

The distribution structure of tour products in the inbound travel industry

Sang Jun Kim*
 Kindai University

Abstract

This article focuses on the distribution channels for “tour products” being used by an increasing number of foreign visitors to Japan, and tries to analyze the mechanisms of the distribution of those tour products within the Japanese travel industry. Finally, the article tries to understand the problems that arise in the distribution of inbound tour products. The analysis performed in this study found that practices unique to the industry in the transactions between the travel agencies in the departure country and the land operators in the destination country have an adverse effect on the travel business, and that the adverse effect caused changes in conventional business. First, it should not be forgotten that travel companies conceive of “tourist customers.” Diversification of customer needs necessitates changes in the distribution channels of tour products, and the travel industry needs to respond accordingly. There is a strong need to appeal to the market in order to justify the existence of a travel agency, and also a need for new initiatives in the travel industry to prevent travelers from moving away from tours.

Keywords: travel industry, distribution structure, inbound, economic ripple effect

1. Introduction

The number of foreign tourists visiting Japan in 2018 broke records, increasing 8.7% year-on-year to surpass 31.19 million. Furthermore, by the year 2020, the aim is to achieve a target of 40 million visitors and 8 trillion yen in travel consumption. Before the start of the “Visit Japan” campaign¹⁾ in 2003, Japanese tourism was primarily reliant upon domestic and outbound travel. The now familiar term “outbound” was, at the time, only known to industry insiders. The number of foreign visitors to Japan touted during the Visit Japan campaign was achieved three years later than anticipated, in 2013, but the government's policy support has been successful, and growth has been dramatic.

The consumption by growing foreign tourists has had a large effect on the economy, and Japan, which until now has been a major force in manufacturing, is certain to place a key strategic focus on the service industry in the future.

The total consumption by foreign tourists to Japan in 2018 increased 2% year-on-year to 4.5 trillion yen, once again surpassing prior records. Hiroshi Tabata, Secretary of the Japan Tourism Agency, emphasized at a press conference that the goal for 2020 was also in sight, but said that “the amount of consumption by tourists

* ksjum@bus.kindai.ac.jp

1) On January 31st of 2003, then-Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi announced a policy of “Tourism Nation.” This policy aimed to increase the number of yearly tourists to Japan from 5 million to 10 million by 2010, which would shrink the gap between incoming tourists and the 16 million yearly outgoing Japanese tourists.

has fallen into a slump.”

Looking at the nationalities of visitors to Japan in 2018, South Korea, posting a record of 7.53 million visitors, and Taiwan, reaching 4.49 million visitors, were second and third, respectively behind China (8.38 million visitors). However, the consumption per capita was 77,559 yen for Korean tourist and 128,069 yen for Taiwanese, both of which fell short of the average figure of 152,954 yen. China was at 223,640 yen per capita (Table 1).

The Japanese National Tourism Organization aims to attract tourists from countries outside of Asia that have a large per capita consumption, such as Australia (242,050 yen), Spain (236,996 yen) and Italy (224,268 yen). In addition to tourists from Asia, which account for about 80 percent of the total number of visitors to Japan, it is necessary to attract visitors from regions other than Asia, such as Europe and America.

Table 1. Number of foreign tourists visiting Japan and per capita consumption by year

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2020
Visitors to Japan (million people)	1,036	1,341	1,974	2,404	2,869	3,119	4,000
per capita consumption (thousand yen)	136.6	151.3	176.1	155.8	153.9	152.9	200.0

Source: Japan Tourism Agency statistics, edited by the author.

Note: target value for 2020

In order to increase the number of visitors to Japan, one thing that should not be overlooked, besides appealing to customers from countries outside of Asia, is the responsiveness of the travel industry in Japan. Visitors to Japan are purchasing commodities being sold by travel agencies. Tour products ranging from single items such as airline tickets and hotel bookings to complete package products are being offered. As in other industries, travel companies have a distribution system for their products. From the production of goods to the delivery of the product to the consumer, the distribution system of tour products is the same.

As will be described later, there are factors that are currently disrupting the distribution structure of the travel industry. In short, the Japanese travel industry has undergone a rapid disintermediation as tourists bypass the distribution structure and make arrangements on their own. The business to business (B2B) chain (flow) which has persisted until recently is coming to an end.

In the past, the mechanism of distribution was maintained because travel companies had superior access to information regarding the travel destination, and it was also difficult to secure product sales channels. But due to developments in telecommunications technology, such mechanism of distribution can no longer be maintained. The diversification of customer needs necessitates changes in the distribution channels for tour products, and the Japanese travel industry is required to respond adequately to such changes. But it appears that the Japanese travel industry is lagging behind in responding to such changes. It goes without saying that the increase in tourists to Japan will have strong economic effects, but it is a harsh reality that the travel industry will not reap the benefits. This article analyzes the mechanism of distribution of goods in Japan's travel industry, clarifies the problems occurring in the distribution of inbound tour products, and proposes a strategy for improvement.

2. Theoretical background

There are few academic papers related to the distribution of travel services' and even fewer on the subject of the distribution of inbound travel services. Until now, both the Japanese government and travel industry have been focusing their efforts on promoting domestic travel and the travel of Japanese tourists to destinations abroad. Literature and academic research have been produced on this subject²⁾, but there is little know-how regarding foreign travelers to Japan, and little research has been done on the distribution of products and services in this regard.

In the period around 2010, there was a trend of writing textbook-like publications on attracting foreign tourists, primarily from businessmen and consultants. (e.g. the Japan Tourism Association (2012), Takahiro (2013), Niitsu (2014), Sakamoto (2015), Murayama (2015, 2016, 2017), Nakamura (2015, 2017), Atkinson (2015, 2017), and Ono (2016) etc.) In recent years, academia has become more active in conducting academic research on inbound business. It is undeniable that the cultural dialogue regarding the explosion in purchasing by Chinese nationals and the effect this has had on business has become a catalyst for research. Recently, specialized studies on inbound business can be seen here and there, but are still scarce compared to other fields. After reviewing the concepts of the terminology used in this article, this section provides an overview of the types of inbound channels, the main roles of those channels.

2.1 Concepts

2.1.1 Tour products

This is a generic term for travel products and solutions sold by travel agencies. These commodities include, but are not limited to, means of transportation, accommodation arrangements, sightseeing arrangements and related services, and package tours which integrate all these different services into a single product. Recently, the profitable SIT (special interest tour) service has attracted attention as a favored service unique to travel agencies that adds value to tour products in the form of convenient planning and customer guarantees.

2.1.2 Travel services

Travel agencies have as purpose to ensure a smooth trip for its customers by: arranging quality transportation and accommodation facilities, and by signing agency contracts between travelers and transportation agencies, lodging facilities, restaurants, sightseeing facilities, etc. Furthermore they take care of initiating the application procedure for obtaining a passport or visa, making travel schedules, estimating travel expenses and communicating with the traveler.³⁾

2.1.3 Inbound

Inbound refers to foreigners visiting another country. For example, inbound travel to Japan is a visit by foreigners to Japan, whereas travelers leaving their home country to visit a foreign country is referred to as outbound.

2) As representative research papers related to the travel industry, Yamakawa (2015), Hirooka (2015), Endo (2016), Ono (2017) and Torio (2017). Each of these have been published in travel journals (Some have been republished in academic journals. Dates in parenthesis are the date of publication in the travel journal.)

3) <https://rotenburo.in/tour1.html>(Accessed Jun 6th, 2019)

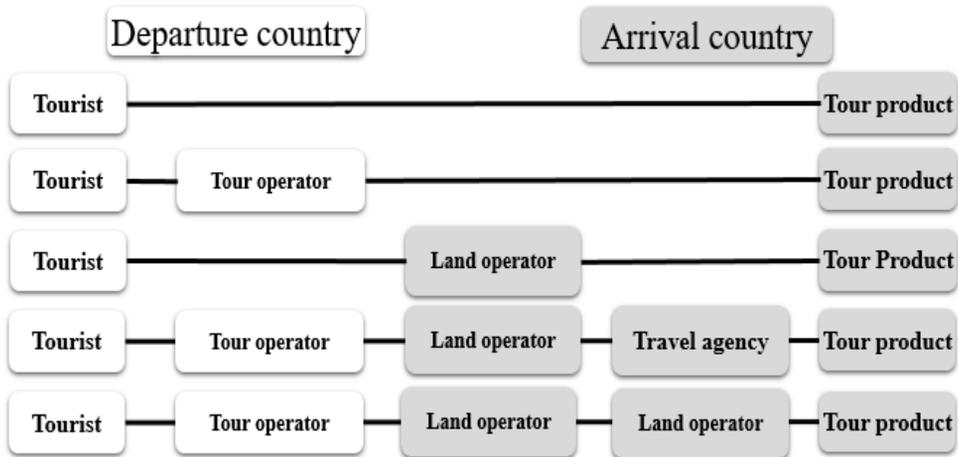
2.2 Types of travel product distribution channels

Tour products also pass through a channel of distribution. There are five basic models that describe the distribution channels involved in the purchase of tour products by inbound tourists.

In one of the models the tourist directly purchases tour products in the destination country. In the other models different intermediaries such as tour operators, land operators and/or travel agencies are involved in the purchasing process. (Figure 1).

Lumsdon (1997-2011, pp.191-202) assumes that there are a large number of distribution channels, and explains the role of the distributors as simplifying the access to travel products. In addition, Fujimoto and Morishita (2011, pp.19-26) touch upon the distribution of tour products from the types of travel companies and the creation of package tours.

Figure 1. Basic model of tour products distribution channels



Source: Lumsdon (1997:191), author’s emphasis.

Figure 1 shows the basic types of distribution channels of overseas tour products. This depends on the time and economic situation of the tourists, and the circumstances between the tourists and stakeholders on the destination and arrival side. The choice of which channel to choose is often the decision of the tourists themselves, or in the case of a group, the organizer in charge. This basic model has been previously applied only for the distribution channels of tour products, but with the growing popularity of overseas travel the mass production of tour products became necessary. And due to a growing value chain including more and more intermediaries, and advances in communications technology, distribution channels have grown complicated. At the same time, unfair trading was found in the tour products market. This will be covered in Section 3.

2.3 Companies involved in the distribution channels of tour products

Here, we will explain the distribution of tour products in the Japanese travel industry in the order shown in Figure 2, below.

2.3.1 Retailers

A retailer is a travel agency that sells tour products to individuals, groups, corporations, organizations, etc.,

and is used by wholesalers who specialize in planning and wholesale of package tours. By making consignment sales contracts with wholesalers and chain stores, retailers also make proxy sales of accommodations and air tickets in addition to package tours. Most major travel agencies specialize in retail, using specialized departments or separate companies for the wholesale function. Many of the products purchased through face-to-face sales by inbound tourists are purchased from retailers in the country of origin.

2.3.2 Wholesalers

A wholesaler is a company or organization that organizes package tours and wholesales. While the retailer mainly handles tour orders based on the requests of individual and group travelers, it is a sponsoring company of agent-organized tours as defined in the standard form travel agent contract in order to attract travelers. In addition to itinerary management, the company must bear three responsibilities: itinerary guarantee, special guarantee, and compensation for damages. In the case of major travel agencies, sales are consigned to in-company sales agents or a contracted travel agency in order to broadly distribute to an unspecified number of travelers, unlike media sales which carry out both product planning and sales.

Also, in Japan, in addition to establishing distribution outlets through the internet and telephone, indirect sales to tourists via retailer brochures is commonplace.

2.3.3 Land operators

A land operator is a company, hired by the travel agency, that specializes in making arrangements and reservations for hotel, restaurants, guides, buses, trains, etc. at the destination.

Unlike domestic travel, professional skills such as language skills are required in booking and arranging overseas travel, and an understanding of customs and culture of the destination country are also necessary.

Except for major travel agencies that have overseas branches and subsidiaries, and have their own operating styles, it is common for land operators who are familiar with the local area to be subcontracted. Japanese domestic travel agencies that specialize in arranging and booking inbound hotels and other services are also land operators. Generally, travelers do not directly deal with the land operator. Instead, much of the communications consists of business to business communication between the land operator and the travel agency.

2.3.4 Supplier

In general, a manufacturer makes a product, while a supplier is a manufacturer that makes product parts.

Looking at the distribution structure of tour products, it is the wholesaler who deals with planning and producing products. Suppliers in the travel industry provide the core constituents of tour products for example, airlines, hotels, rental cars, etc. These suppliers outsource the sales of their products to wholesalers and retailers when it was difficult to secure sales channels, but now it is easier to secure sales channels due to the development of the internet. Not only consignment sales but also direct sales to travelers are on the rise.

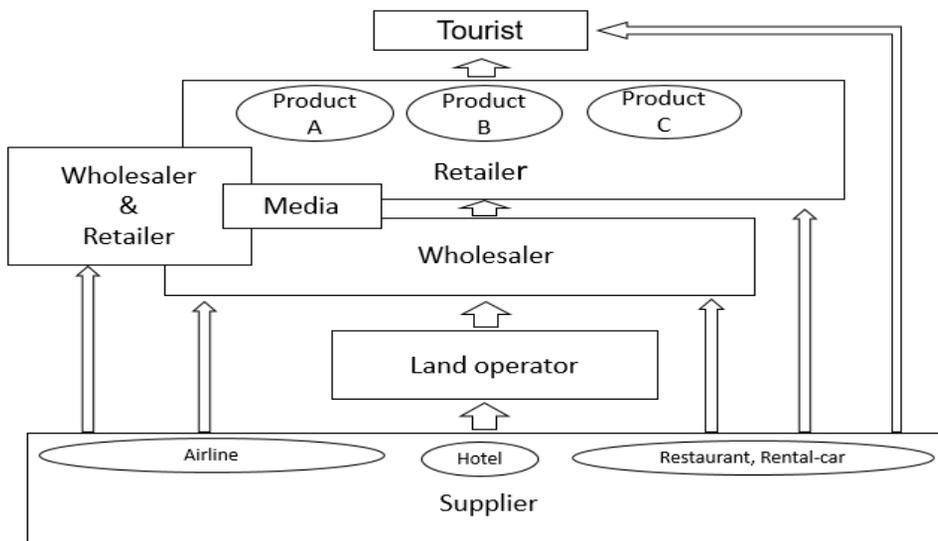
2.3.5 Other

Due to the diversification of travelers' tastes, there have been changes made to the distribution methods in the travel industry. The number of situations in which travel agencies have functions of both wholesaler and retailer, are increasing. Besides, the amount of media channels that carry out both service planning and sales are also growing. In the case of media channels, price competition is strong, therefore it is sometimes assumed that profit margins are small. In order to avoid the risk, many major travel companies also have a media division of their own.

A summary of each type of industry related to the distribution channels of tour products touched on in this

section are shown in Figure 2. There are diverse stakeholders involved in the distribution of tour products. Based on where they provide their services, stakeholders can be divided into two groups; the origin side (departure country) and the destination side (arrival country). On the departure side are: transportation (airports, railways, busses, shipping), telecommunications (publishing, broadcasting, communications), finance (insurance and banking), medical care (medicine and cosmetics), travel goods, clothing (apparel), photography and camera-related services, home delivery, rental businesses, etc. On the arrival side are: retail trade (souvenirs and products), entertainment businesses, regional transport (such as busses and taxis), the leisure industry (such as skiing and golf), agriculture, the fishing industry, ceramics, forestry, etc. These industries cooperate closely with travel agencies in various ways and are directly or indirectly involved in the distribution of tour products.

Figure 2. Distribution of tour products



Source: author

3. Survey of actual conditions

The research method of this study, presented in the introduction, examines the current state of the distribution channels of the travel industry through interviews and case studies. Additionally, related literature will be taken into consideration.

First, there will be a focus on specific phenomena in the distribution of inbound tour products and the response of the travel industry.

Figure 2 of Section 2 shows the route of tour products from the supplier to the tourist. This figure is the distribution structure of general tour products, focusing on package tours. There has been a collapse in the traditional distribution structure for tourist products. Here, we look into the cause of this collapse. There are two main causes for this collapse: (1) recent changes in the travel business, mainly unfair B2B business practices, and (2) an increase in disintermediation.

3.1 “B2B” business in the travel industry

Regarding business transactions in the travel industry, informal transactions between Japanese travel agencies and foreign land operators. When a non-equal transaction is performed between a travel agency in the country of departure (an advantageous position) and a subcontracted land operator in the country of arrival (a disadvantageous position), discrepancies may arise which may be passed on to the traveler. In the past, Travel Journal articles have also been published on this issue⁴⁾, and it was a wake-up call to the industry.

This author investigated the state of business transactions between multiple Chinese and Korean travel agencies and land operators as it relates to the distribution channels of tour products to visitors to Japan. The survey components were carried out by the author while adding to or reconstructing articles taken from Travel Journal (2005/2/7, 2011/7/4). From May to June of 2013 and 2018, phone and face-to-face interviews were conducted with 26 land operators.

Fourteen years have passed since Travel Journal conducted its own first survey. Since then, many aspects addressed in the survey have improved, but there are also some that deteriorated (Table 2). For example, compared to 2013, 2018 has seen an increase in payment-related risks, organizational risks related to travel arrangements, conflicts over itinerary guarantees, and unreasonable demands. And although there have been improvements in contractual flexibility and in issues related to the borderlessness of working with tour agencies, conditions are still far from being fair.

Table 2. Tour agency and land operator transactions

Item (Specific content)	Number of responses in 2013	Number of responses in 2018
Payment-related risks (Late payment, deposit advance)	18	23
Issues related to contractual flexibility (Price reduction, quality requirements above conditions)	20	17
Organizational risks related to bookings (Securing difficult to book items)	21	22
Conflicts over itinerary guarantee (Frequent itinerary guarantee claims)	9	14
Travel agencies and the borderlessness of work (Requesting a response to unexpected events)	20	18
Unreasonable demands (Unpaid help for non-business matters)	15	17

Note: 26 companies participated in the surveys.

Source: author

Such undesirable transactions are directly connected with tour quality control, and it will accelerate the move of travelers away from tours(Travel Journal, 2005/02/07, p.10). Solving these issues is mainly a responsibility of the travel agency, but also the land operator must fulfill its obligations. It is needless to say that travel companies are experiencing a crisis, but as long as they adhere to these business practices, they will lose their competitiveness in the global market, and the travel business itself will collapse(Travel Journal, 2005/02/07, p.14).

4) The 1st was published in Travel Journal (2005/2/7) pp.8-14 and the 2nd was published in Travel Journal (2011/7/4) pp.10-13, respectively.

It is necessary that both travel agencies and land operators listen to the advice of tourism experts and do effort to build a solid relationships with each other, based on a policy of mutual trust.

3.2 Changes in the travel industry due to the increase of disintermediation

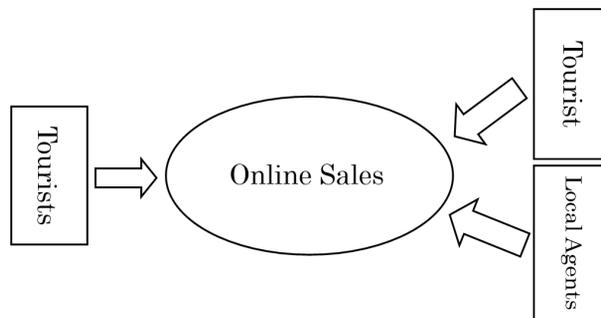
3.2.1 The introduction of online intermediaries

In 2018, a record 7.53 million Korean tourists visited Japan. Although this is still behind the 1st place China (8.38 million people), it has retained a leading 2nd place over the 3rd place Taiwan (4.75 million people). Of course, not all people traveling to Japan go there for the purpose of sightseeing, as these numbers also include people residing in Japan or visiting the country for business.

Korean tourists who have traveled to Japan, have purchased a variety of tour products, including package tours. However, in recent years there has been a trend among Korean tourists to arrange travel accommodation and travel itinerary by themselves, without involvement of a tour agency. This is a “disintermediation,” in which customers themselves complete all their own arrangements without involving a travel agency. It is said that this phenomenon is increasing even among Japanese traveling overseas.

Figure 3 is an example of “disintermediation.” A mail-order intermediary constructs an online platform to mediate between tourists and on one hand local tourist facilities (hotels, ryokans, etc.) and local agents (land operators, professional guides, etc.) on the other hand .

Figure 3. Distribution of tour products by online intermediaries



Source: author

At first glance, there are no anomalies in this kind of distribution, but there is a serious problem with itinerary guarantee. Such online sales intermediary sites have revealed the following problems.

“Company A is an online shopping intermediary, not a party related to the mail-order seller. Accordingly, Company A is not responsible for any merchandise transaction information nor the transactions themselves”

In other words, the mail-order intermediary is not responsible for the transaction because it only mediates between tourist and travel agencies/land operators in the destination country, and it is taking the platform usage fee as a commission simply for connecting the two. This type of company is not registered as a travel business, but as an “online sales intermediary”. However, all of the business that this company is doing is essentially that of a travel agency. Although there are no special problems with an intermediary business, they do not offer itinerary guarantee. Also, when unexpected accidents occur, the issue of responsibility is unclear. Currently, traditional travel agencies are responsible for local safety and itinerary guarantee.

In some cases, such online intermediary registers its head office functions in Korea or some other 3rd country as an “online sales intermediary.” The example “Company A” has been used by more than a few million travelers since the start of business in 2012. In addition, such a disintermediation phenomenon has spread not only to Korea but also to other places, like Taiwan.

The business environment related to the distribution of inbound tour products is always changing, and this is an era when not only the travel industry but also related industries are required to respond.

3.2.2 Sluggish travel agent outlays in travel to Japan

Due to developments in telecommunications, there have been changes in the way tour products are purchased by tourists to Japan, which has led to unfair trade practices among travel agents. The fact that agents were slow to respond to changes in market needs is seen as a reason for the sluggish demand of tour products.

In addition, changes to the travel industry, such as of the above-mentioned online intermediaries, have led to some amendments to the law. For example, some businesses were operating as land operators without being obliged to register as such. They would take tourists in Japan to duty free shops and offer them high priced goods. Besides, they would spare costs on transportation, leading to a reduction in safety.⁵⁾ Because of such practices, in January 4th of 2018, changes were made to the travel law, making it a requirement to register as a “Travel Service Arrangements Operator.” The “Travel Service Arrangements Operator” industry that was a result of revisions to the law took root in the delayed reaction to the business practices between the travel agencies sending tourists on the departure side and the major travel agencies on the arrival side. As shown in Table 3, this has resulted in sluggish tourist outlays among the 49 major travel companies in Japan.

In order to prove the figures shown in Table 3 below as reliable data, it is necessary to compare them with the amount handled by the travel service arrangement operators, and analyze some supplementary materials, such as the amount of consumption per traveler. But the simple fact that the land operators have been affected will not change.

Table 3. Handling of 49 major travel companies in Japan

	Oct, 2013	May, 2014	Jan, 2015	Jan, 2016	Jan, 2017	Feb, 2018
Outbound	197Billion 426.94M¥	171Billion 020.72M¥	138Billion 136.34M¥	127Billion 49.23M¥	139Billion 284.99M¥	169Billion 935.38M¥
Inbound	7Billion 021.08M¥	9Billion 663.59M¥	6Billion 580.4M¥	10Billion 120.26M¥	12Billion 476.17M¥	16Billion 296.28M¥
Domestic	371Billion 076.94M¥	344Billion 272.70M¥	267Billion 452.2M¥	288Billion 410.83M¥	214Billion 54.0M¥	238Billion 522.49M¥

Source: Author, based on materials from the Japan Tourism Agency

3.2.3 Considerations

Many stakeholders are involved in the creation and distribution of tour products within the travel industry. In the past, the supply of travel materials, the creation of goods, and the sale of goods have been divided among these stakeholders. Before the development of information and communication technology as we know today, the side in charge of recruiting customers has been in a favorable position. Traditional transactions (informal commercial transactions conducted to secure the necessary resources for price-oriented product development

5) <https://旅行業登録.jp/land-operated-register> (Accessed Jan 15th, 2019)

and distribution) were rampant in the industries that were forced into price competition in order to acquire customers. As mentioned above, such unfair trading has also occurred in the past, but it has not been improved upon.

The persistence of such unfair trade practices could have severe consequences for the quality of products and services offered by the subcontractors. As a result, it will lead to a decrease in the safety and satisfaction of travelers, and it will encourage travelers to stop using travel agencies. This is reflected in the decrease in the handling amount.

However, it is difficult to understand travelers' desires regarding travel. The online shopping intermediaries make use of that uncertainty which allows the disintermediation movement to gain momentum. Of course, from the point of view of travelers, the distribution process should be simplified and, in addition, a greater selection of products at low prices should be offered. However, the question remains whether the price appeal should be sought at the expense of the safety of travelers. On the other hand, the industry has been making improvements, such as encouraging the revision of the travel business law in order to eradicate illegal and undesired acts. Nevertheless, the law has not yet delivered the desired result.

4. Conclusion

In recent years, there has been continuous talk of not only the travel industry, but the Japanese industry in general, as well as foreign tourism to Japan. Looking back on the last 10 years, foreign travel to Japan has seen a dramatic increase compared to a stagnant number of domestic and overseas trips made by Japanese residents. But even if this development continues for the time being, growth may stop at some point. It may not be possible to cope with natural disasters and changes in the external environment despite the efforts of government and industry. In order to minimize the backlash of such occurrences and to realize sustainable development, new measures must be taken. In conclusion, the following recommendations are made.

4.1 Improving the traditional travel business

It is believed that unfair transactions between travel agencies in the country of departure and land operators in the country of arrival have had an effect on traditional business practices conducted between those in an advantageous position and a subcontractor. Behind this unfair trading practice, there is also the element of excessive competition that occurs in the process of creating a travel business. It should not be forgotten that both have the job of serving "tourist customers."

If only commodities are put into circulation, it is inevitable that companies will engage in price competition in order to differentiate themselves from other companies. This leads to a loss of profits, and as a result, the travel industry as a whole will repeat a vicious cycle that shrinks the market.

Unless unfair transactions between travel agents is improved, there will be an accelerated movement away from tours. To bring tourists back to travel agency organized tours, it is necessary that travel agencies appeal to the market and clearly communicate their strengths. Telecommunications may continue to develop, however, there are many things within a region that cannot be accessed. The "visualization" of this is one other possible direction.

4.2 Future initiatives for the travel industry in response to changes in the environment

The travel industry, which had been leading the economy before the sharp rise in transportation and

telecommunications technology, has not been able to fully respond to recent changes in the travel market.

Changes in the environment at the departure country is expected to further complicate travel to Japan. The development of information and communication technology, the changes in population structure, the increasing speed of movement, the expansion of travel layers, the development of population intelligence, etc.: All of these are changes that cover a wide variety of fields. It is not easy to attract travelers in an era of change. It is possible that the era when many of the necessary arrangements for travel are to be fully completed by the travelers themselves is not far away.

Even in travel, it is necessary to deal with demands of “quantity over quality” or “quality over quantity.”

4.3 Future challenges

This study analyzes the current state of the travel industry from the viewpoint of companies involved in the distribution of tour products. It was mentioned previously in this paper that complementary research is necessary to determine whether the travel industry’s B2B practices and disintermediation have had an effect on sluggish tourist outlays among the 49 major travel companies in Japan. This author would like to address this issue in the future.

References

- Atkinson, D. (2015). *New Theory of Tourism Nation*. Toyo Keizai, Inc.
- _____. (2017). *How to Make Japan the Most Desired Destination in the World* Toyo Keizai, Inc.
- Endo, N. (2016, November 28). Analysis of determinants of comprehensive travel from system and regulatory perspectives. *Travel Journal*.
- Fujimoto, Y. and Morishita (2011). *Theory and Practice of Travel Product Planning*. Doyukan.
- Hirooka, Y. (2015, November 2). Who will represent the travel industry. *Travel Journal*.
- Japan Travel and Tourism Association.(2012). *Inbound Business*.
- Lumsdon, L. (1997). *Tourism Marketing*. International Thomson Business Press. Translated to Japanese by Okamoto, K. Taiga Shuppan.
- Murayama, K. (2015). *Introduction to Tourism Business for Foreign Visitors to Japan*. Shoeisha Co., Ltd.
- _____. (2016). *Introductory Course to Inbound Business, 2nd Edition*. Shoeisha Co., Ltd.
- _____. (2017). *Attracting Inbound Business Visitors*. Shoeisha Co., Ltd.
- _____. (2015). *National Tourism Revolution*. Canaria Communications.
- _____. (2017). *10 Laws of the Lucrative Inbound Business*. Nikkei Business Publications.
- Niitsu, K. (2014). *How to Get Foreign Tourists to Visit With a Smile*. Shogyokai Publishing.
- Ono, S. (2016). *How to Attract Foreign Tourists*. Nippon Jitsugyo Publishing.
- Sakamoto, T. (2015). *Sales Guide to Attracting Foreign Tourists*. Chuokeizai-sha Holdings, Inc.
- Takahiro, N. (2013). *Inbound Marketing*. SB Creative Corp.
- Torio, K.(2017, April. 10). Travel industry research. *Travel Journal*.
- Travel Journal (2005, February 7). p.14.
- _____. (2005, February 7). p.10.
- Yamakawa, T. (2015, September 14). Redefining the travel industry based on cultural value in overseas travel. *Travel Journal*.
- Japan Tourism Agency statistics. <https://statistics.jnto.go.jp/en/>
<https://rotenburo.in/tour1.html> (Accessed Jun 6th, 2019)
<https://旅行業登録.jp/land-operated-register> (Accessed Jan 15th, 2019)