmental, climatic, social, economic and spatial. In this regard, research objectives of the study are mainly based on investigating and making a comprehensive study on main sightseeing spots in Okayama pref. to find new tourism values and to provide a tourism inventory of Okayama pref. by means of information, data and clues from the field in/between the tourist destinations such as hotel guests, gardens and castles. Therefore, Okayama pref. has a rich potential of historical and cultural heritage in terms of spatial planning and growth. The important point is that the structural adaptation between historical and cultural assets and the city life should be provided and protected for domestic and foreign tourism as much as creating better futures in health tourism, gastronomy tourism, cultural tourism, belief tourism, congress tourism, thematic tourism and local tourism.

**Keywords:** *tourists, sightseeing spots, tourism inventory, Okayama prefecture*

### 1 INTRODUCTION

Japan is consisted of total of 29 national parks, 55 quasi-national parks, and many environmental

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preservation areas and main tourist resources are sightseeing, natural beauties, historical areas, recreational facilities, regional specialties, cuisine and local festivals (Gotoh et al. 2012: pp.131-132). Tourism appeals depend on a wide range of resources in the destinations with the existence of natural resources and cultural services or the interaction with local societies which obviously affect the preferences of tourists. Tourists mostly visit other places around their main destination depending on the attractiveness,

resources and dynamics of the region in the neighborhood triggering high levels of regional GDP (Gross Domestic Product) or value added in tourism (Romão and Saito, 2016: pp.2-17). Green tourism is also very important in Japan and described as a range of tourism activities conducted in rural areas, or semi-natural landscapes between urban and rural communities like an interaction between food producers and consumers (Chakraborty and Asamizu, 2014: p.73).

On the other hand, the expansion of railways in Japan, social interaction is increased by travelling sightseeing spots near lines and the JNR (Japanese National Railways) shinkansen network was expanded over the years and reached Okayama in 1972. Highway structures also expanded across Japan around the 1970s and regional airports started with comprehensive domestic routes resulting in diversification and individualization of travel ways (Saimyo, 2010: pp.6-8). Japanese local government authorities have faced with the challenges of globalization and entered a new stage how to use the opportunities because not only governmental bodies but also related societies are under the pressure of self-decision at the local level, and thus decentralization is expected to affect the structural relationships throughout Japanese society (Menju, 2003: pp.16-18). Also, Okayama pref. needs to spend more efforts to provide a satisfying "City Planning Regulation of Okayama Prefecture Welfare" focusing on safe and comfortable society about all people including the elderly and the disabled (Jung-Sook and Adachi, 2009: p.3567).

As it is summarized above, there are several environmental, social and economic research fields which have global academic values by making contributions to plans, creation of new business areas, developing the spatial features for education and tourism sector. The researches in these fields may also

improve awareness of Okayama at international levels. Finally, in the globalizing world, environmental and spatial developments have vital dimensions for all nations. Different policies are needed in different countries or regions depending on environmental, climate and socioeconomic problems they have. The tourism sector should be considered as a tool for improving the cooperation between the countries, regions and cities from these perspectives. In this regard, research objectives of the study are mainly based on investigating and making a comprehensive study on main sightseeing spots in Okayama pref.

One of the main statistics in early stage of the study (Ichiminami, 2002) that the authors used to examine the trend of major tourists destinations in Okayama pref. was the tourism statistics between 1970 and 2000. As more than a decade has passed since then, we re-examine the trend of main sightseeing spots in Okayama pref. mainly from 1995 to 2013 focusing on the updated material. As a basic material, we used the annual tourism statistics which were published and available on internet in the tourism division of Okayama pref. The general explanations are based on the data figures and tables with some pictures photographed by the authors.

There are many factors in the development of countries and, in order to sustain the development, some important socio-economic factors need to be given. When considered on a sectoral basis in the developed countries, high-technology products and services sector appeared more important. In particular, determining the value and potential of a region very well, as a requirement of globalization, today has much more importance than the past. Therefore, in this study, we tried to evaluate the development and the potential of Okayama pref. from broader aspects focusing on the tourism sector as one of the service sector components with the current data by examining and explaining the main sightseeing spots in Okayama

pref. With the results of this study, there will be a tourism inventory and guidance for foreign visitors about the region. Also, there will be an important contribution to rural plans and business projects in terms of public and private sector needs. Our research is conducted by the analysis of the tourism potentials in Okayama pref. with some ideas at global levels. In this regard, an important research necessity is appeared that a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis of the region should be done in this context at national and international levels. Specific case and comparative studies may also increase the competitiveness and awareness of Okayama in the world.

## 2 EXPLANATION AND ANALYSIS OF MAIN SIGHTSEEING SPOTS

### 2.1 Overview

Since the 1990s, the tourist destinations in Japan are to be registered as a world heritage site by UNESCO, 16 places of cultural heritage and 4 places of natural heritage are specified in July, 2016. A large number of tourists tend to visit tourist destination that was registered as a World Heritage Site from the more distant areas. Near Okayama pref., Both the Atomic Bomb Dome and Itsukushima Shrine in Hiroshima pref. were registered in Dec., 1996. Tourists from foreign countries visit them immediately via Hiroshima airport. Alternatively, after visiting Tokyo, Kyoto, Nara, and Osaka, they may tend to visit the Hiroshima pref. rather than Okayama pref.

Although the proximity to airport, the Shinkansen or bullet train as a high-speed transportation and the highway, and huge accommodation function are major

attractions for the tourist destinations, the ability to attract customers of the tourist destination which is not a world heritage site, is, in fact, quite small when compared with that of the world heritage.

While expecting such a thing, we try to check the number of hotel <sup>1)</sup> guest of 2015 by pref. (**Fig. 1**). The number of hotel guests in Tokyo is dramatically large, Hokkaido and Osaka continues to this. In western Japan, Okinawa and Fukuoka have numerous number of hotel guests. In the Chugoku region, guests in Hiroshima pref. is the largest, Okayama pref. is only about half of it. Many of guests in Chiba and Shizuoka pref. are believed to be due to the impact of Tokyo Disneyland and DisneySea and Mt. Fuji. Consequently, it can be determined that the importance of transportation and accommodation function is generally valid.

Hence, there are fewer number of tourist arrivals of Okayama pref. where there is no tourist destination of the world heritage class, compared to the prefectures of the surrounding. It must be considered in a sense as a matter of course. When the number of tourists comprised of both day visitors and hotel guests to Okayama pref. is considered, we should pay attention to not only the examination and improvement of sightseeing facilities and tourist attractions but also the activity of sightseeing organizations, the creation of information related and how to publish it.

It may be not directly related to this study, Sasage (2007) examined in detail the history of tourism administration after the Meiji era in Okayama pref. with reference to a variety of literature. The activity and advertising of the sightseeing organization is bound to the number of tourists, however, he did not mention it at all.

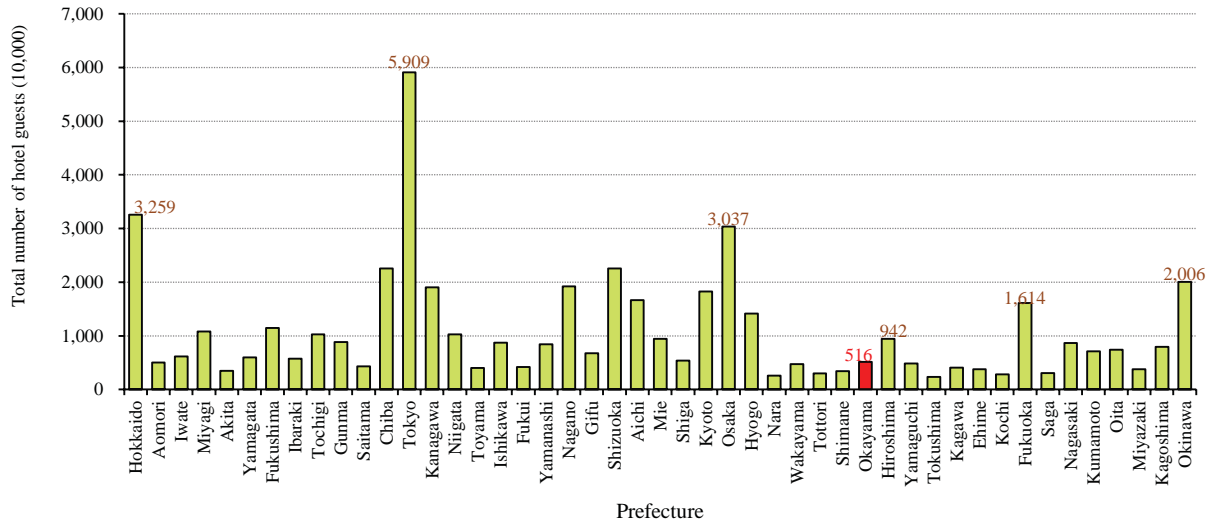


Fig. 1 Statistical survey on hotel guests in Japan in 2015

Source: Ministry of land, infrastructure, transport and tourism (Japan Tourism Agency)

Then, we overview the major changes of tourism and transportation in Okayama pref. during the second half of the 20th century or later (Table 1) in reference to Ichiminami (2002). Okayama airport was opened in 1962 on the southern outskirts in Okayama city and in the immediate vicinity of the Seto Inland Sea, but in 1988, the new airport was opened at the northwestern outskirts in Okayama city. Domestic flights bound for Tokyo (Haneda) have been flying to 10 flights a day, and Sapporo and Okinawa 1 flight every day in service, respectively. Although the changes in the international flights are often occurs mainly due to economic conditions, as of July 2016, 1 flight to Shanghai every day, almost every day 1 flight to Seoul, 2 flights a week in Hong Kong, and 3 flights per week to Taipei, in service.

In the first half of the 1970s, the toll roads were opened on the outskirt of Kurashiki and Okayama cities and in the vicinity of Daisen and Hiruzen mountains. Later, all of them were transferred to the free prefectural road. In addition, the Chugoku Expressway had extended since the mid-1970s and it was opened in the east-west direction, that is, from Suita in Osaka pref. to Shimonoseki in Yamaguchi pref.

in 1983. The Sanyo Expressway in Okayama pref. had extended since the early 1980s and it was opened in 1993. Of the Chugoku Expressway, the north-south direction was opened to traffic in the 1990s. The interval between Yonago and Ochiai was opened in 1992 and the one between Okayama and Hokubo in 1997.

The Sanyo Shinkansen which links Okayama to Shin-Osaka was opened in 1972 and the section between Okayama and Hakata (Fukuoka pref.) was opened in 1975. The number of tourists of Okayama pref. in 1972 rose approximately 70% in comparison with 1970. 2-story Seto-Ohashi linking Kurashiki and Sakaide (Kagawa pref.) needed the construction period of 9.5 years and was opened on April 10, 1988, and a railroad runs at the lower part. The number of the tourists of Okayama pref. in 1988 (3.72 million person) rose 17% from the last year by the opening of a new airport and Seto-Ohashi. Looking at the number of tourists in recent years of Okayama pref., the opening of the Sanyo Shinkansen Line and the Seto Ohashi is greatly related to the increase in the number of customers.

**Table 1** Major changes in the tourist areas and traffic in Okayama prefecture

Year	Major changes
1962	Opening of Okayama Airport (Urayasu)
1963	Hiruzen plateau had been incorporated to Daisen Oki National Park.
1966	Reconstruction of Okayama Castle
1970	Opening of Washuzan Skyline (Free in April 1995. Currently, Okayama prefectural road, 393 Route)
1970	Opening of Hiruzen - Daisen Skyline (Free in July 1993. Currently, Okayama and Tottori prefectural road, 114 Route)
1972, Mar.	Opening of the Sanyo Shinkansen (Okayama - Shin-Osaka), Mar. 15
1974	Opening of the Chugoku Expressway (Mimasaka - Ochiai)
1974	Opening of the Okayama Blue Line (Free in April 2004. Currently, Okayama prefectural road, 397 Route)
1975, Mar.	Opening of the Sanyo Shinkansen (Okayama - Hakata), Mar. 10
1975	Opening of the Chugoku Expressway (Suita - Ochiai)
1976	Opening of the Chugoku Expressway (Hokubo - Ochiai)
1978	Opening of the Chugoku Expressway (All routes in Okayama pref.)
1979	The streets with white wall along the Kurashiki river had been specified in the traditional buildings preservation district in Japan.
1982	Opening of the Sanyo Expressway (Bizen - Tatsuno-nishi)
1982, July	Completion of the electrification, West Japan Railway, Hakubi Line
1983	Opening of the Chugoku Expressway (Suita - Shimonoseki)
1988	Opening of the Sanyo Expressway (Hayashima - Fukuyama-higashi)
1988, Mar.	Opening of new Okayama Airport (Nichioji)
1988, Apr.	Opening of Seto Ohashi, April 10
1990	Completion of the International Racing Track (Aida-cho)
1991, Sept.	Completion of the Symphony Hall at Omote-cho, Sept. 20
1992	Opening of the Chugoku Expressway (Yonago - Ochiai)
1993	Opening of the Sanyo Expressway (Okayama Junction - Bizen)
1994, Dec.	Opening of Chizu Express, The 3rd sector railway, Dec. 3
1997	Opening of the Chugoku Expressway (Okayama - Hokubo)
1997	Opening of Okayama Farmers Markets in two locations
1997, July	Opening of Kurashiki Tivoli Park, July 18 (Closed down on Jan. 1, 2009)
1999, Jan.	Opening of Ibara railway, Ibara line (Soja - Kannabe), Jan. 11
2001, Mar.	Opening of Universal Studios Japan (Osaka), Mar. 31

Edited using Ichiminami (2002)

**Fig. 2** indicates the number of tourist arrivals in Okayama pref. by transportation. The number of tourists to visit Okayama pref. after the 1990s was about 25 million people. There was, however, no significant change and there was a slight decrease in the 21st century. As can be seen in Fig. 2, the maximum number of tourists is consistently the use of private cars, accounting for about 60-70%. The number of tourists to use the tourist bus, once, had more than 8 million people, however, it gradually decreased and it became less than 5 million people. Its utilization ratio was 31% in 1988, then, it has declined 20 percent level. The number of tourists to use railway has been announced since 2011 and it is about 300 million people (10 percent level). Tourists to take a bus or a taxi are no more and the number of users has decreased. In particular, the decrease of the number of tourists to use a taxi was notable and the number became about one fifth during 20 years.

In the subsequent sections, taking into account

the convenience of on the display of diagrams, Okayama pref. is divided into the following 4 regions, and the changes in the number of tourists are described; b) Okayama city, Tamano city and Setouchi city, c) Kurashiki city and basin of the Takahashi river area, d) Tsuyama city and Maniwa city, and e) the eastern part of Okayama prefecture. In addition, the period covered is from 1995 through 2013 in many cases.

## 2.2 Okayama, Tamano and Setouchi area

**Fig.3** describes the number of tourists visiting the typical tourist destinations in Okayama, Tamano and Setouchi area. Although the number of tourists to Shibukawa in Tamano city was about 1.4 million people in the past, it has been often more than 2 million people in the 21st century. There are Shibukawa beaches (tourists in 2014 were about 47,000 people), marine aquarium (about 85,000 people a year), camping place, park to play with small

animals (about 40,000 people), toy kingdom (about 300,000 people) in the vicinity of Shibukawa.

Recent tourist arrivals of Okayama Korakuen garden (In the following text, simply sometimes referred to as Korakuen) is about 600,000-800,000 people, the fluctuations due to year is small. When we take into account that it is a significant tourist destination, tourists are not so many. According to Ichiminami (2002), the number of tourists to Korakuen

was about 1.14 million people in 1970, but it was more than 2 million people in 1972 when the Sanyo Shinkansen was opened between Okayama and Shin-Osaka. However, then, it continued to decrease to 1.19 million people in 1978. It was more than 1.2 million people in 1979 and 1980, but it had been sluggish to the level of 1 million people from 1981 through 1987. It increased to 1.53 million people in 1988 when the Seto Ohashi Bridge and new Okayama

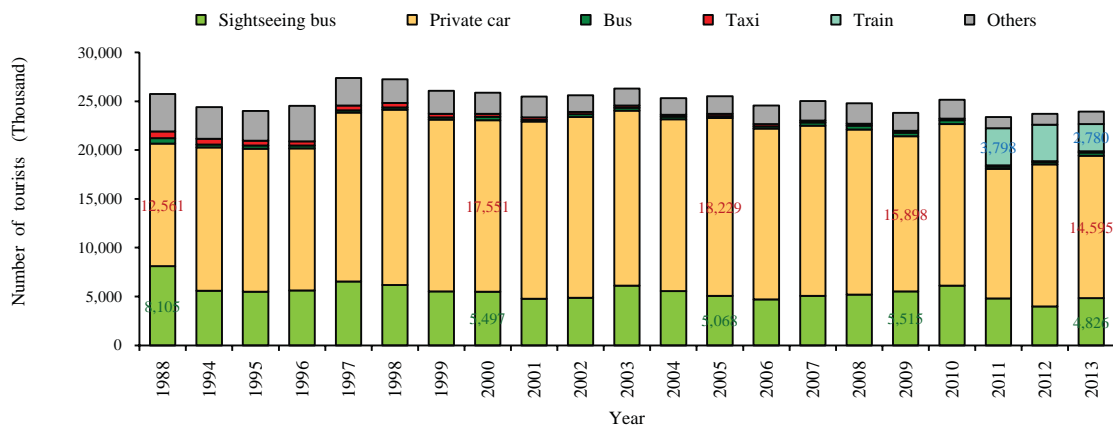


Fig. 2 The number of tourists arrivals in Okayama prefecture by transportation

Source; Tourism statistics of Okayama prefecture.

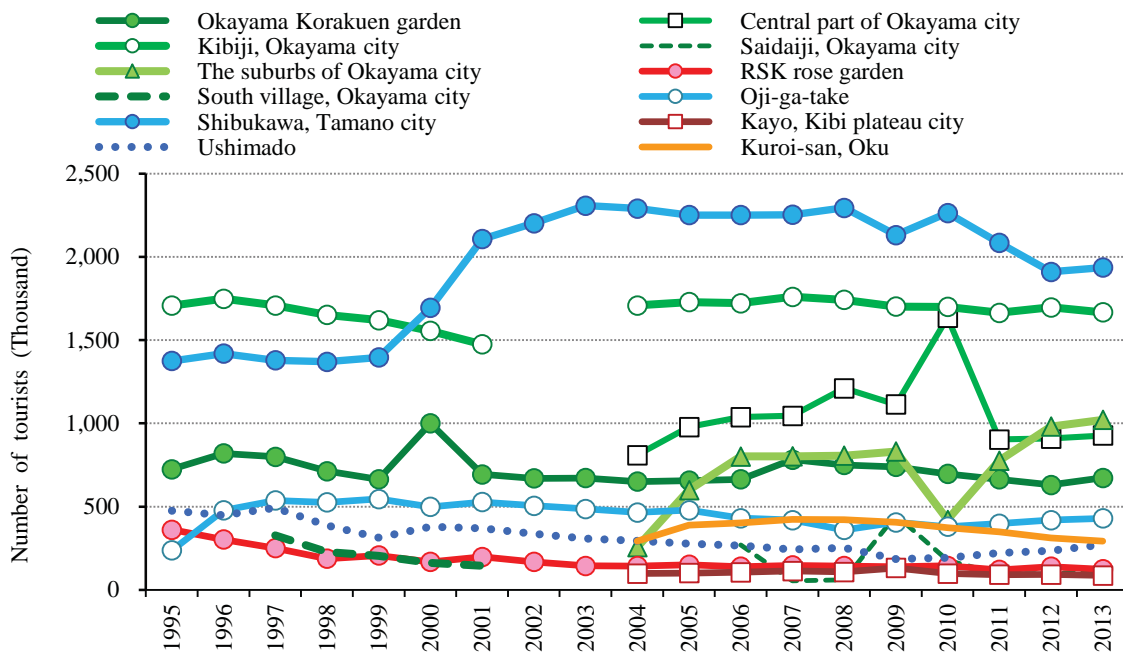


Fig. 3 The number of tourists in Okayama, Tamano and Setouchi area

Source; Tourism statistics of Okayama prefecture





**Fig. 4** Grove of the cherry blossoms in full bloom photographed by the author on April 2, 2014.



**Fig. 5** Tea picking festival in May

airport was opened, but then began to decline. It decreased to less than 1 million people in 1994. After that, it has resigned to the level of similarity as the only exception of 1 million people in 2000.

Throughout the year, flowers and trees are beautiful in Korakuen. **Fig. 4** depicts the cherry blossoms in the beginning of April and **Fig.5** shows tea picking festival in May. Tea is picked in May every year by the young women who live in Kaita area in Mimasaka city. **Fig. 6** shows traditional rice planting festival. The event has been implemented since 1962. The group plants glutinous rice with drums and singing and sustains its tradition in the Tessei area of Niimi city.

**Fig.7** indicates Oga lotus in Korakuen. Since 1961, the event has been made to enjoy the flowering of lotus in Korakuen from early morning. At a time when lotus is flowering, tourists can gain admission from 4:00 am to Korakuen <sup>2)</sup>. **Fig.8** gives an example of the view of the usual tea plantation. **Fig.9** is a view of the pond which is located close to the tea plantation. **Fig.10** is indicative of the guest house. When the tourists climb Yuishinzan hill, the buildings are visible on the outside of Korakuen. However, if customers

walk normally, such a trivial concern does not occur. These are fine matters and it occasionally becomes a hot topic in the opinion of the people <sup>3)</sup>.

Okayama Castle is lighted up the same as Korakuen garden between the night of Aug., and the visitor can enjoy a night view from an evening to half past 9 at night (**Fig.11**). Many stalls of the tent are open at Korakuen, Okayama Castle, and near Ishiyama Park along the Asahi-kawa River. In the stalls of the tent, mainly various foods, drinks, and ice creams are sold and served by the locals. The light up with the candle was directed in Okayama Castle during a period at time to cheer up an ancestral ghost from Aug. 12 to 16, 2016. The general theme in 2016 was beauties of nature composed of flowers, birds, wind, and the moon and the like, but a small theme changed every day. The theme of the 12<sup>th</sup> was love feeling of the peony, the one of the 13<sup>th</sup> was “Come, and come Okayama”, the one of 14<sup>th</sup> was full bloom of the cherry blossom, the one of 15<sup>th</sup> a story in the moonlit night when a flower bloomed, and the one of 16<sup>th</sup> charming sights in summer.



**Fig. 6** Traditional rice planting festival in June



**Fig. 7** Oga lotus in bloom in July



**Fig. 8** Tea garden photographed by the author on May 21, 2011



**Fig. 9** Sawa-no-ike pond photographed from Yuishinzan hill by the author on May 21, 2011



**Fig. 10** *Enyo-tei* and *Kakumei-kan* (Guest house) photographed by the author on April 2, 2016



**Fig. 11** Night view of Okayama Castle photographed by the author on Aug. 13, 2016





**Fig. 12** Main hall and the hall of worship of Kibitsu shrine  
photographed by the author (June 18, 2016)

Tourists to Kibiji of Okayama city have about 1.7 million people a year and there is no large fluctuation (as shown in Fig.3). The picture of Kibitsu shrine is given in **Fig.12**, Kibitsu-hiko shrine, Saijo-inari (another name is Takamatsu-inari and it is the temple which have maintained to pray both God and Buddha), Takamatsu castle ruins, and Tsukuri-yama tumulus which is the largest in Okayama pref., and the huge ancient tomb is the fourth largest of the scale in Japan. Kibitsu shrine is located in the northwest suburbs of Okayama city. It has been known by a heroic and unique architecture of the shrine, the ritual, which divines fortune in the sound emitted by the caldron, and the model in the legend which Momotaro subjugated demons.

Data on the number of tourists to the central area in Okayama city is limited to data after 2004. It is normally about 0.8-1 million people, however, it was about 1.6 million people in 2010 (Fig.3). There are more than 100,000 tourists a year, in Okayama castle, prefectural museum of art, Ikeda zoo (Attendance in 2013 was 12.1 thousand people), Okayama city museum (Similarly, about 20.6 thousand people), and the like.

There is an increasing trend of tourists to the suburb of Okayama city in the long term. It was more than 1 million people in 2013. RSK Rose Garden was

opened in the western outskirts of Okayama city in 1974. More than 100,000 tourists visited it and the peaks are both from April through June and October and November. The number of visitors has reduced, it was 0.3 million people in about 20 years ago and was about 12.5 thousand people in 2013.

South Village is located in the southern suburbs of Okayama city. Previously, it was the agricultural park managed by Okayama pref. In the opening of the park with the image of southern Europe in 1997, it originally had about 330,000 visitors a year. But, then the visitors decreased significantly, management agency also changed, and it became a facility which can be free admission. For those who prefer the plants, Handa-yama botanical garden is in the northwest outskirts of Okayama city (similarly, about 5.6 thousand people).

Oji-ga-take whose altitude is 234m, is the mountain which can be easily climbed with hiking mood. From there, Seto Ohashi and the Seto Inland Sea are able to overlook, there are 0.4-0.5 million tourists a year. There is also a paragliding flight point. There are marine aquarium (similarly, about 9.4 thousand people), toy kingdom (similarly, about 32.3 thousand people), and animal park (similarly, 3.6 about thousand people) in Shibukawa area, they are mainly crowded with family visitors (Fig.3).

There are about 100,000 tourists to Kayo and Kibi plateau city. There are resting places along the main road, campgrounds, and hot springs. Okayama pref. announced a new urban vision of Kibi area in 1973, and it promoted the development. However, the plan has been, in effect, frozen since the mid-1990s.

More than 400,000 tourists per year visited Ushimado in the mid-1990s. However, it was then decreased, it experienced the level of 200,000 people in the 21st century and it temporally decreased to less than 200,000 people. There are olive groves, yacht harbor, beaches, Setouchi city museum of art, traditional townscapes, hotel, pensions, and inns. Views of the sea of Ushimado called as "Aegean Sea in Japan" is very exclusive and exceptional. Since the tourism value of the unique scenery is great, the certain tourism demand has not changed significantly during the years (Fig.3).

In Oku and Kuroi-san, there is the tourist demand of about 300,000-400,000 people a year. Because Kuroi-san is along the Okayama Blue Line and it is the rest area, it is easy to visit by car. There is the pool for children (available mainly in July and Aug.) and oranges gardens (available from the mid-Oct. to Dec.). Although Okayama Blue Line had been a toll road which was opened from 1974 through 1977, it has been free of charge since 2004. As the traffic volume is large in the line, it plays the bypass function of National Highway Route 2. Nearby, there is a museum that exhibits the traditional Japanese swords; the number of visitors in 2013 was about 3.3 thousand people (Fig.3).

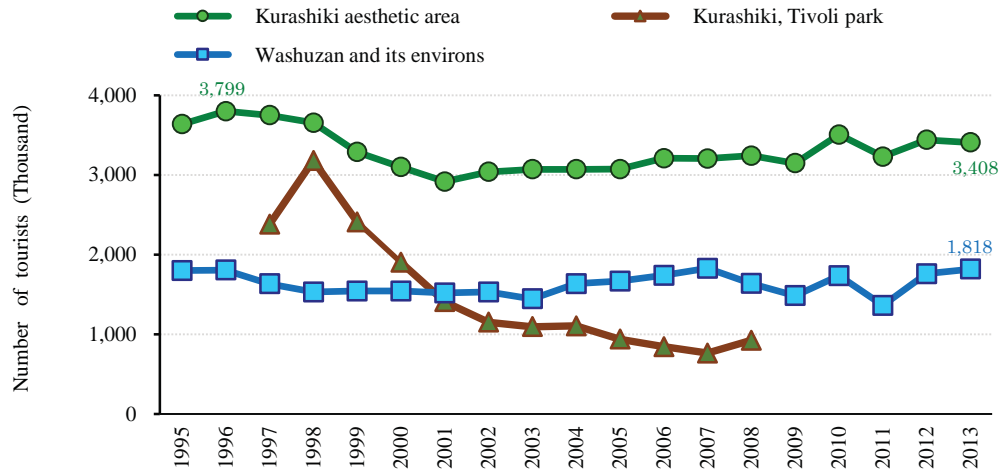
### 2.3 Kurashiki and Basin of the Takahashi River Area

Katayama (2012) examined some topics on Kurashiki aesthetic area such as history, townscape, folk handicraft (Sakazu crockery, woodwork, Japanese paper, Kurashiki glass, and figured mat), and he sent

praise on the foundation of the Ohara art museum in 1930 and the development by the Oharas. He also commented on "Magosaburo OHARA utilized the wealth for social service to the maximum, redecorated old storehouse being conscious of aesthetic value of the cityscape by the folk handicraft, and established Kurashiki folk handicraft building in 1948 and Kurashiki archaeology building in 1950".

Zhang and Ichiminami (2006) briefly investigated the consciousness of residents about preservation activity of the townscapes on Kurashiki aesthetic area. Inoike (2013) asked the tourists (N=597) to Kurashiki aesthetic area, the means of transportation, travel form, stay-tour time, and the number of times you have visited this district in the past. As a result, traffic ratios were 43% by automobile, 33 % by train, 16% by bus. In the travel form, family and friends were 34%, respectively, single 15%, and group 11%. In the stay-tour time, a few hours 44%, one day accommodation tourism 24%, tours of about one day (without accommodation) 23%, 2 nights or more 7%. Lastly, in the number of visits, once (the first time) was 37%, twice 18%, three times 15%, four times 5%, five times 3%, and six times or more 22%. It is also expected to further deepening of the investigation.

In recent years the number of tourists who visit Kurashiki aesthetic area substantially maintains the level of 3 million people (Fig.13). It is a still most in Okayama pref. However, according to Ichiminami (2002), the number of tourists to Kurashiki and Mizushima region was less than 1 million people in 1970. Kurashiki is a well-known as a destination of the group travelers like the school trip. As part of the national publicity in 1970 in the title of Discover Japan -Japan, the beautiful, and Myself - by Japan National Railways, Kurashiki was also advertised. This publicity was also featured in women's magazines; as a result, it was consistent with the change in social conditions, such as the expansion of



**Fig. 13** The number of tourists in Kurashiki area

Source; Tourism statistics of Okayama pref.



**Fig. 14** Kurashiki river, willow trees and whitewashed houses of Japanese style in Kurashiki aesthetic area photographed by the author (Nov. 1, 2015)

personal travel and an increase in the female traveller (**Fig.14**). It was more than 2 million people in 1972, when the Sanyo Shinkansen was opened. After that, although it decreased in 1977, then, the rapid increase experienced as more than 3 million people in 1979 (designation of traditional buildings), and more than 5 million people in 1988. Then, it continued to decline until the end of the 20th century. Near the Kurashiki aesthetic area, some of the tourist facilities are present<sup>4)</sup>.

Among the chaos, intricate economy, Kurashiki Tivoli Park was opened in July, 1997 and it attracted 3.18 million tourists in the next year. But, then, the

number of tourists continued to decrease, the tourists become less than 1 million people after 2005. It was, in fact, closed down at the end of 2008 (Fig.13). Although it had been originally planned the opening of the park in Okayama city, the opposition movement became stronger from residents against sloppy management policy and the plan was frustrated. Then, Okayama pref. presented the plan in Kurashiki city; it was supposed to be the creation of a park on the north side of Kurashiki station. However, since the Hankyu Corporation withdrew from the management on the way, it was not accompanied by a dense know-how of the park management. For this reason, the park was

supposed to be closed down in a short period of time. The results were presented the realities and challenges of modern urban planning as a lesson. After that, although commercial facilities were located on the site of the park, the change of the management agency was confused. When the tourists facilities are run by the public institutions like the prefecture, it may fail as Kurashiki Tivoli Park, Okayama agriculture parks, both south and north. Of course, there may be a case of failure to businesses in the private sector. The important fundamental is to clarify the whereabouts of responsibility and to fulfil the responsibility. In addition, if the management fails, citizens, residents, company employees, or shareholders, should have a strong interest in how to handle the debt. In particular, the people of wealthy nations to be less concerned about the uses of taxes, it may be going to change.

Although tourists to Washuzan was about 1.98 million people in 1972, then it decreased, and it was less than 1 million people from 1978 through 1983. The tourists increased after 1984 and it became 3.46 million people in 1988, however, after that, it decreased. In recent years, there are approximately 1.5-2 million people of a stable tourism demand in Washuzan and its periphery (Fig.13). There are Mt. Washuzan, Brazilian Washuzan Highland (leisure land), the townscape of Shimo-tsui including the wholesaler by small cargo vessel, and the fishing ports to handle the landing, such as sea bream, squid, and octopus. In particular, the view of the Seto Ohashi Bridge and the Seto Inland Sea from Washuzan Highland is really great and exceptional (**Figs. 15 and 16**). In recent years, there has been a growing interest in the Seto Inland Sea. The islands of the Seto Inland Sea, there remain a traditional culture and beautiful natural scenery. The Seto Inland Sea, as traffic artery, has played a role in propagating a lot of new culture from the old days. Setouchi international art festival, at a frequency of once in three years, began in 2010. By

holding the arts festival, we are trying to transmit the charm of the Seto Inland Sea in the exchanges between visitors and the islands residents. The residents in Okayama pref. should deepen the strong awareness of the views of the sea.

According to the estimation of Okayama pref., tourists to Yuga-san in Kurashiki city was more than 300,000 people a year in the late 1980s, however, recently there is a tourism demand of about 200,000-300,000 people. There is also the tourism demand with approximately 100,000 people in Tamashima area including Entsuji temple, but tourists tend to decrease. Tamashima district is located in the western part of Kurashiki city. Once the harbor was opened in Tamashima in the early Edo period, it was called "Small Osaka in the Sanyo" and it was a port town which represents the western part of Okayama pref. In the town of Tamashima, there are still vestiges of the time such as the traces of wholesaler and harbor. There is also Sami beach and the visitors are about 40 thousand people a year (**Fig.17**).

In Bicchu-kokubunji, there are about 300,000-500,000 people per year in the tourist demand. The number of tourists had increased significantly from 2002 through 2003 (**Figs.17, 18 and 19**). Five-story pagoda which is located in the countryside has become a symbolic presence of the tourist destination Kibiji. Mizuta and Ichiminami (2012) investigated sightseeing behavior of tourists in Bicchu-kokubunji from various aspects, it was affirmed the shortness of time to tour. Sightseeing spot, Bicchu-kokubunji, in fact, has become the passing tourist destination. Many of the tourists pass through the crosswalk from the parking lot, and walk to the five-story pagoda. They visit the tower in a short period of time, while taking some pictures, then, return to the parking lot, and move to the next tourist destination. Five-story pagoda (the height is 34.32m) is located in the countryside, is designated as an





**Fig. 15** The northern part of Bisan Seto Big Bridge (Seto-Ohashi) from Washuzan photographed by the author (July 17, 2016)



**Fig. 16** The northern part of Bisan Seto Big Bridge (Seto-Ohashi) from Washuzan highland photographed by the author (July 17, 2016)

important cultural property in Japan, and has become a symbolic presence of the tourist destination Kibiji. The tower was built in 741 years, then, it was lost, and it was, however, rebuilt during the period from 1844 to 1847. Local residents and residents' association grow and bloom rape blossoms, lotus, and peach flower in paddy field in spring. They also bloom sunflower and raise the fireworks in summer. And they have sowed the seeds to bloom cosmos in autumn. In recent years, because the red rice has been planted, the enjoyment of tourists has increased. In this way, they are making efforts to the creation of the landscape in the vicinity of Bicchu-kokubunji.

Hofukuji temple in Soja city is the famous temple where monk, *Sesshu* had been training in the Muromachi period. Tourist arrivals in 2010 was said to have more than 500,000 people, but the usual tourist demand would be approximately 200,000-300,000 people a year (Fig.17).

In Chikurinji-yama in the former Kamogata town (it is currently Asakuchi city), the tourists was about 210,000 people, then, it continued to decline, and it shows less than 100,000 people in recent years. There are observatory, astronomy museum, and campsite (Fig.17).

There is no significant change of the number of tourists in Ibara city and there are about 200,000 people a year of the demand. Denchu-en is free of charge admission at the Japanese garden and there are trees of Chinese pistachio and tea room. There is also Denchu museum in the immediate vicinity and the visitors in 2013 were about 2.5 thousand people. Visitors to the Bisei Observatory were about 1.6 thousand people (Fig.17).

There were about 230,000 tourists in Kasaoka city and the Kasaoka Islands in 1995; however, it decreased in 2013 resulting in about 150,000 people. There is a way station as resting and shopping place, "Kasaoka Bay Farm" in a vast Kasaoka Bay reclaimed land where flowers are in bloom almost all year and rape, poppy, sunflower, and cosmos are seen. There is also the only facility in Japan, Kasaoka city museum of horseshoe crab. The visitors in 2013 were about 5.4 thousand people. The Kasaoka Islands is popular with the scenery including the sea and the voyage and there are, of course, bathing beaches (Fig.17).

There is a tourism demand of about 400,000-600,000 people per year in Takahashi city. Although Bittchu Matsuyama castle which is shrouded in fog and sea of clouds has recently become a popular,

tourists decrease to the level of 300,000 people. There are the garden of Raikyū-ji temple (Attendance in 2013 was about 1.6 thousand people) and samurai residences (similarly, 9 thousand people). According to Ichiminami (2002), although the tourists to Takahashi city in 1970 was about 120,000 people, then it increased, it became more than 300,000 people in 1978, 720,000 in 1980, 840,000 in 1981, and it increased to 935,000 people in 1982. Thereafter, it kept the level of 800,000 people until 1987, however, it decreased to 660,000 people in 1988, and it further reduced to 400,000 people in 1996 (Fig.17).

Although there is no recent tourism statistics, there were about 150,000 to 190,000 tourists per year from the late 1990s through the early 2000s. There are some facilities such as campsite, bungalows village, lodge and condominium in the middle of Yataka-yama at an altitude 654m. View from the summit is a large panorama of 360 degrees. Including the mountains of Kibi plateau, people can overlook the Seto Inland Sea

and Shikoku Mountains on the south and Mt. Daisen to the north (Fig.17).

In 1995 there were about 270,000 tourists at Fukiya area in the former Nariwa town, it gradually decreased, and it became about 150,000 people in 2013. The appearance of townscape of Fukiya is unified with the red iron oxide color and *Sekishu* tile with red copper color and followed by orderly. This townscape is the cultural heritage which the millionaire of Fukiya has left to posterity from the late Edo era through the Meiji period. It was certified to the hometown village of Okayama pref. in 1974 and the Agency for Cultural Affairs also certified it to the conservation district of traditional buildings of Japan in 1977. In Fukiya area, there are some sightseeing facilities. Regional museum of Fukiya Frusato village had the visitors of about 1.5 thousand people in 2013 and the folk museum of red iron oxide one had similarly 1.3 thousand people (Fig.17).

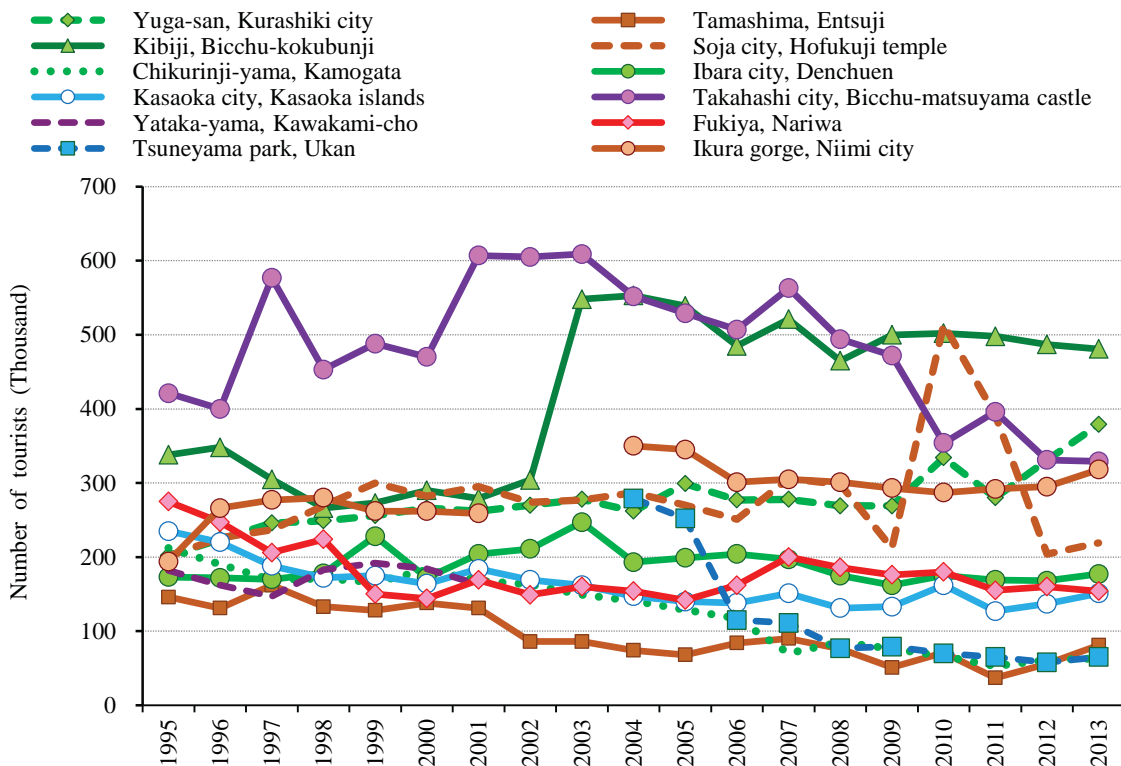


Fig. 17 The number of tourists in Kurashiki and the Takahashi river basin area

Source; Tourism statistics of Okayama prefecture



**Fig. 18** Bicchu-kokubunji and rapeseed flowers  
photographed by the author (April 10, 2011)



**Fig. 19** Bicchu-kokubunji and red rice  
photographed by the author (Sept. 15, 2016)

More than 250,000 tourists visited Tsuneyama Park in Ukan area in 2005. However, it then decreased, and it is recently 100,000 or less. Seven windmills which are made of stone have been installed on the slopes of gentle prairie. There are about 300,000 people a year of the tourism demand in Ikura gorges in Niimi city. There are not large fluctuations of tourists. Waterfalls and limestone caves are scattered in karst plateau of the Takahashi River basin. Total length of the limestone cave, Ikura-do is 1,200m and the height difference is 90m. It was discovered in 1958 and development has been promoted. It is designated as a natural monument by Okayama pref. In 2013, there were attendances of some 6.6 thousand people in Ikura-do, 10.2 thousand people in Niimi Chiya hot spring, and 6.1 thousand people in Maki-do, respectively. In the vicinity of the boundary between the Tottori pref., there is a ski resort "village of Ibuki", which has about 30 thousand tourists a year (Fig.17).

## 2.4 Eastern Area

Shizutani School of Bizen city is the school which was opened for the common people by Okayama clan in 1673. According to Ichiminami (2002), although tourists were not less than 200,000 people per year in the past, it had been more than

400,000 people since 1979, and it increased further. There were 0.5 to 0.6 million tourists from the 1990s through the early 21st century, however, it was the level of 300,000 people a year and it decreased to less than 0.3 million people (Fig.20).

Hinase is a fishing port, oyster farming is thriving. Tourists to Hinase and the Hinase Islands were about 100,000 people, but it was more than 200,000 people in 1981, and it became more than 300,000 people in 1992. Although there is the tourist demand of about 300,000-400,000 people in recent years, the change is large and it was 250,000 people in 2013 (Fig.20). In addition, the bridge which connects Kakui and Kashira islands was opened in Nov., 2004; the one that connects Hinase and Kakui islands was completed in April, 2015.

There is the tourist demand of about 40,000-70,000 people a year in Hattoji Furusato village (Fig.20). Bizen city restored the traditional thatched houses of the Edo period and they have been open to the public as a folk museum.

Mimasaka of Yunogo hot spring is very close to the Chugoku Expressway, there are 800,000-1 million people a year of tourism demand. Yunogo spa town has about 20 inns and hotels. Okayama Yunogo Belle team of women's football is based in Yunogo. The

team was established in May, 2001. Yunogo hot spring museum of heron had the attendance of about 20.2 thousand people in 2013.

There is the tourist demand of 100,000-150,000 people in Okayama International Circuit in Aida.

Assuming the dairy and forests in northern Europe, North Village was opened as an agricultural park in Shoooh town in April 1997. The number of tourists was about 300,000 people in 1977, but then, it reduced little by little. It decreased to less than 200,000 people in 2010, and then, it increased to more than 500,000 people in 2013 (Fig.20).

Although Awaku land in Nishi-awakura had about 260,000 people of tourism demand in 2004, then it has decreased to the level of 150,000 people. There was tourism demand of 160,000 people in village of love in Higashi-awakura in 2004. Then, it fell sharply and recently it is about 40,000 people.

Akaiwa city and Wellhausen village in Nahe region of Germany have built a friendly relationship through the wine since 1993. After a while, the forest of German was opened as a rural-type theme park in April, 1995. German-style idyllic farm has been reproduced by taking advantage originally hilly terrain

and nature. The agriculture park is divided into several areas, such as town, village, ranch, play and flower garden; town area (square, Koresato winery, restaurants, workshop (sausage, baumkuchen, bread and ice cream), kiosk, barbecue house), ranch area (dog run, cherry orchard, milking experience of the Jersey cow, zoo for children (rabbit and miniature pig), pasture of sheep), play area (go-karts, putter golf, SL locomotive, boating and deformation bicycle), village area (workshop of local beer, stone oven bread and pizza), and flower garden (rose garden, flower garden and lawn open space). A part of slope has been used as a vineyard likened to the scenery like Europe (Fig.21). Riesling, a breed for brewing is grown. Attendance can enjoy German-style of food (bread, pizza, beer, sausage, etc.), culture and nature, it is also possible to admission brought the dog. The area of parking lot is sufficient for many cars and buses to park. The forest of Germany was visited by the level of 0.9 million people of tourists in 1995 opening of the park and the following year, then decreased, recent tourists is about 0.3 million people per year. The visitors were about 223 thousand people in 2013 (Fig.20).

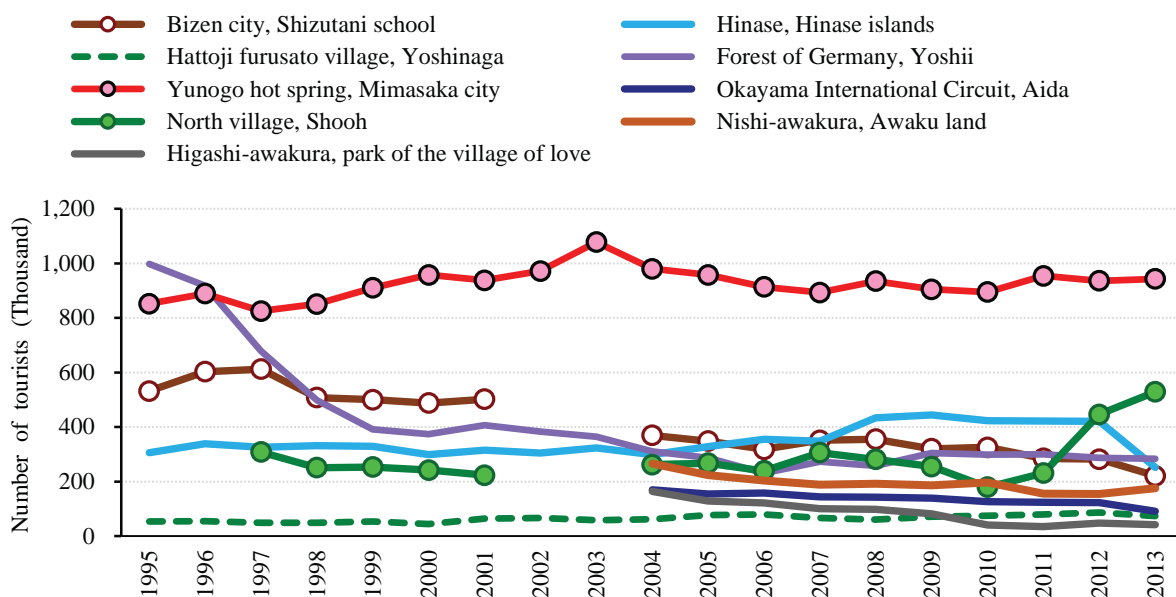


Fig. 20 The number of tourists in the eastern area in Okayama prefecture

Source; Tourism statistics of Okayama prefecture





**Fig. 21** Vineyards on the slopes in Forest of Germany in Akaiwa city  
photographed by the author (Sept. 8, 2016)

## 2.5 Tsuyama and Maniwa Area

Inoike (2014) investigated the presence or absence of the visit of tourists attractions in Tsuyama city as the target of the 20-year-old or more residents (N=169) in Tsuyama city. In Tsuyama castle, Shurakuen garden, preservation district of Joto townscape, mysterious museum of nature in Tsuyama, Chohoji (another name is Hydrangea temple), Tsuyama museum of Western studies, fan-shaped locomotive garage, the ratios of visitors were in large numbers. Ichiminami (2003) explained the characteristics of Tsuyama region including the trend of sightseeing spots synthetically. In reality, because there is a conflict with the tourist destinations in other regions, how to publicize the information is the challenge.

Until the 1990s, although tourists to Tsuyama city and Kakuzan park were less than 0.5 million people a year, it increased to in the 21st century, and it was more than 0.7 million people in 2013 (**Fig.22**). There are valuable tourism resources, such as Yokono Falls, Nontaki, Sakushu folk crafts museum, Tsuyama

provincial museum, Jousei roman museum, Shurakuen, Tsuyama castle (the visitors in 2013 was about 0.1 million person), traditional buildings preservation in Joto district, etc. If we transmitted the history and culture of Tsuyama area little by little, tourists to this region is likely to increase.

Mansion of ranch, Makiba-no-yakata located in the former Asahi town (currently, Misaki cho) was opened in April, 1991. Until 2004-2006, it was maintained at about 200,000 tourists a year, but then, it decreased. In recent years, it has become less than 100,000 people. Also, there are herb and lavender gardens.

The drop of Kanba Falls of Katsuyama is 110m. Many of wild monkeys inhabit. Usually there are about tourist demand of 150,000-200,000 people per year. Tourists were about 140,000 people in 1970, but it increased to 340,000 in 1976. After that, it reduced to the level of 200,000 level in the 1980s and it was sluggish in the level of 100,000 in the 1990s (**Fig.22**).

Daigo large cherry tree in Ochiai town was designated as a natural monument of Okayama pref. in

Dec. 1972. More than 130,000 people visited from 2004 through 2010, but after 2012, it reduced to less than 100,000 people. Visit time of tourists is very limited due to the characteristics of tourism resources.

There is a tourism demand of 500,000-600,000 people per year in Yubara hot spring (Fig.22). There are about 20 accommodations, capacity is about 2,000 people. There is a huge open-air bath in the downstream of the dam Yubara. It is known as sand spouting hot water, or *Sunayu*. Although the tourists were about 270,000 people in 1970, it became more than 500,000 people in 1972. After that there was no big change. Tourists increased after the late 1980s and they increased more than 700,000 people in 1992. Nearby, there are Shimo-yubara (the visitors were about 116 thousand people in 2013), Taru (similarly, 45 thousand people), and Maga hot springs, and the like.

Hiruzen plateau is the plateau whose altitude is from about 500 to 600m. There are about 2.5 million people a year of the tourism demand, but the wave of increase or decrease is also large (Fig.22). It boasts the

largest number of tourists in the northern part of Okayama pref. The area of Hiruzen was designated as a national park in 1936. There is a ranch which feeds Jersey cattles (**Fig.23**), and Japanese radish and buckwheat are grown by taking advantage of the cool areas of climate. Jersey cattle was imported from New Zealand and Australia after 1954. Breeding population increased to about 2,800 animals in 1972, however, about 2,000 cows are bred. Although the number of tourists was about 380,000 in 1970, it increased to 730,000 people in 1975 when the Chugoku Expressway connecting Suita in Osaka pref. and Ochiai in Okayama pref. was opened. It exceeded 1 million people in 1977, and it became more than 1.5 million in 1987. In addition, it increased to more than 2 million in 1996 and it reached 2.6 million in 1998. There are 3 ski resorts, such as Hiruzen bear valley, Kami-hiruzen, and Tsuguro plateau in Maniwa city. The sum of their visitors is approximately 40 thousand people a year.

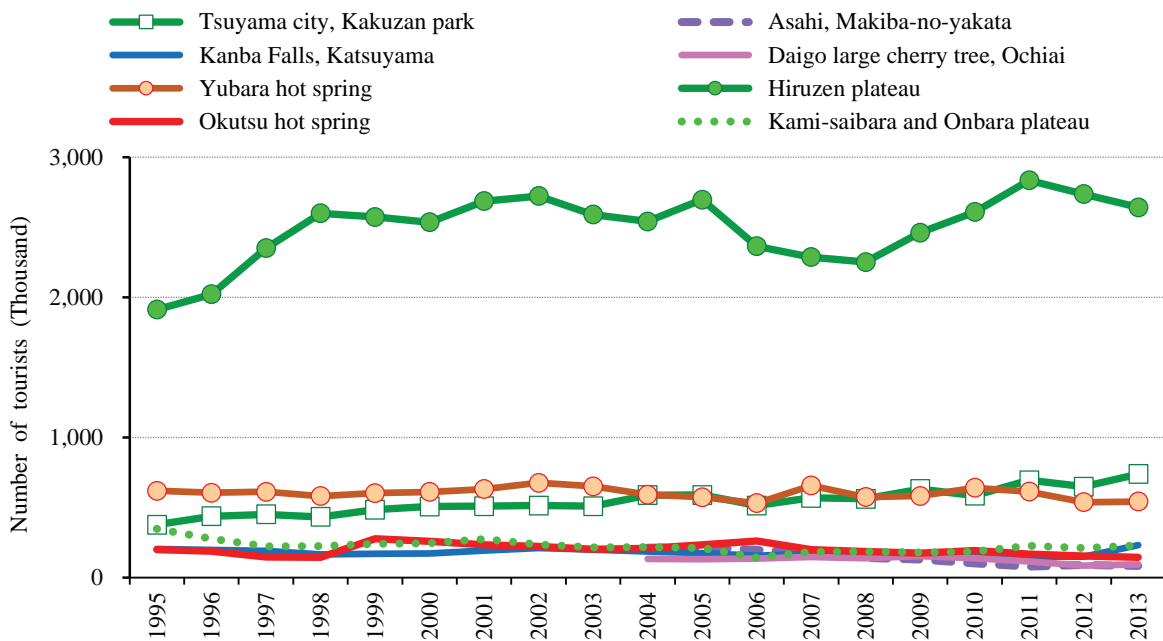


Fig. 22 The number of tourists in Tsuyama and Maniwa area

Source; Tourism statistics of Okayama prefecture



**Fig. 23** Jersey cows which were grazing in the training ranch of the Hiruzen Jersey land photographed by the author (Aug. 17, 2014)

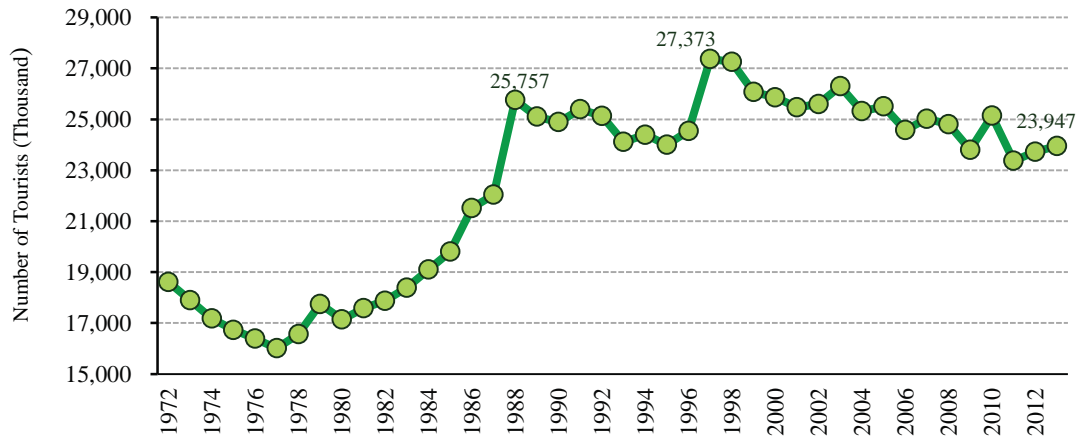
There are 9 accommodations in Okutsu hot spring which has a tourism demand of about 200,000 people. In the 1970s, tourists had more than 300,000 people. It is recently decreasing and it was less than 200,000 people after 2007 (Fig.20). About 350,000 tourists visited Kami-saibara and Onbara plateau in 1995; however, it reduced and continued to be the level of 200,000 people. From 2006 through 2010, less than 200,000 tourists visited there (Fig.22). Onbara plateau is endowed with a variety of natural environment such as birch, larch forests, and lake, etc. Visitors can enjoy camping, ground golf, cycling, fishing and skiing in winter. The visitors of Onbara plateau ski resort is about 70 thousand people a year.

### 3 DISCUSSION

The number of tourists to Okayama pref. had continued to increase from the 1970s when the Sanyo Shinkansen was completed through 1988 when the Seto Ohashi Bridge was opened. The tourists have been maintained more than 20 million people since 1986. Tourist arrivals had been stagnant during the first half of the 1990s when bubble economy was broken; however, it had increased again to 1997 when

Kurashiki Tivoli Park was opened. Then, it is followed by a reduction trend of tourist arrivals (**Fig.24**). The opening of the media that can transport a large amount of traffic at high speed is the incentive of many tourists, but its influence also extends to other areas as well, Okayama pref. Therefore, it must be considered that economic trends and inter-regional conflict, etc. are related to the increase or decrease in the number of tourists.

Furthermore, in order to examine the long-term trend of the number of tourists in each major tourist destination, we prepared Figs.25-28. In 1980 when the number of tourists to Okayama pref. was about 17 million people, the number of tourists to Korakuen was 1.25 million people, and the tourists to Kurashiki district was 3.6 million people. In the southern part of Okayama pref., there stand out tourist destinations where tourists of the same or more than the current level visited. However, tourists in Oji-ga-take and Shibukawa in Tamano city were still small. In addition, in the north part of Okayama pref., for example, the tourists to Hiruzen plateau was 1.14 million people and it was less than or equal to the current half. The tourists to Yunogo hot spring has also remained at 0.6 million people (**Fig.25**).



**Fig. 24** Changes in the number of tourists to Okayama Prefecture

Source; Tourism statistics of Okayama prefecture

In 1990 when the number of tourists to Okayama pref. was about 25 million people, there were many tourist attractions which increased the number of tourists in the southern part of Okayama pref. Tourist arrivals of Hiruzen plateau increased to 1.6 million people, Yunogo hot spring accepted 0.87 million people and Yubara hot spring 0.67 million people (**Fig.26**). The number of tourists to Okayama pref. is generally decreasing after 1997 and the distributions of tourists in 2000 and 2010 are not much different in the case of 1990 (**Figs.27 and 28**).

Furthermore, by selecting 10 tourist destinations where many tourists had visited, the change in the number of tourists is illustrated from 1978 to 2013 (**Fig.29**). The intent is not to describe the tourist destination of the order, but to overview the transition of the tourists of pref. By validating more long-term trends, it may be able to distinguish the various changes and trends. First, Kurashiki aesthetic area and Washuzan and its environs depict similar specific transitions which have a big peak of the opening of the Seto Ohashi Bridge in 1988. Second, there are the long-term upward trends in the changes in the number of tourists to visit Hiruzen plateau and Shibukawa. However, more recently, visitors of any of the tourist

destinations have the downward trend. There are not particularly large fluctuations of the number of tourists in the other districts.

**Fig.30** shows the average tourists expenditure per capita in Okayama pref. Of course, the consumption amount of hotel guests per capita is more than three times of that of the day visitors. Tourist expenditure of hotel guests had increased significantly until 1990, then, it has been largely reduced. The consumption of day visitors had gradually increased until 2000, then, it has been reduced quite sharply. It is clear that tourism management in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is generally more stringent than that of the 20 century.

In recent years, the foreign tourists to visit Japan are increasing. **Table 2** indicates the number of hotel guests in Okayama pref. Foreign guests in Okayama pref. in 2015 are more than doubled in 2007, it was more than about 0.16 million people. Although South Korea's ratio was greater in earlier, it has fallen. However, there is no significant change of the real number of visitors from South Korea. Visitors from China, Taiwan, and Hong Kong have increased noticeably.



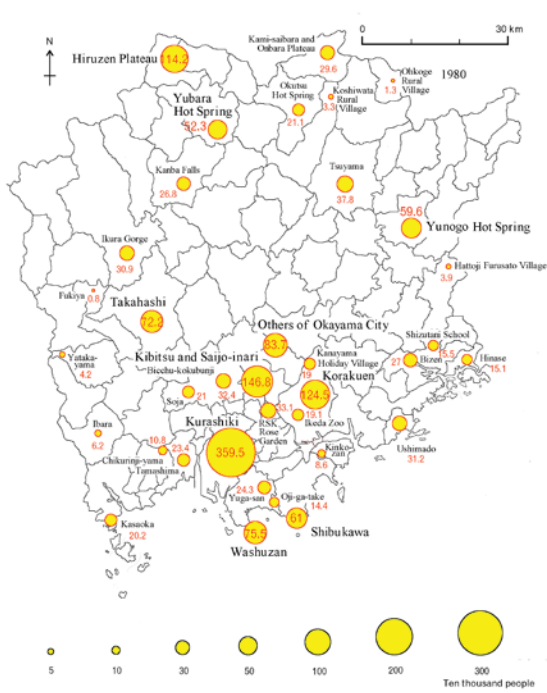


Fig. 25 Distribution of tourists in 1980 in Okayama pref.

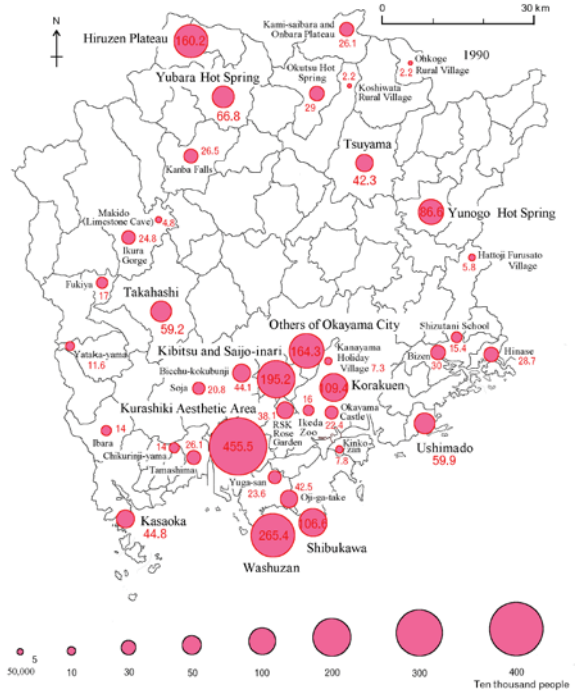


Fig. 26 Distribution of tourists in 1990 in Okayama pref.

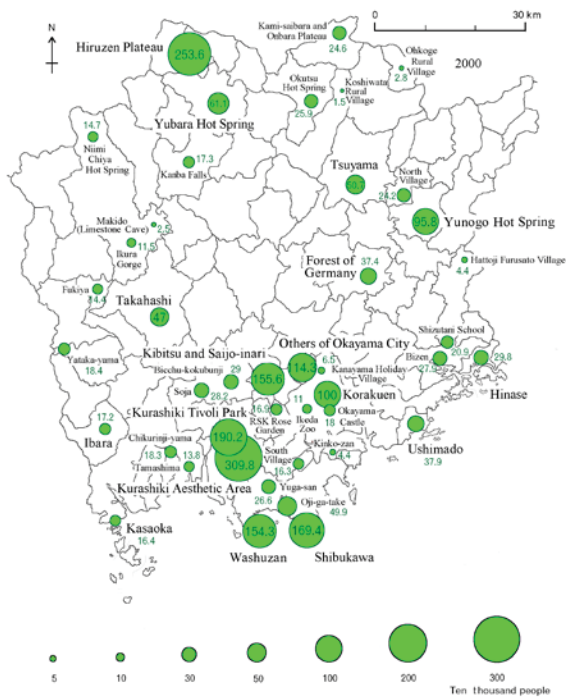


Fig. 27 Distribution of tourists in 2000 in Okayama pref.

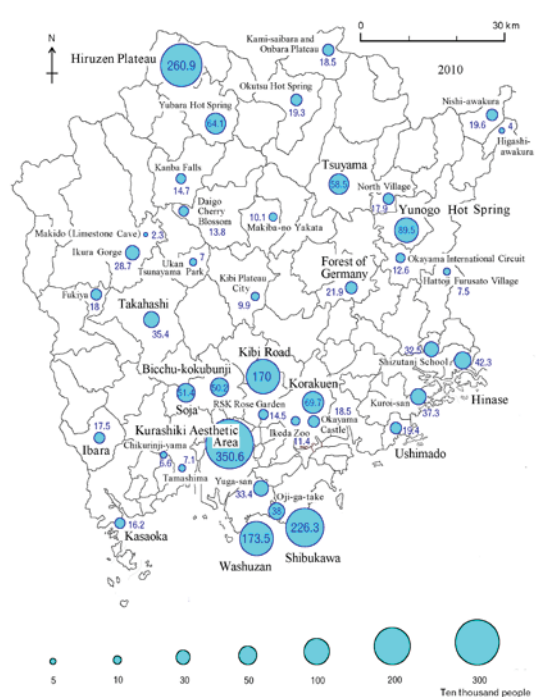


Fig. 28 Distribution of tourists in 2010 in Okayama pref.

Note: According to circumstances, the boundaries of the old municipalities are depicted and there can be some limitations in tourist distribution according to the region.

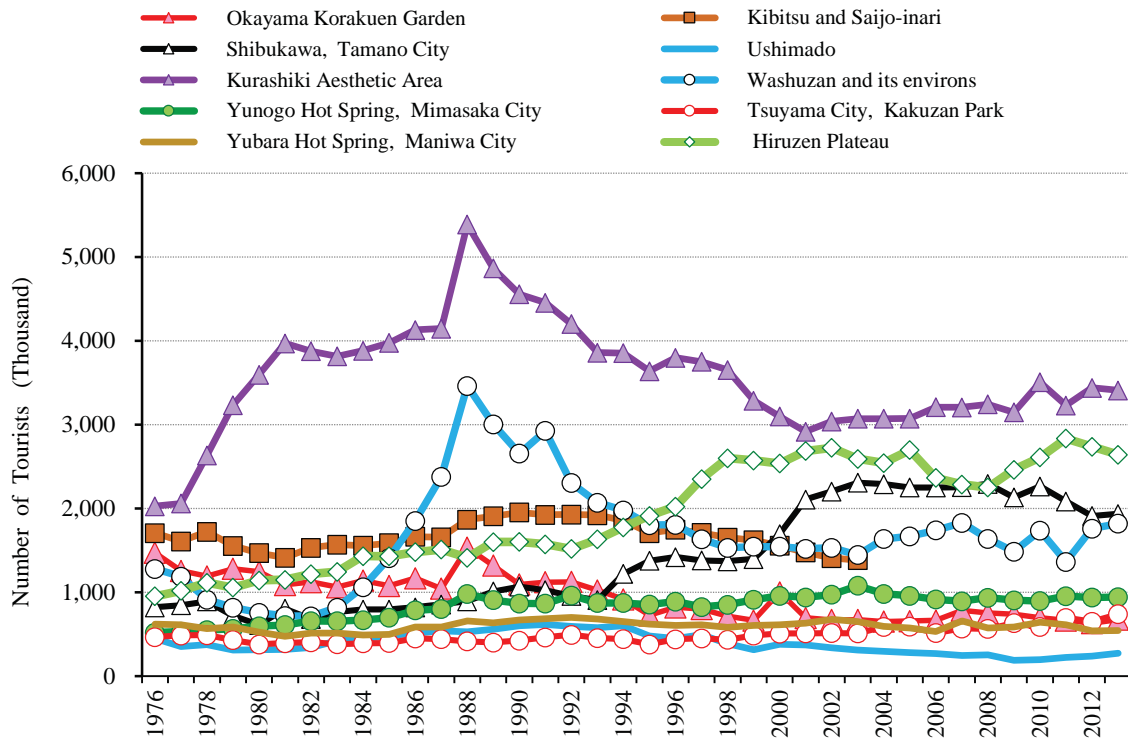


Fig. 29 The number of tourists in main destinations in Okayama prefecture

Source; Tourism statistics of Okayama prefecture

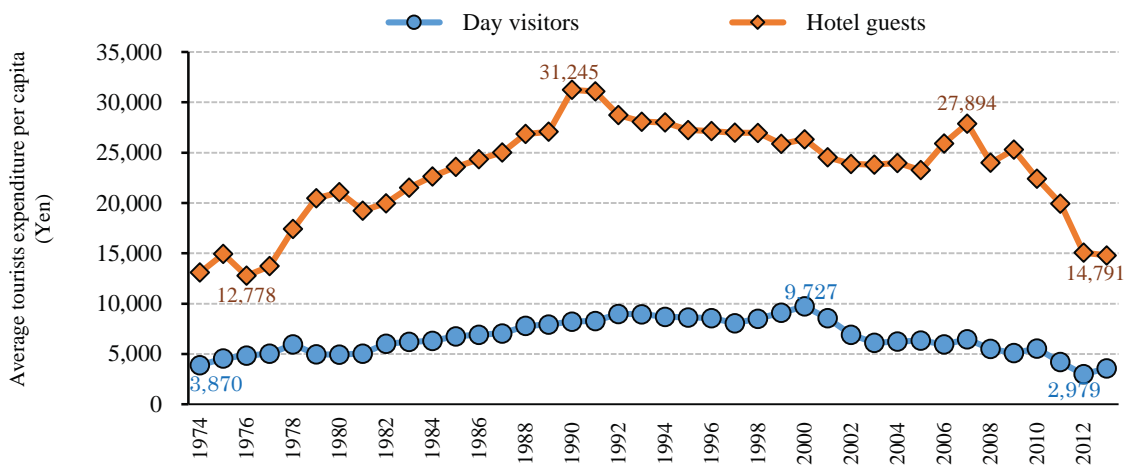


Fig. 30 The average tourists' expenditure per capita in Okayama prefecture

Source; Tourism statistics of Okayama prefecture

Other countries vary according to a year slightly. The number excluding index in parentheses is the percentage of the total. About after 2010, it is the number of the foreign tourists who stayed at the facilities which have more than ten employees.

Table 3 shows the number of hotel guests in Okayama pref. from 2008 through 2015. The number of hotel guests has increased significantly in 2012 and beyond. A while ago, we described that the guest of foreign tourists has also increased in Okayama pref.,

however, the ratio is only about 2 percent of the total. However, foreigners have stayed about 0.1 million people a year in Okayama pref. The types of accommodation are diverse, but there are many

number of people or percentage to stay in city hotels and business hotels where room charge is relatively inexpensive. This trend is particularly true for foreigners.

**Table 2** The number of foreign hotel guests in Okayama prefecture

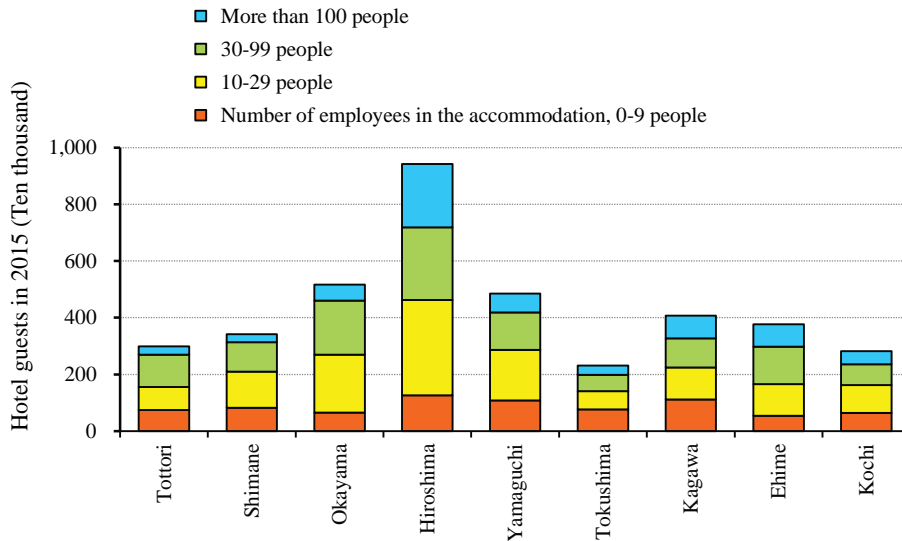
Year	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Korea	18,380 (27.3)	14,420 (19.2)	10,910 (21.3)	15,220 (22.8)	13,890 (28.0)	14,690 (22.8)	9,850 (12.2)	8,740 (8.8)	16,480 (10.0)
China	6,720 (10.0)	8,690 (11.6)	6,420 (12.6)	9,040 (13.5)	6,700 (13.5)	9,060 (14.0)	11,110 (13.7)	14,100 (14.2)	30,290 (18.4)
Hong Kong	1,700 (2.5)	6,650 (8.9)	1,690 (3.3)	1,250 (1.9)	1,870 (3.8)	2,850 (4.4)	5,940 (7.3)	11,140 (11.2)	17,180 (10.5)
Taiwan	6,230 (9.2)	7,980 (10.6)	6,230 (12.2)	5,810 (8.7)	5,310 (10.7)	8,360 (13.0)	16,870 (20.9)	23,160 (23.3)	35,720 (21.7)
Singapore	300	350	400	380	670	690	750	960	1,530
Thailand	810	1,020	490	710	360	570	990	1,890	3,540
Malaysia				1,470	460	420	620	810	1,100
India				390	370	320	530	420	400
Indonesia							340	510	970
Vietnam							830	340	550
Philippines							330	280	720
Australia	1,000	1,400	1,480	1,510	1,210	1,780	2,870	3,250	4,830
U. S. A.	9,560 (14.2)	9,540 (12.7)	6,050 (11.8)	8,680 (13.0)	5,660 (11.4)	6,750 (10.5)	7,630 (9.4)	7,850 (7.9)	10,940 (6.7)
Canada	460	910	750	860	650	1,030	1,260	1,080	1,620
United Kingdom	1,830	1,630	1,470	1,790	1,160	1,210	1,830	2,050	2,850
Germany	1,370	2,700	1,170	2,450	680	1,480	2,140	2,050	2,810
France	2,070 (3.1)	2,210 (2.9)	2,590 (5.1)	3,810 (5.7)	1,570 (3.2)	2,030 (3.1)	3,590 (4.4)	4,420 (4.5)	9,290 (5.7)
Italy									2,000
Spain									1,350
Russia				450	160	180	750	390	550
Other countries	17,010 (25.2)	17,620 (23.5)	11,490 (22.5)	13,010 (19.5)	8,800 (17.8)	13,070 (20.3)	12,680 (15.7)	15,820 (15.9)	19,580 (11.9)
<b>Total (Index)</b>	67,440 (100)	75,120 (111)	51,140 (76)	66,830 (99)	49,520 (73)	64,490 (96)	80,910 (120)	99,260 (147)	164,300 (244)

Source; Tourism Agency in Japan, "Statistical survey on accommodation travel".

**Table 3** Number of hotel guests in Okayama prefecture from 2008 to 2015

Year	2008	2009	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
<b>Total hotel guests (index)</b>	3,766,820 (100)	3,635,970 (97)	3,858,080 (102)	4,667,230 (124)	5,216,680 (138)	5,387,650 (143)	5,163,880 (137)
Facility type	Inn (Japanese style)	812,460	773,500	784,870	891,600	858,230	898,990
	Resort hotel	482,920	423,770	377,400	399,530	465,280	341,140
	Business hotel	1,815,630	1,846,990	1,931,390	2,318,930	2,971,670	2,825,770
	City hotel	621,910	563,990	667,970	701,340	600,310	718,960
	Accommodation of companies and organizations			10,760	34,040	22,990	89,880
<b>Foreign hotel guests (percentage)</b>	76,610 (2.0)	51,570 (1.4)	49,990 (1.3)	78,880 (1.7)	85,970 (1.6)	110,960 (2.1)	170,530 (3.3)
Facility type	Inn (Japanese style)	7,640	5,820	3,460	7,310	9,060	13,820
	Resort hotel	5,160	3,490	5,120	4,020	5,870	8,050
	Business hotel	32,390	23,130	23,630	33,940	41,930	81,600
	City hotel	31,420	19,110	17,680	32,210	28,380	59,790
	Accommodation of companies and organizations			10	20	20	3,090

Note: For 2010, because it is not investigated on the same basis as any other year, the number is not listed.



**Fig. 31** Number of hotel guests in the Chugoku and Shikoku districts in 2015

**Fig.31** draws the number of hotel guests in the Chugoku and Shikoku regions in 2015 by the employees of accommodations and prefecture. There is the maximum number (942,000 person) of hotel guests in Hiroshima pref., it is the second largest (516,000 person) in Okayama pref., however, it is about half of the one of Hiroshima pref. In most prefectures, the number of hotel guests in accommodation which has 10-29 employees is the largest. In addition, the number of hotel guests in Okayama pref. of accommodations which have less than ten employees is less than the ones of Hiroshima, Kagawa and Yamaguchi prefectures. In each prefecture or spot, it is important to enhance the accommodation function along with the increase of the tourist resort of charm.

#### 4 CONCLUSION

The main purpose of this paper is to explain the characteristics of sightseeing spots and examine the changes of the number of tourists who visited the major points in Okayama pref., mainly from 1995 to 2013. In fact, it might have ended up a description of the tourist destination. In the last part, we tried to

bird's-eye view of the longer-term trend of tourist arrivals. In the revolution of transportation, highway including the Seto Ohashi Bridge, the Sanyo Shinkansen, and the function of the airport is very important. Airport functions can be expected to have a large impact on the tourists from distant areas like foreign countries. However, due to the small number of foreign tourists, it is difficult to consider it in detail.

Kurashiki aesthetic area and Washuzan and its environs which are very close to the Seto Ohashi Bridge, have been experiencing a significant increase in tourists due to the effects of the opening of the Seto Ohashi Bridge, then the number of tourists has decreased or stagnated. Thus, it does not mean that the opening of the bullet train and the highway is largely related to the increase in the subsequent tourists. This is because of the vehicle use by the large number of tourists and a conflict with other tourist attractions and the backgrounds (and/or reasons) for the increase or decrease of the number of tourists is very complex to make a clear decision.

Fewer foreign tourists visited Okayama pref. even about half a century ago and hotel guests similarly were very few. In recent years, there is increasing foreign tourists gradually and hotel guests



also increased; it is expected to increase in the future. The biggest challenge is the conflict with the tourist destination of the nearby prefectures. It is very low that the possibility which foreigners who enter Japan via Tokyo-Haneda, Narita, and the Kansai international airport, come directly to Okayama pref. However, since the Kansai international airport is open 24 hours a day, it should be devised so as to take full advantage. In addition, since the direct flights Shanghai, Taipei, Seoul and Hong Kong operate from Okayama airport; it should formulate a sales strategy while studying thoroughly the culture and customs of the countries. Currently, although it is not high proportion of foreign tourists, because the domestic tourism market will shrink in the future, the importance of foreign markets is going to become a large size.

For the Japanese, it should publicize the variety of culture and information that can be experienced in each of the tourist destination of Okayama pref. In addition, in Okayama pref., there are many tourist attractions and resources which are not a well-known. If anyone carefully examines the history, culture and natural environment and tell them to others, it may be possible to grow the seed of a new tourism. Familiar stroll place may be known to more people in the future. In addition, it should be diversifying the tourist resort of accommodation function.

Finally, Okayama pref. has a rich historical and cultural heritage to produce new policies in terms of spatial planning and growth. The important point is that the structural adaptation between historical & cultural assets and the city life should be provided and protected. The accessibility opportunities of people as locals or domestic/foreign tourists to these historical and cultural assets should be increased by improvements in spatial arrangements for domestic and foreign tourism such as health tourism, gastronomy tourism, cultural tourism, belief tourism,

congress tourism, thematic tourism, and local tourism.

## NOTES

- 1) Hotel, inn (Japanese style), simple lodging, and the accommodation of companies and organizations are extracted on the basis of sampling theory, and they have been investigated on the basis of the following criteria. All of the facilities with more than 10 employees are surveyed. As for the ones having 5-9 employees, it is randomly extracted and sample survey of 1/3 is conducted. As for the ones with less than 5 employees, it is randomly extracted and sample survey of 1/9 is carried out.
- 2) When the students enrolled in high schools and universities in Okayama pref. present their student ID, admission is free of charge. In addition, the entrance fee of children who are younger than high school students is free of charge. Therefore, the actual attendance can be considered to be greater than the number of tourists that have been published. Near Korakuen, some cultural facilities representative of Okayama pref. are distributed, which are referred to as the Okayama culture zone. Of these, Okayama Castle (Attendance in 2013 was about 19.9 thousand people) represents the feudal heritage of the southeastern area of Okayama pref. and was newly renovated for its 400<sup>th</sup> year anniversary. Okayama prefectural museum (Similarly, about 3.6 thousand person) is located in the island in the Asahikawa river as well as Korakuen and is a collection of artifacts displaying the history and culture of Okayama pref. Okayama Orient museum (Similarly, about 2.8 thousand person) is a collection of some 5,000 Near Eastern archaeological findings from prehistoric times to the Islamic age. Okayama prefectural museum (Similarly, about 11.5 thousand people) of art is a collection works by artists in Okayama pref. Hayashibara museum of art (Similarly, about 1.7 thousand person) is a prestigious collection of Far Eastern art and Ikeda (former Okayama feudal

lord) family heirloom. Okayama symphony hall is designed primarily for orchestral performances and is fully-equipped concert hall. Okayama prefectural library is the center of lifelong learning with a great number of books and a wide variety of media-materials and boasts the largest number of lending books for more than 10 years in Japan.

- 3) Photos from Fig. 5 to Fig. 7 quotes from Okayama Korakuen official site of photo gallery.  
<http://www.okayama-korakuen.jp/gallery/>
- 4) Following six facilities are distributed in Kurashiki aesthetic area. The number of visitors in 2013, each in parentheses, is shown. Ohara Museum of Art (29.7 thousand people), Kurashiki City Museum of Art (9.4 thousand people), Kurashiki Museum of Natural History (5.4 thousand people), Ivy Gakkan (Rental hall and exhibition hall, 2 thousand people), Kurashiki Folk Crafts Museum (1.7 thousand people), and Kurabo Memorial (2 thousand people). Housing of old Nozaki family and historical museum of the salt industry is present in Kojima district. Visitors to this destination were about 3.1 thousand people in 2013.

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## Appendices

**Table A** The number of tourists in Okayama, Tamano and Setouchi area

Sightseeing Spots	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Korakuen	725	820	800	713	664	1,000	694	670	672	651	657	664	782	751	739	697	664	631	673
Central part of Okayama city										809	978	1,038	1,046	1,211	1,114	1,635	903	909	927
Okayama city, Kibiji	1,707	1,749	1,708	1,652	1,620	1,556	1,475			1,708	1,728	1,722	1,760	1,742	1,702	1,700	1,664	1,697	1,667
Okayama city, Saidaiji												271	55	61	449	177	96	100	113
The suburbs of Okayama city										257	600	802	803	806	831	421	777	981	1,022
RSK Rose garden	362	303	251	188	207	169	199												
Okayama city, South village			327	228	205	163	145												
Oji-ga-take	238	478	538	526	546	499	528	506	487	466	479	431	419	361	406	380	398	419	430
Tamano city, Shibukawa	1,375	1,419	1,379	1,370	1,396	1,694	2,107	2,202	2,308	2,290	2,251	2,251	2,253	2,294	2,131	2,263	2,084	1,910	1,936
Kayo, Kibi plateau city										99	102	106	114	108	132	99	92	93	87
Ushimado	476	448	493	387	314	379	370	338	308	296	278	267	244	253	186	194	223	236	272
Oku, Kuroi-san										294	390	403	424	421	406	373	349	313	294

Source; Tourism statistics of Okayama prefecture

Note: The unit of the numbers is a thousand people. Since the survey methods and the areas and spots have been changed by the time, the part which no longer corresponds to the survey has become blank. This also applies to the following tables.

**Table B** The number of tourists in Kurashiki and the Takahashi river basin area

Sightseeing Spots	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Kurashiki aesthetic area	3,637	3,799	3,750	3,654	3,287	3,098	2,916	3,039	3,070	3,071	3,073	3,209	3,206	3,242	3,147	3,506	3,230	3,440	3,408
Kurashiki Tivoli park			2,380	3,180	2,410	1,902	1,409	1,151	1,096	1,106	939	844	765	925					
Washuzan and its environs	1,801	1,806	1,634	1,531	1,543	1,543	1,519	1,531	1,444	1,635	1,667	1,739	1,828	1,638	1,485	1,735	1,362	1,759	1,818
Kurashiki city, Yuga-san	202	224	246	249	256	266	262	270	278	262	299	277	278	269	269	334	280	331	379
Tamashima, Entsuji	146	131	162	133	128	138	131	86	86	74	68	84	90	76	51	71	37	56	81
Kibiji, Bicchu-kokubunji	338	348	305	266	273	290	279	304	548	553	539	485	521	465	500	502	498	487	481
Soja city, Hofuku-ji temple	201	226	237	269	300	282	295	274	277	287	270	251	306	298	212	514	392	204	219
Chikurinji-yama, Kamogata	212	190	169	171	166	183	168	163	149	141	129	117	70	85	76	66	53	61	63
Ibara city, Denchuen	173	172	170	178	228	172	204	211	247	193	199	204	197	175	162	175	169	168	177
Kasaoka city, Kasaoka islands	235	220	188	172	175	164	184	169	162	147	140	138	151	131	133	162	127	137	151
Takahashi city, Bicchu-matsuyama castle	421	400	577	453	488	470	607	605	609	552	529	507	563	494	472	354	396	331	329
Yataka-yama	182	162	147	183	192	184	163												
Nariwa, Fukiya	275	247	206	224	150	144	169	149	160	154	142	162	200	186	176	180	155	160	154
Ukan, Tsuneyama park										279	252	115	111	77	79	70	65	58	65
Niimi city, Ikura gorge	194	266	277	280	262	262	259			350	345	301	305	301	293	287	292	295	318

Source; Tourism statistics of Okayama prefecture

**Table C** The number of tourists in the eastern area in Okayama prefecture

Sightseeing Spots	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Bizen city, Shizutani school	532	603	612	508	500	488	502			369	348	318	351	355	320	325	285	282	221
Hinase, Hinase islands	306	339	326	332	329	298	315	305	323	299	328	355	348	434	444	423	422	421	252
Yoshinaga, Hattoji furusato village	53	55	49	49	53	44	64	66	58	62	77	79	66	60	71	75	79	86	73
Yoshii, Forest of Germany	998	918	679	498	391	374	406	383	364	310	287	230	273	257	305	299	300	287	283
Mimasaka city, Yunogo hot spring	852	889	825	851	910	958	938	972	1,078	980	958	914	893	935	905	895	954	936	943
Aida, Okayama International Circuit										170	154	158	144	143	139	126	124	122	91
Shooh, North village			308	251	253	242	223			262	267	239	306	281	255	179	231	446	529
Nishi-awakura, Awaku land										266	224	204	188	192	186	196	156	154	175
Higashi-awakura, park of the village of love										164	129	121	100	98	81	40	35	47	42

Source; Tourism statistics of Okayama prefecture

**Table D** The number of tourists in Tsuyama and Maniwa area

Sightseeing Spots	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Tsuyama city, Kakuzan park	377	438	451	433	484	507	509	514	509	588	589	514	569	562	632	585	694	649	739
Asahi, Makiba-no-yakata										213	217	197	176	140	129	101	79	91	83
Katsuyama, Kanba Falls	204	198	191	166	170	173	192	212	200	186	174	156	170	160	156	147	149	149	231
Ochiai, Daigo large cherry tree										134	132	136	146	139	154	138	115	85	95
Yubara hot spring	619	605	612	581	603	611	632	676	651	592	574	531	657	575	583	641	613	538	543
Hiruzen plateau	1,912	2,022	2,351	2,600	2,573	2,536	2,686	2,723	2,591	2,542	2,697	2,364	2,287	2,251	2,462	2,609	2,835	2,737	2,642
Okutsu hot spring	200	188	147	144	278	259	235	223	202	208	235	261	199	186	175	193	168	155	144
Kami-saibara and Onbara plateau	349	278	223	224	240	246	274	237	215	217	212	143	183	186	180	185	228	210	229

Source; Tourism statistics of Okayama prefecture