

## Survey Results

### A Customer Survey in Tokyo

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【Survey members in Tokyo (FY 2016)】

ITO, Kozue(D2)※※	: Japan
SOMSIRIVARANGKOOL KANOKWAN(D2)※	: Thailand
WANG, DONGDONG (D2)	: China
KAWABE, Sakiko (D1)※※	: Japan
PRANANDA LUFFIANSYAH (D1)※	: Indonesia
TANADA, Saki (D1)	: Japan
ARAI, Eriko (M1)※※	: Japan

※The member who participated in this project from preparation stage

※Leaders

## The “Strong Points” of *Wajima nuri* : A Customer Survey

MATSUMURA, Eri

(Center for Cultural Resource Studies, Kanazawa University)

### 1. Technical Characteristics and Historical Background of *Wajima nuri*

In a poll related to this project, there was an extremely high rate of positive responses to the question, “Do you know about *Wajima nuri*?” There are over 20 lacquer-ware regions throughout Japan, but this could be evidence that people’s level of familiarity with *Wajima nuri* surpasses regions.

A major feature of *Wajima nuri* that producers strongly drive home is the great technique/skill that goes into its creation (**Figure 1**). The chart shows only the fundamental process, but it/this can be strictly/precisely and finely differentiated. By adding layers of *urushi* (lacquer), a vessel’s durability is improved creating lacquer ware that is lightweight, yet strong and suitable for everyday use.

#### ***Wajima nuri* Production Process**

**Shaping the wood base (\*a):** 1. Katahatsuri (shaving the shape) → 2. Arabiki (approximate carving) → 3. Kijibiki (carving the core)

\*a: Techniques vary depending on the vessel, and are generally classified into the following wood bases: turnery, joinery, board rounding, and hollowing.

**Nuri (Base):** 4. Katakiri-bori (basic hollowing) → 5. Kokuso (urushi mixed with fibers) → 6. Cleaning kokuso → 7. Hardening wood base → 8. Polishing wood base → 9. Nunokise (pasting cloth) (\*b) → 10. Kisenuno kezuri (filing pasted cloth) → 11. Somijitsuke (somi lacquer application) (\*c) → 12. Somimigaki (polishing somi) → 13. Jinuri (base lacquering) (Honkataji [lacquer mixed with powder]: Ippenjinuri (crude lacquering) → Karatogi (polishing) → Nihenjinuri (second crude lacquering) → Nihenjitogi (second polishing) → Sanbenjinuri (third crude lacquering) → Jitogi (polishing)) (\*d)

\*b: A process in which “nunokise,” a combination of linen or cotton cloth, unrefined urushi, and rice glue is pasted to the weaker or easily damaged parts, such as the edges or base, of a bowl or any other item. In some cases, the entire piece is pasted with cloth, called “sonunokise” (total cloth pasting).

\*c: A process that involves lacquering with a type of fired and powdered locally produced diatomaceous earth is called “jinoko”; this step increases durability.

\*d: The technique of lacquering with unrefined urushi on the upper edges to increase durability is called “jienbiki.”

**Nuri (Intermediate):** 14. Nakanuri (intermediate lacquering) → 15. Sabizarai (removing rust) → 16. Tsukuroisabi (mending with rust) → 17. Koshiraemon (sharpening) → 18. Konakanuri (semi-intermediate lacquering) → 19. Konakatogi (semi-intermediate sharpening) → 20. Fukiage (re-sharpening)

**Nuri (Final I) :** 21. Nuritate (final lacquering without polishing)

**Nuri (Final II):** 22. Roiro (polishing)

Roirotogi (polish sharpening) → Dozuri (smoothing) → Fukiage (re-sharpening) → Suriurushi (rub lacquering) → Ikkaime tsuyaage (first polishing) → Nikaime suriurushi (second rub lacquering) → Nikaime tsuyaage (second polishing) → Keshozuri (make-up rub) → Kesho tsuyaage (make-up polishing)

**Kashoku (Ornamentation) I :** 23. Chinkin (gold inlays)

**Kashoku (Ornamentation) II:** 23. Makie (gold lacquer)

**Figure 1** : Process to make *Wajima nuri* (Created by author FY2017)

Table 1: Process Chart

Next, a general outline is presented of the context in which these types of durable vessels were made, have become popular throughout Japan, and have now become established as a single brand.

There are a few theories about when and how the techniques of present-day *Wajima nuri* in Wajima were handed down. One such theory states that lacquer-ware production techniques were handed down by monks at the Negoro-ji Temple, the headquarters of the New Shingon school of Buddhism in Kii during the Muromachi period (around the mid-forteen century-the late sixteen century), but precise historical facts remain unknown. However, the disciplined lifestyle of the ascetic monks of temples was definitely involved in the background of *Wajima nuri*'s improved durability. In the Kamakura period (around the early twelve century-the mid fourteen century), many ascetic monks shared a communal lifestyle, eating and sleeping together, after the Soji-ji Temple was opened as the main site of Soto Zen Buddhism in Okunoto area. For the large quantities of tableware used there, the monks required items that were easy to care for and sturdy, and *Wajima nuri* was born in response to that demand, the lacquer ware boasting durability that has been passed down to the present day.

There were always many monks training at Soji-ji, and around the late Edo period, the number of ascetic monks is estimated to have been as many as 700 to 800. Because they came from every corner of the country, *Wajima nuri* gradually came to be known as “head temple vessels” when the monks would bring it back to their hometowns. Additionally, a superior business system formed in the Edo period played a role in *Wajima nuri* acquiring the status of a household name. This was an association of sellers called “Daikoku-ko (Daikoku Association)” supported by association of buyers called “Wan-ko (Bowl Association)” and “Kagu Tanomoshi (Mutual Furniture Financing Association).” The association of sellers and buyers

helped in the highly valued *Wajima nuri* reaching commoners through the rich cargo ships that sailed the Sea of Japan. Japan was divided into 64 market regions, from Karafuto to Ryukyu, and *Wajima nuri* further solidified its place as a national lacquer ware brand.

So, why did commoners need *Wajima nuri*? They needed it because lacquer ware was used in important religious rites like Buddhist funerals and memorial services. Needless to say, the average commoners were unable to purchase these expensive items; but, there was a system by which the three highest-ranking members of villages (*murakata sanyaku*) would buy these items together and lend them out to villagers. Hence, it became necessary to lend out several matching sets with matching designs, there was a need for standard designs in addition to durability. Thus, production of *Wajima nuri* to meet uniform and controlled standards soon began to circulate.

With regard to the technique, the gold inlay was introduced in the mid-Edo period, gold and silver lacquer were introduced in the late Edo period, and additional ornamentation techniques were incorporated with the migration of artisans to Wajima following the abolition of feudal domains during the Meiji Restoration. Later, the use of *Wajima nuri* spread from religious spaces to cuisine and ryokan use. Soon after Japan's period of rapid economic growth, bowls began to be made with synthetic resins and chemical paints, and cheap lacquered frames and vases appeared on the market throughout Japan. Namely, the consumption pattern was divided into two extremes, showing preference for inexpensive stuff or for high-grade items. The former was focused on lacquer ware made with synthetic resins and chemical paints and the latter was circulated as high-grade interior lacquer ware, in addition to its use as traditional vessels.

(The above is a description based on the information in primary source (1) and in a special lecture by Mr. Omukai)

As the market for *Wajima nuri* expanded, *Wajima*

*nuri* soon acquired the status of a proud Japanese *kogei* (traditional craft).

The designation of Japanese traditional crafts, or *kogei*, began in 1975. Based on the 1974 announcement of the Act for Promoting *Kogei* Production (nicknamed Traditional Production Law) and as per the Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry, 230 types of works as of 2017 were labeled

*kogei*. There are ten kinds of *kogei* designated in Ishikawa Prefecture production, and four of these, including *Wajima nuri*, were designated in the first year of the program, 1975 (**Figure 2**). In addition, there were six prefectural designated types of *kogei* and 20 rare *kogei* items touted among a total of 36 types of *kogei*, making Ishikawa Prefecture renowned as the “*Kogei Kingdom*.”

Designated due date	Craft item name	made in Ishikawa
17/Feb/1975	Nambu ironware, Yamagata casting, Murayama-Oshima pongee( <i>tsumugi</i> ), Shiozawa pongee( <i>tsumugi</i> ), Takaoka copperware, Shinshu pongee( <i>tsumugi</i> ), Kiso lacquerware, Shunkei lacquerware, Oshima pongee( <i>tsumugi</i> ), Kumejima pongee( <i>tsumugi</i> ), Miyako fine ramie ( <i>jofu</i> )	0/11
10/May/1975	Tsugaru lacquerware, Aizu lacquerware, Isezaki splash patterns( <i>kasuri</i> ), Inami sculpture, <b>Kaga-yuzen</b> dyeing, <b>Kutani ware</b> , <b>Wajima lacquerware</b> , <b>Yamanaka lacquerware</b> , Echizen lacquerware, Ichii-itto carvings, Hikone buddhist altar, Takayama tea-whisk, Inshu Japanese paper, Kumano brushes, Koishiwara ware, Kawanabe buddhist altar	4/16
4/Sep/1975	Ojiya shrinkage( <i>chijimi</i> ), Ojiya pongee( <i>tsumugi</i> ), Takaoka lacquerware, Iiyama buddhist altar, Arimatsu-Narumi tie-dyeing( <i>shibori</i> ), Shigaraki ware, Osaka fanlight, Yumihama splash patterns( <i>kasuri</i> )	0/8
26/Feb/1976	Cherry bark work, Oitama pongee( <i>tsumugi</i> ), Murakami carved and lacquerware, Matsumoto furniture, Nishijin weaving, Kyokanoko tie-dyeing( <i>kanoko-shibori</i> ), Kyoto buddhist altar, Kyoto buddhist altar fittings, Kyoto lacquerware, Kagawa lacquerware, Hakata dolls	0/11
2/Jun/1976	Tokyo fine-pattern dyeing( <i>komon</i> ), <b>Kanazawa buddhist altar</b> , Echizen Japanese paper, Wakasa agate work, Kosu crystal carving, Uchiyama Japanese paper, Tokoname ware, Kyo-yuzen dyeing, Kyoto fine-pattern dyeing( <i>komon</i> ), Kyoto cabinetwork, Banshu abacus, Izumo stone lanterns, Hakata weaving, Kurume splash patterns( <i>kasuri</i> ) Yuntanzan-hana weaving, Yuntanzan-minsa weaving, Tsuboya ware	1/17
15/Dec/1976	Kawatsura lacquerware, Shiozawa weaving, Kamo paulownia chests, Suruga bambooware, Nagoya buddhist altar, Mikawa buddhist altar, Toyohashi brushes, Iga kumihimo braids, Kyoto embroidery, Kyoto kumihimo braids, Akama inkstones, Awa Japanese paper, Tobe ware, Tosa Japanese paper	0/14
30/Mar/1977	Yuki pongee( <i>tsumugi</i> ), Akatsu ware, Omi fine ramie( <i>jofu</i> ), Kyoto ware · Kiyomizu ware, Yamefukushima buddhist altar	0/6
8/Jun/1977	<b>Kanazawa gold leaf</b>	1/1
14/Oct/1977	Kiryu weaving, Kihachijo waving, Kyoto folding fans, Kyoto fans, Osaka fine cabinetry, Nara brushes, Ozu Japanese paper, Imari and Arita ware	0/9
6/Feb/1978	Oborisoma ware, Edo-Kimekomi dolls, Wakasa lacquerware, Tanba-tachikui ware, Kishu lacquerware, Hiroshima buddhist altar, Mikawachi ware, Hasami ware	0/8

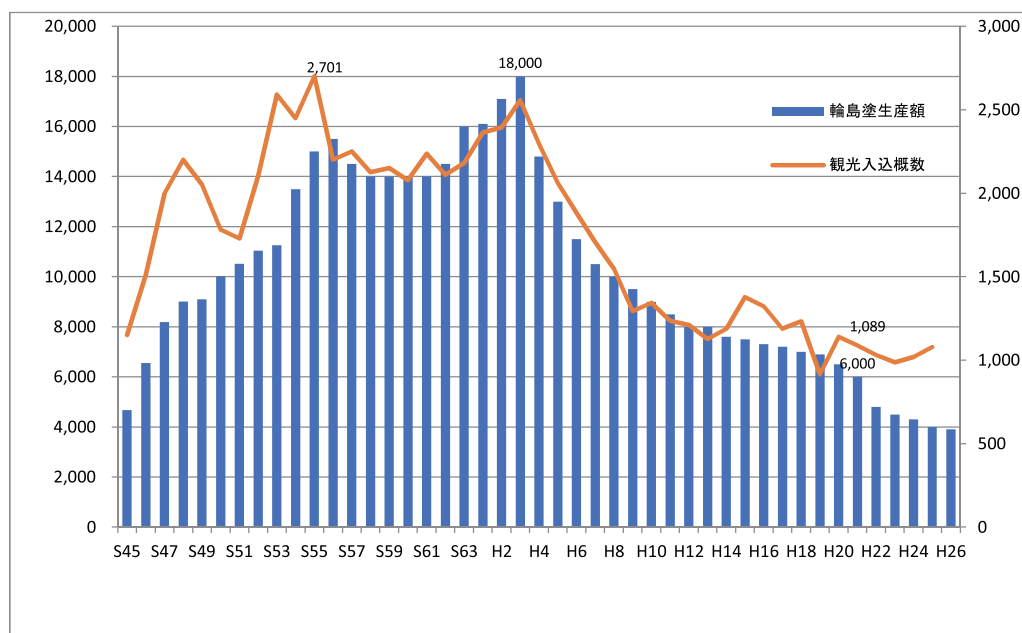
14/Jul/1978	Shogawa turnery	0/1
22/Jul/1978	Mino ware, Nanao buddhist altar, Awa indigo cotton weaving	1/3
12/Jan/1979	Tokyo silversmithery, Echizen forged blades, Kamakura carved and lacquered ware, Yokkaichi-banko ware	0/4
2/Aug/1979	Mashiko ware, Kasukabe paulownia chests, Okazaki stone carving, Kyoto black dyeing, Katsuyama bamboo basketry, Beppu bamboo basketry	0/6
3/Mar/1980	Yamagata buddhist altar, Tokyo yuzen dyeing, Tama fabric, <b>Kanazawa lacquerware</b> , Nagiso turnery, Izushi ware	1/6
16/Oct/1980	Odate bentwood work, Niigata Shirone buddhist altar, Nagaoka buddhist altar, Sanjo buddhist altar, Suzuka ink sticks( <i>sumi</i> )	0/5
22/Jun/1981	Miyagi kokeshi dolls, Tsubame beaten copperware, Nagoya paulownia chests	0/3
3/Mar/1982	Iwayado chests, Kyoto stone carving, Sakai forged blades, Shinshu forged blades	0/4
1/Nov/1982	Tokamachi splash patterns( <i>kasuri</i> ), Tokamachi-Akashi shrinkage( <i>chijimi</i> ), Iga ware, Bizen ware, Miyajima woodwork, Osaka buddhist altar	0/6
27/Apr/1983	Ryukyu splash patterns( <i>kasuri</i> ), Shuri fabric, Nagoya-yuzen dyeing, Nagoya black dyeing, Osaka-Naniwa pewterware, Agano ware, Ise paper stencils	0/7
31/May/1984	Ryukyu-Bingata dyeing, Akita cedar cooperage, Hakone wood mosaic work, Odawara lacquerware	0/4
22/May/1985	Hidehira lacquerware, Joboji lacquerware, Mino Japanese paper, Ogatsu inkstones, Unshu abacus, Fukuyama Japanese harp ( <i>koto</i> )	0/6
12/Mar/1986	Ryukyu lacquerware, Echizen ware, Echigo-Yoita forged blades, Kyoto dolls	0/4
18/Apr/1987	Yonakuni weaving, Kishu chests, <b>Ushikubi pongee(<i>tsumugi</i>)</b>	1/5
9/Sep/1988	Kijoka banana weaving, Ecchu Japanese paper, Karatsu ware	0/3
11/Apr/1989	Yaeyama-minsa weaving, Yaeyama fine ramie( <i>jofu</i> ), Sekishu Japanese paper, Osaka-Senshu paulownia chests, Ouchi lacquerware	0/5
20/May/1991	<b>Kaga embroidery</b> , Naruko lacquerware, Edo fishing rods	1/3
8/Oct/1992	Toyooka willow basketry, Kasama ware	0/2
2/Jul/1993	Aizu-Hongo ware	0/1
4/Apr/1994	Iwami ware, Miyakonojo bows, Suruga hina doll fittings, Suruga hina dolls	0/4
5/Apr/1995	Gifu lanterns, Owari cloisonne, Makabe stone lanterns	0/3
8/Apr/1996	Tendo Japanese chess pieces, Osaka-Kongo bamboo blinds, Banshu-Miki forged blades	0/3
14/May/1997	Edo joinery, Seto underglazed ware, Kyoto art mountings , Marugame fans	0/4
6/May/1998	Tosa forged blades	0/1
13/May/1999	Edo decorative papers	0/1
31/Jul/2000	Koshu seals	0/1
3/Jul/2001	Yame lanterns	0/1
30/Jan/2002	Edo cut glass, Hagi ware, Satsuma ware	0/3
17/Mar/2003	Boshu fans, Niigata lacquerware, Shodai ware, Amakusa ceramic, Higo inlay	0/5

10/Sep/2003	Otani ware, Okuaizu basketry	0/2
31/Aug/2004	Kawajiri brushes	0/1
22/Sep/2005	Uetsu shinafu weaving	0/1
9/Mar/2007	Iwatsuki dolls, Edo-sekku dolls, Edo woodblock print	0/3
28/Apr/2009	Echigo-Sanjo forged blades,	0/1
25/Jul/2012	Chibana-hana weaving	0/1
8/Mar/2013	Nibutani ita woodwork, Nibutani attusi weaving, Kishu fishing rods ( <i>herazao</i> )	0/3
26/Dec/2013	Chichibu meisen weaving, Echizen chests, Yamaga lanterns	0/3
26/Nov/2014	Edo glass	0/1
18/Jun/2015	Sendai chests, Edo tortoiseshell, Tokyo antimony crafts	0/3
26/Jan/2017	Owari buddhist altar, Nagasaki tortoiseshell work, Haebaru-hana weaving	0/3
30/Nov/2017	Okuaizu-showa- fine ramie ( <i>karamushi</i> ), Chiba artisans tools, Tokyo plain dyeing, Ecchu-Fukuka sedge hat ( <i>sugegasa</i> ), Sanshu-onigawara crafts	0/5

**Figure 2:** Designation of traditional crafts by Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (Created by author using the following URL FY2017

<http://kougeihin.jp/association/about/>

<http://www.meti.go.jp/press/2017/11/20171130001/20171130001.html>)



**Figure 3 :** *Wajima nuri* Production Shifts (in millions of JPY) (Created by Wajima-shi, FY2015)

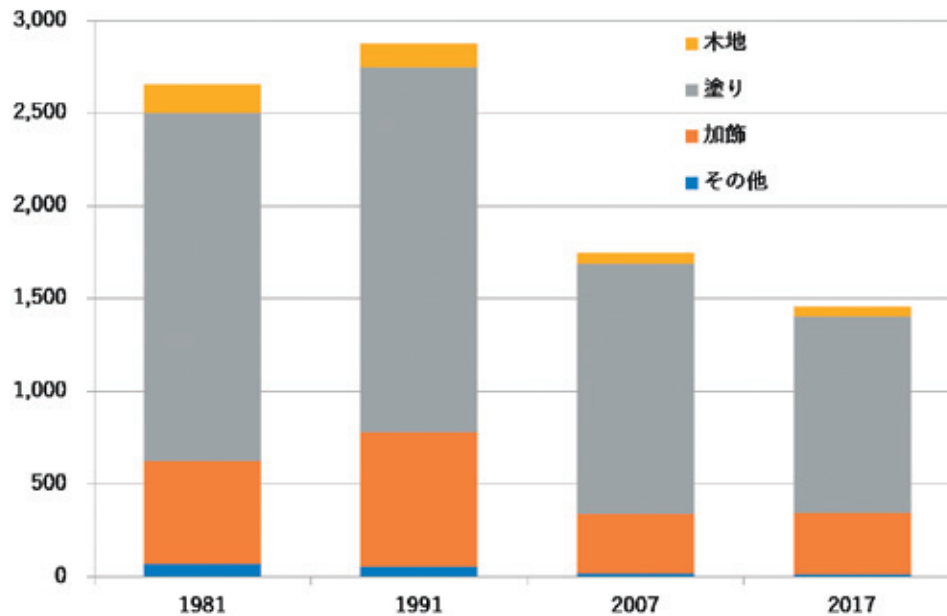
[Graph item translations]

輪島塗生産額 *Wajima nuri* Production

観光入込概数 Sightseeing Visitors (Rounded Values)

Under these circumstances, *Wajima nuri* came to be known more than ever as a *kogei* representative of Ishikawa Prefecture. Sales began to rise sharply in 1979, and continued to soar until 1981, growing to a production value of as much as ¥15.5 billion. Following that, production value dropped somewhat

from 1983 to 1986, to about ¥14 billion, but grew further in 1987, reflecting the bubble economy, and rose again to a record high of about ¥18 billion just before the bubble economy crashed (**Figure 3**). However, soon after, *Wajima nuri* market conditions continued to drop, and have reached the present-day



**Figure 4** *Wajima nuri* Artisan Shifts Created by Wajima-shi, FY2018

[Graph item translations]

木地	Wooden Base	塗り	Lacquering
加飾	Ornamentation	その他	Other

condition after falling to under 25% of their highest production value, with ¥3.9 billion in 2016 and ¥4.2 billion in 2017.

The production of *Wajima nuri* grew after it was designated a national “*kogei* item” during Japan’s rapid economic growth, and it soon increased with the favorable circumstances of the bubble economy just as production was starting to fall. Then, there was a sharp drop in production with the collapse of the bubble, leading to distress among producers who saw a little hope for “recovery” toward previous trends. As a result, an increasing number of producers had to leave the craft, and as of 2017, the number of artisans dropped to about 50% of their peak in 1991 (Figure 4).

## 2. Revitalizing the *Wajima nuri* Producing Region: A Survey to Understand Customer Conditions

Since the Edo period, Chinese production of *urushi* (lacquer) has supported Japanese lacquerware demands in addition to domestically produced *urushi*, but due to an increase in lacquerware exports starting in the Meiji period, Chinese *urushi*

has become even more necessary. In addition to this, use of compound paints has also risen due to the increased demand for cheap lacquer ware during Japan’s rapid economic growth, to the extent that domestic production of *urushi* has dropped precipitously, and *urushi* production regions are very few in Japan now, including Joho-ji Temple in Iwate Prefecture. Since then, about 99% of *urushi* used in Japan is produced overseas (mainly in China), and currently even *Wajima nuri* is made mainly with *urushi* brought in from overseas.

Under these circumstances, a new trend of cultivating *urushi* trees in production regions has begun, so that the *urushi* produced thus can be used to make lacquer ware. In Wajima City as well, an *urushi* tree-planting program is underway based on the concept of “returning to the roots of making *Wajima nuri* using local Wajima materials and techniques” (2). Needless to say, the production quantity is small, and because its cost is about five times the cost of *urushi* produced outside of Japan, this program is not aimed at the market. The goal is mainly to enhance the cultural value of lacquer ware made of local materials and techniques to



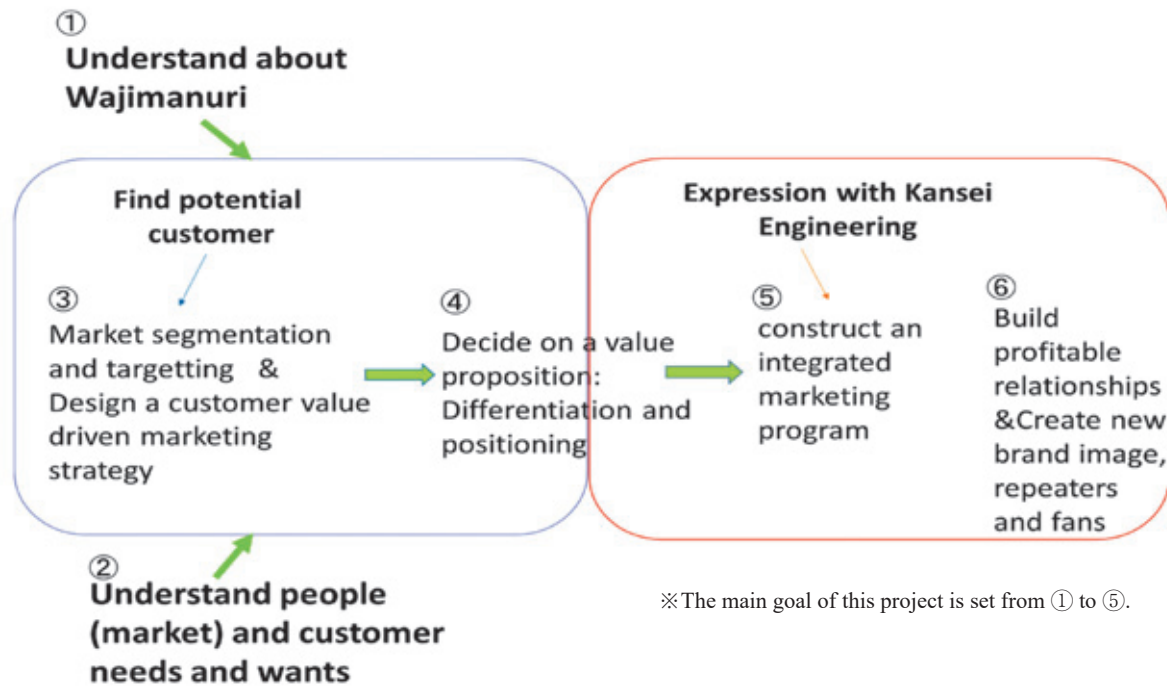


Figure 5 : Marketing process model

reconstruct a regional identity.

The antibacterial properties of *Urushi* are inspected at industrial technology centers, and it is now gaining attention for its safety in use as tableware (3). However, presently, because its functional aspects such as its antibacterial quality can be interpreted broadly, these points are difficult to highlight. Going forward, by more reliable demonstrations of these qualities, there is a latent potential for raising added value in scientific terms, but this is not currently the point of appeal that is specific to *Wajima nuri*.

The above developments are aimed indirectly at stimulating the *Wajima nuri* market through reconsidering the raw materials used in production and raising awareness of the production side. Accordingly, this project focuses on “who” the seller should be selling to and on “what” the seller should be selling, that is, to consider the sections of “who = latent customers” and “what = the merits of *Wajima nuri*.”

The entire project is based on a marketing process model (Figure 5).

In this model, “(2) grasping the needs of (actual/



Figure 6 : Tableware Festival in Tokyo Dome

potential) customers” was carried out by conducting a customer situation survey at the following events: “Blossoming with *Urushi*: Exhibition of Up-Coming Wajima Works ~ Exhibit of Works by Young Artisans Using *Urushi* Materials in Wajima” (held on January 28 and 29, 2017, at the Kanazawa antenna shop “Ginza no Kanazawa” in Tokyo); “Tableware Festival 2017: Items Adding color to Life Exhibition” (held from February 3 to 5, 2017, at Tokyo Dome); and “Ishikawa Kogei Fair 2017” (held at Tokyo Dome City Prism Hall). Here, with permission from Wajima-shi and Kirimoto,

we primarily conducted opinion and participant observation surveys in the gallery (Ginza), near the Wajima Kirimoto booth (Tokyo Dome), and by the Wajima-shi booth (Tokyo Dome City) (4)(Figure 6).

In these surveys, by generally classifying customers into the following four customer bases, we clarified the constituency to which each survey participant belonged (Figure 7).

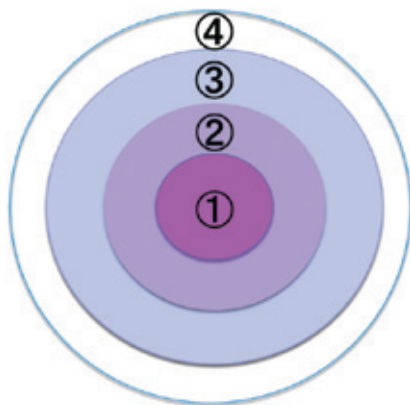


Figure 7 : Customer Base Classification

(1) Actual Customer(existing customer) Base:

They comprised people who (a) were considering buying *Wajima nuri*, (b) were aware of *Wajima nuri* because they have negotiated on buying it earlier, or (c) had a deep interest and were engaged in buying because they already owned *Wajima nuri*.

(2) Potential Customer Base I (who already have interest and information):

This group comprised people who (a) are interested in lacquer ware, (b) taking steps to buy or seeking value from buying them, and (c) are thinking about purchasing it. Or, they were people who are in an environment in which they can obtain information.

(3) Potential Customer Base II (who may have interest in the future):

This group comprised those who currently have little information, their curiosity has not yet been sparked, and hence they are not taking any action, but they can potentially have an interest in future.

(4) Not Promising Customers

Since the surveys were conducted at *kogei* fairs

and tableware festivals, those attending could be classified as belonging to the (1) actual customer base or to the (2) close potential customer base, because they attended with the intention of purchasing *Wajima nuri* or other *kogei* items, or had an interest in these items, or at least arrived at these events so that they had ample opportunity to learn about such things.

The results of this study are summarized at the end of this section, in “Document 1: Tokyo Survey Data 1” and “Document 2: Tokyo Survey Data 2.”

-Documents 1-1, 1-2, 1-3

The total number of opinion survey subjects was 123, with about 89% residing in the Kanto area centered on Tokyo, 54% counting the Kanto area as their home region, showing that a majority of respondents reside in or are from the Kanto area. Residents of Hokuriku (Ishikawa Prefecture) were about 0.8%, and people originally from Hokuriku (all Ishikawa Prefecture) were about 3%.

The gender ratio of the respondents was 64% women and 36% men, and a fairly high ratio of women were in their 50s and 60s. Of the men who responded, most were in their 60s or 40s, followed by men in their 30s. The gender ratio of respondents in their 30s and 40s was unexpectedly even, and in the survey, a point of interest was that men were seen picking up *Wajima nuri* with specific interest (Document 2). Based on this data, it could be inferred that although *Wajima nuri* strongly appealed to the feminine gender because of its use in tableware, there was now interest shown by men as well, including those in their 30s and 40s.

-Documents 1-4, 1-5, 1-6

About 98% of survey respondents knew about *Wajima nuri*, and about 30% learned about it “at some point” without any particular impetus. This shows the high degree of familiarity with *Wajima nuri*, and therefore the need for new breakthrough solutions with regard to the current reality of market congestion.

Regarding their experience of having visited Wajima, about 38% replied that they had been

to Wajima-shi or Wajima City. Some had visited for work-related reasons, and some did not know exactly how many times they had visited, but some had only a vague image of Wajima as a sightseeing locale. Future plans should include not only promoting people’s interest in visiting Wajima but also ensuring that the visit leaves a strong impression on them, more memorable than other regions they have visited.

-Documents 1-7, 1-8

The clear, strong actual customers were about 18%, who responded that their purpose for visiting the location was for “*Wajima nuri*” (22 respondents), and of these, nine were owners of *Wajima nuri*. Although the scope of the survey was limited, many survey respondents already had some kind of connection with Wajima-shi or Wajima Kirimoto, and the most common response to how they learned about the event was “direct messaging,” followed by “hearing about it from a friend or family member.” These could be considered actual customers or as belonging to the Potential Customer Base 1, close to actual customers.

-Documents 1-9, 1-10, 1-11, 1-12

A little over 85% of all respondents already owned lacquer ware (of which about 35% owned *Wajima nuri*), about 45% used it daily, and nearly 50%, said that daily use would be the purpose of buying new lacquer-ware items. Namely, these results demonstrate that lacquer ware is used as a daily item, and furthermore, that it is sought as a daily item. Furthermore, among these opinions, it was interesting that the impression of *Wajima nuri* held by people who use lacquer ware on a daily basis was far from the impression held by people who had not used it. Going forward, this gap could be important to consider between the two groups.

### 3. From Survey Result Summary to This Project’s Aims

At the beginning of the survey period, focusing on the point of “Why have you not purchased anything yet” in our questioning, we asked for

overall reasons. However, during the course of the survey, we began to emphasize on “Why did you buy it? Or, Why do you want to buy it?”

To summarize the results of this survey, the following factors can be listed in the context of stimulating interest in or a will to purchase *Wajima nuri*.

- People became fans by actually using the items in daily life and began to take an interest in *Wajima nuri*.

- The role of a staff member or advisor who explained about the products produces a sense of security, an understanding about the merits of the items, and leads to developing a good image of the product.

- Interactions with staff promoted desire to participate in the event, and sometimes led to purchase.

- Its functionality as a “light weight” product appealed to the senior age bracket.

- For men, the interest was split into two patterns: those whose interest grew with age and those whose interest peaked in their 30s or 40s; the point is that they sensed that it added value to the quality of their own lifestyle.

- For women, the product added value in terms of its sensitivity and nutritional benefits to their families, especially their children.

Next, the following factors can be listed as major reasons for “not deciding to purchase.”

- It is too expensive to afford, and it is difficult to lead people to casually purchase it and try it out.

- There is a very strong image of these items being complicated and “troublesome” to care for.

- In spite of it being suitable for daily use, people do not know that it is durable and highly practical.

- People do not have information on how to use *Wajima nuri* even if they own it, and are not aware of characteristic information such as that it can be repaired.

- People do not have a sense of familiarity with it because they lack information about it.

-Foreigner customers do not have much interest in the item because there is insufficient explanation to attract them to its use.

The factors mentioned above appeared in the survey targeting actual customers as well as potential customers I, and in order to get past these issues, to stimulate interest, we need to “have them use it themselves” and to “communicate the products’ merits.” At the same time, measures that take into account differences between genders and between age groups are required. However, until now, basic targets have not been sufficiently set to determine what to offer to each customer base.

Therefore, in this project, the students considered the superior value of *Wajima nuri* corresponding with being “expensive” in terms of sensitivity and proposed suggestions to resolve the *Wajima nuri* market issue for the estimated potential customer base (potential customers II) deduced from the marketing class.

Please refer to the students’ survey results for details.

#### Group Target Bases

Group A	Men and women aged 30 to 59, of middle to upper income
Group B	Senior citizens
Group C	Childrearing generation, mothers aged 31 to 50

A majority of the team members did not have any experience of *Wajima nuri* before this survey, and could have belonged to the group that had no interest, “(4) Not Anticipated as Customers.” However, as we worked on this survey, we began to have a greater interest and we started to listen to the following “narratives” in everyday conversation.

-Soup that had inadvertently been forgotten did not cool down. (Female, 50s)

-Miso soup stays warm even in the dead of winter. (Male, 50s)

-It feels warm when you put your lips to it, and the texture feels nice on the skin. (Female, 40s)



**Figure 8** : *Wajima nuri* bowls for daily life made by Wajima Kirimoto

These were just some of the “merits” that the people who make *Wajima nuri* wanted to convey, and those of us who were involved in the survey also gradually came to feel this way. Who will we communicate this to, and how will we communicate it? By having students who have never used *Wajima nuri* bring it into their lives, this project was an endeavor that attempted to demonstrate a new direction for dealing with this topic (**Figure 8**).

#### (1) Omukai, Minoru

*Wajima nuri daigoji henkaku ki e no chousen jidai no kaze wo toraeru “takasudo mirai purojekuto”* [Onward toward the 5<sup>th</sup> Transformational Period of *Wajima nuri*: Riding the Waves of the Times “Takasu-do Future Project”]

#### (2) Wajima Urushi Restoration Project

<http://www.wajima-urushi-project.info/page02.htm>  
(February 5, 2018)

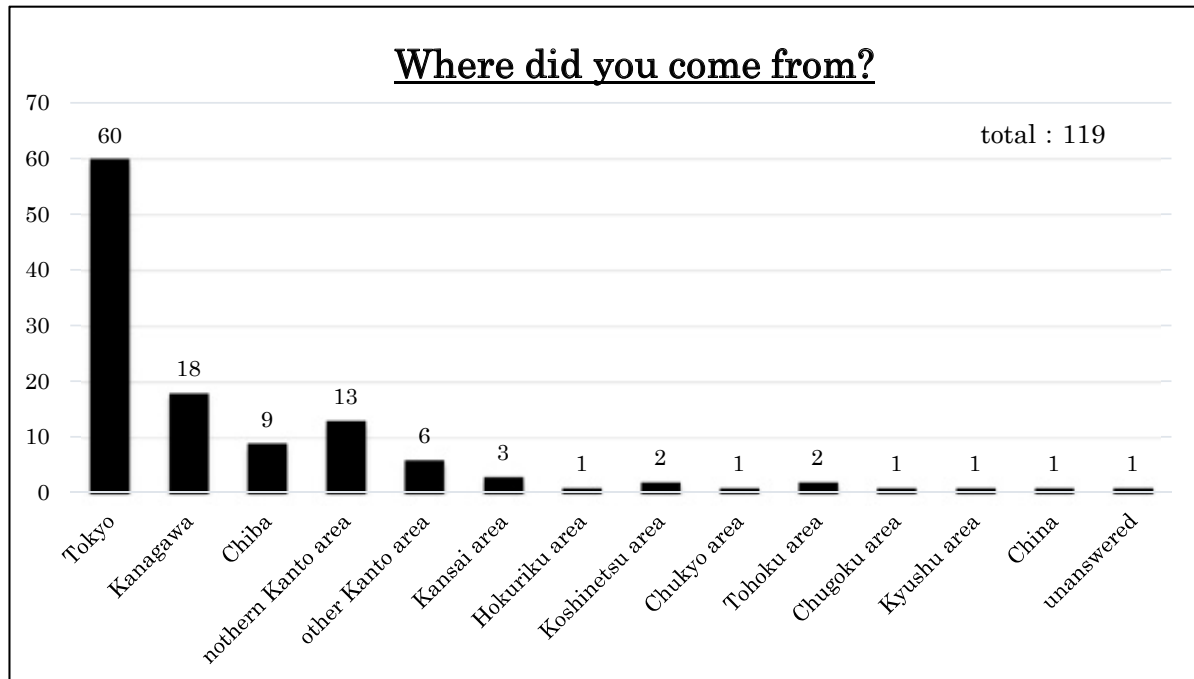
#### (3) Ogawa, Toshio and Oide, Naotaka

2007 “Urushi maku oyobi kanren zairyo no kokusei” [Antibacterial Qualities of Urushi Films and Related Materials] *Journal of the Adhesion Society of Japan* 43(6)  
Kobayashi, Masanobu and Machida, Shun’ichi  
2009 “Urushi-nuri maku no kokusei no kensho” [Inspection of the Antibacterial Qualities of Japanese Lacquer Films”] *Iwate Prefectural Industrial Technology Center Research Bulletin* 16

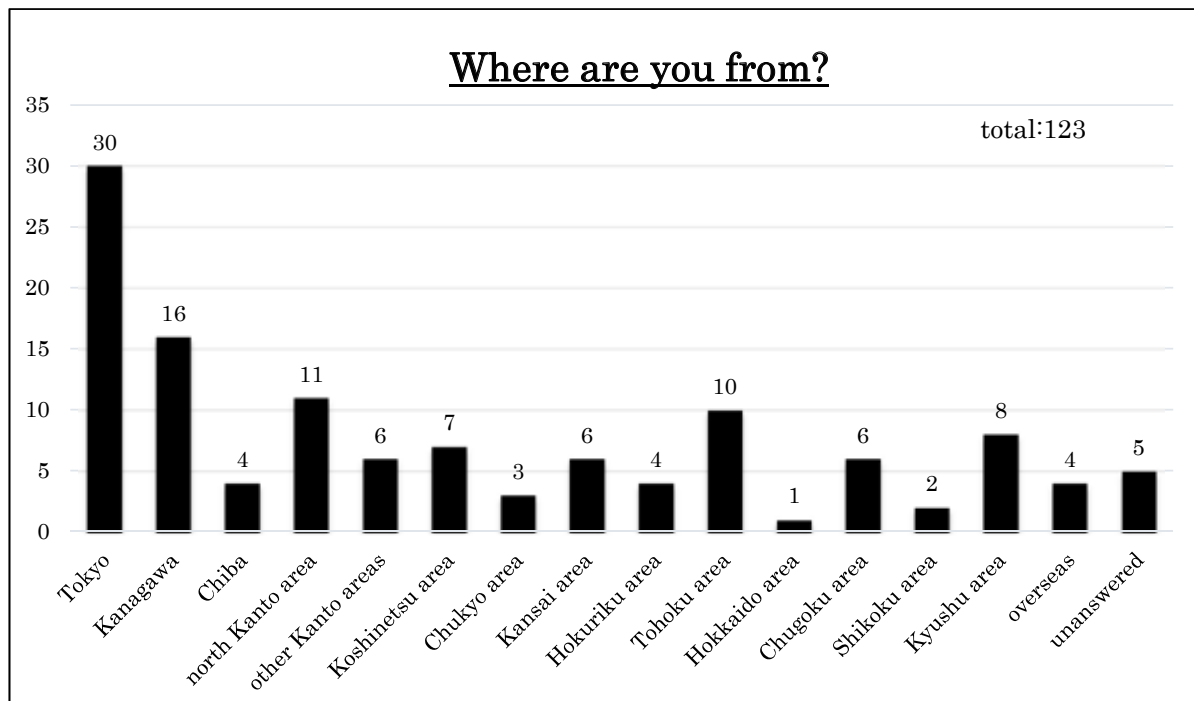
#### (4) This survey was conducted by a mixed team of Japanese students and international students. Students who were unable to interact fluently in Japanese focused on participant observation while the others conducted the survey.

【Reference 1: Survey data in Tokyo 1 (customer survey)】

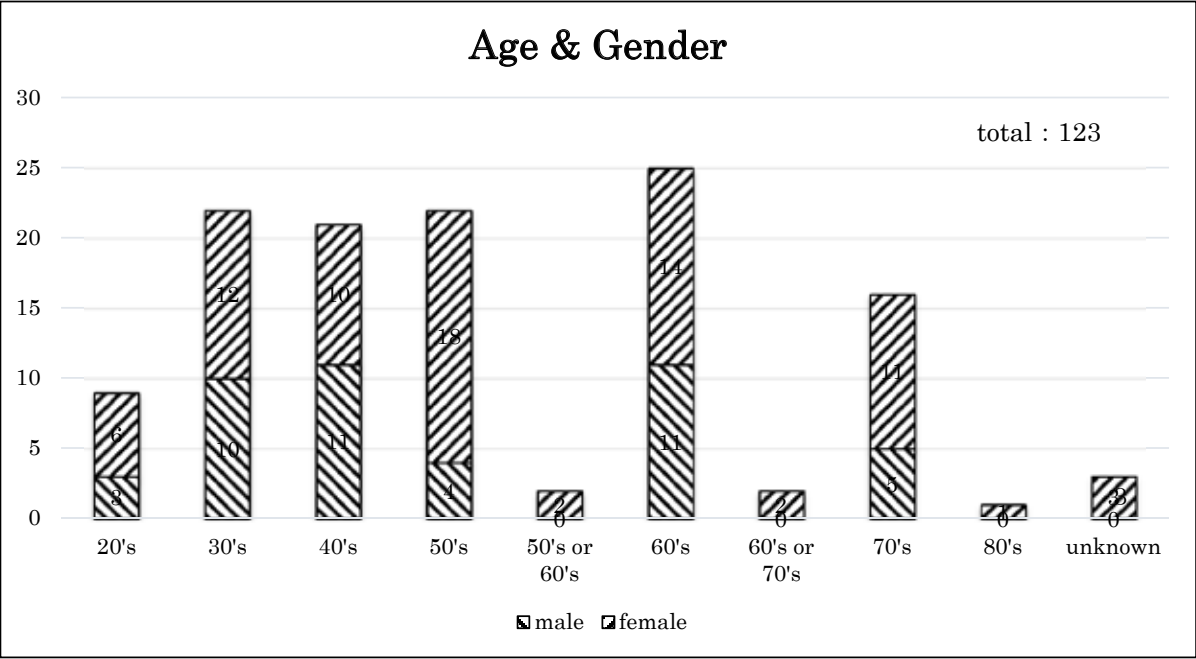
1-1. Residence



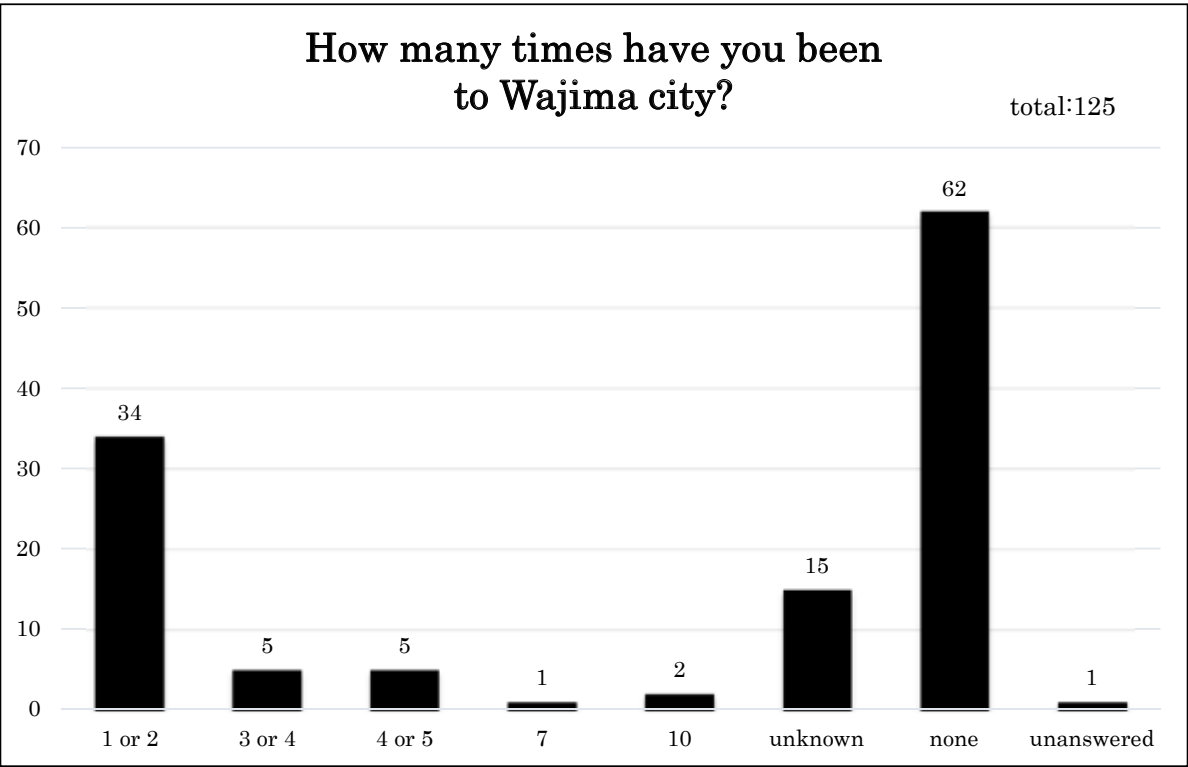
1-2. Birthplace



1-3. Age / Gender

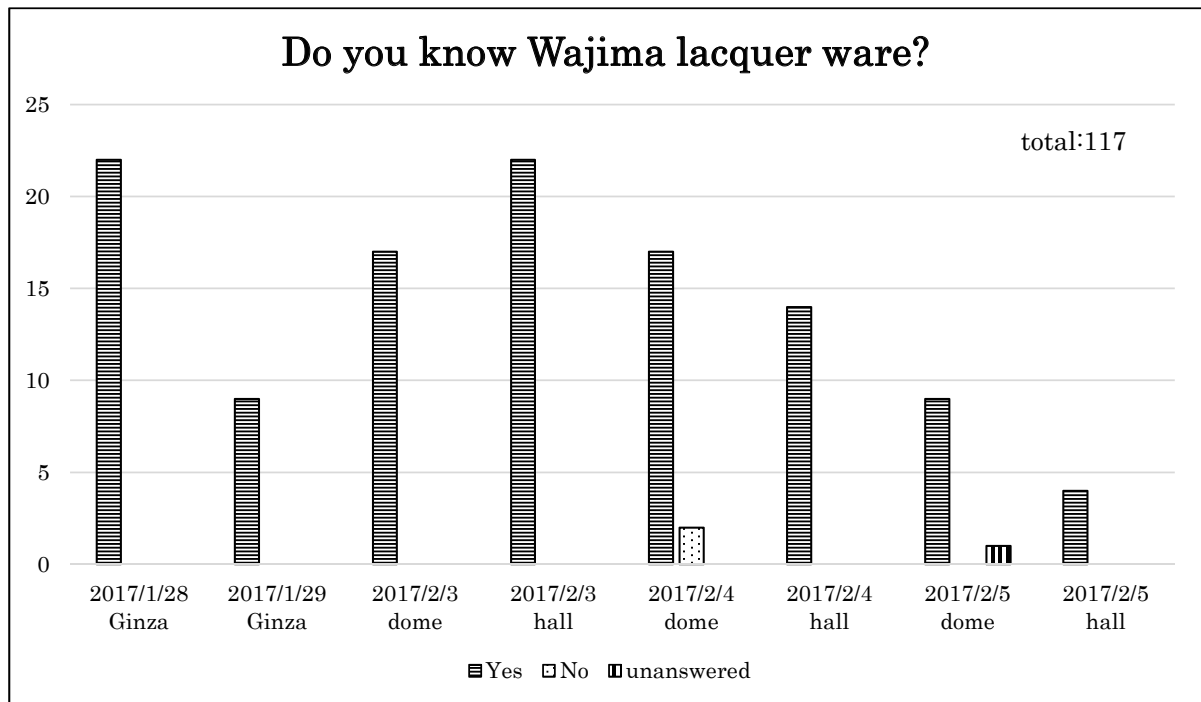


1-4. How many times have you been to Wajima city?

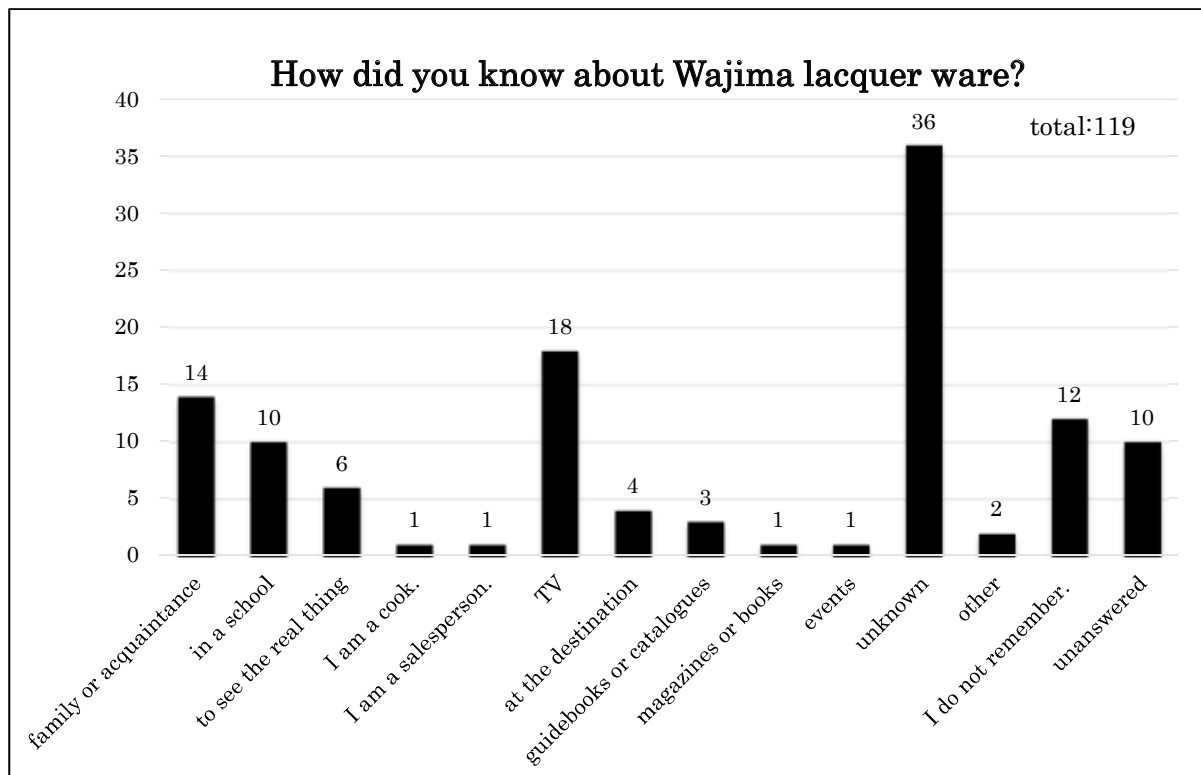




1-5. Do you know Wajima lacquer ware?



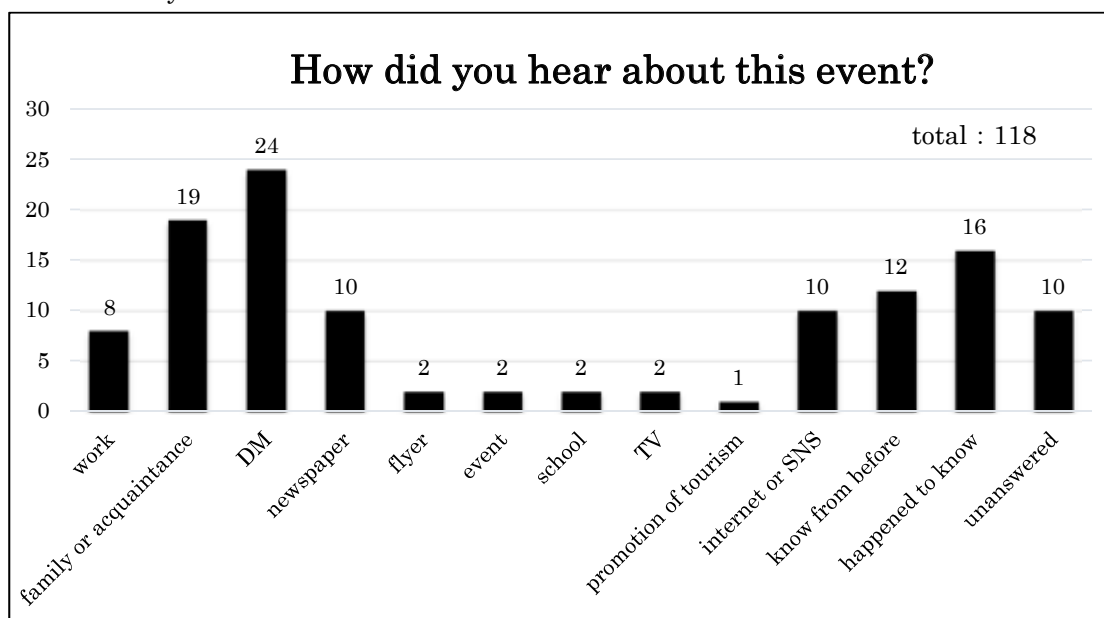
1-6. How did you know about Wajima lacquer ware? (Toward those who answered "Yes" in Q 5)



## 1-7. Visitors' purpose

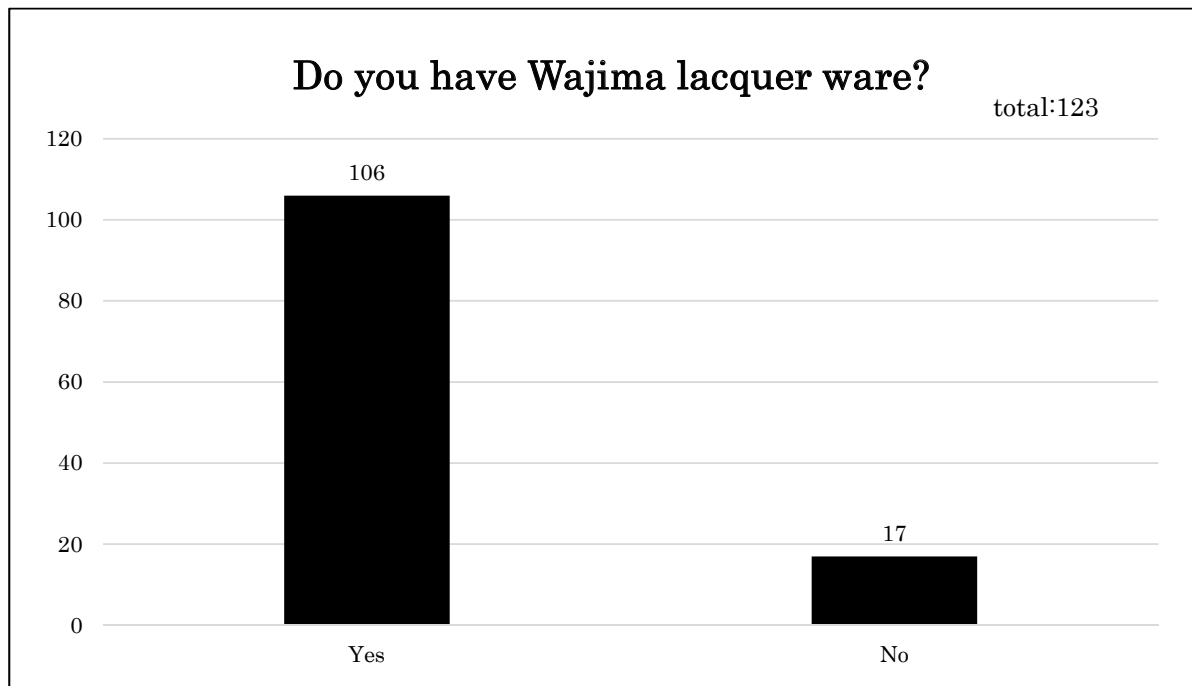
Wajima lacquer ware( <i>Wajima nuri</i> )	22
Yamanaka lacquer ware( <i>Yamanaka nuri</i> )	1
Other lacquer wares	7
Traditional craft ( <i>Koge</i> )	3
Tea ceremony equipment	2
Ceramics	2
Table ware for daily life	9
Products for the table to invite guests	2
Gift	1
Japanese style nicknack	2
Reference for hobbies	4
Event itself	13
To experience Japanese traditional culture	5
To meet the staff and manager	4
Job	4
While taking lunch or shopping	15
None	16
Unanswered	7
	119

## 1-8. How did you hear about this event?

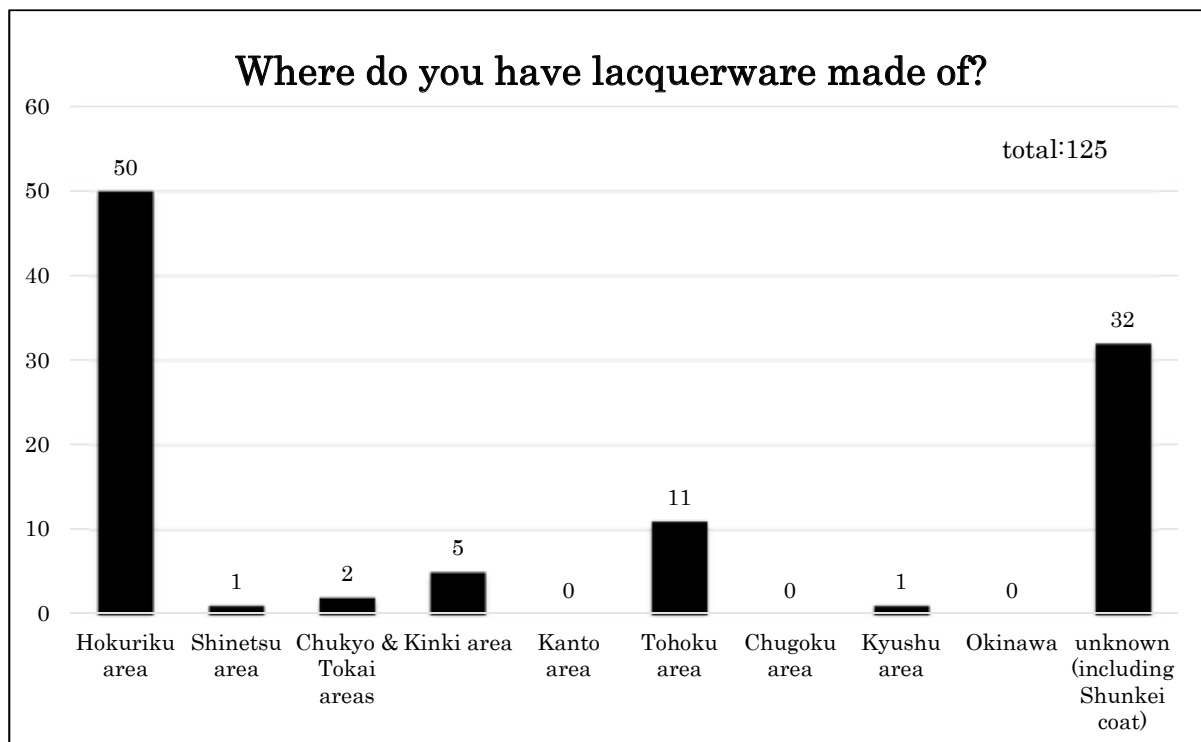




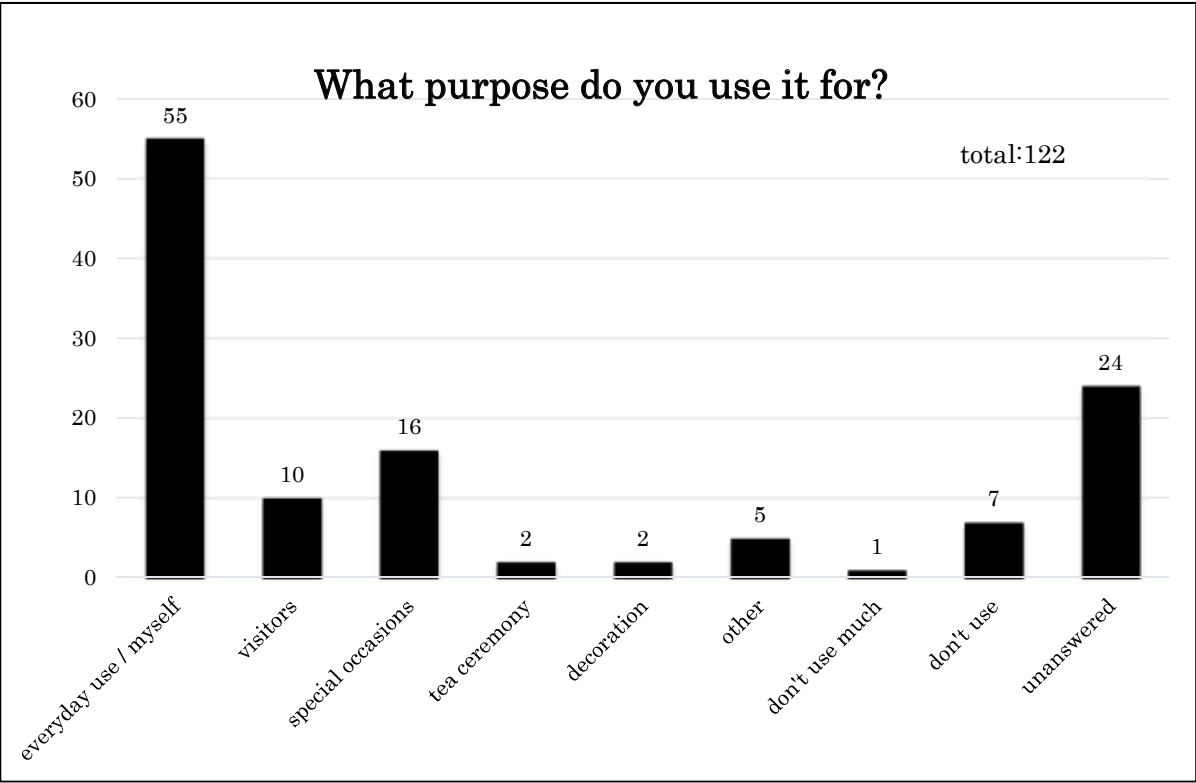
1-9. Do you have Wajima lacquer ware?



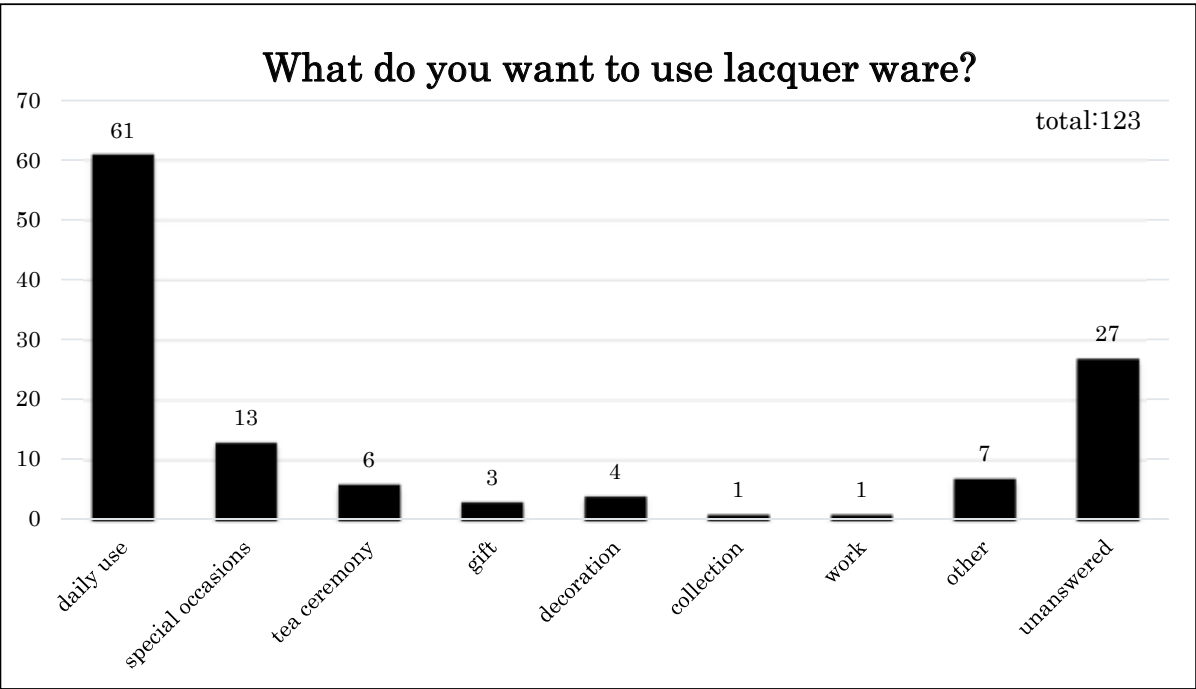
1-10. Where do you have lacquerware made of?



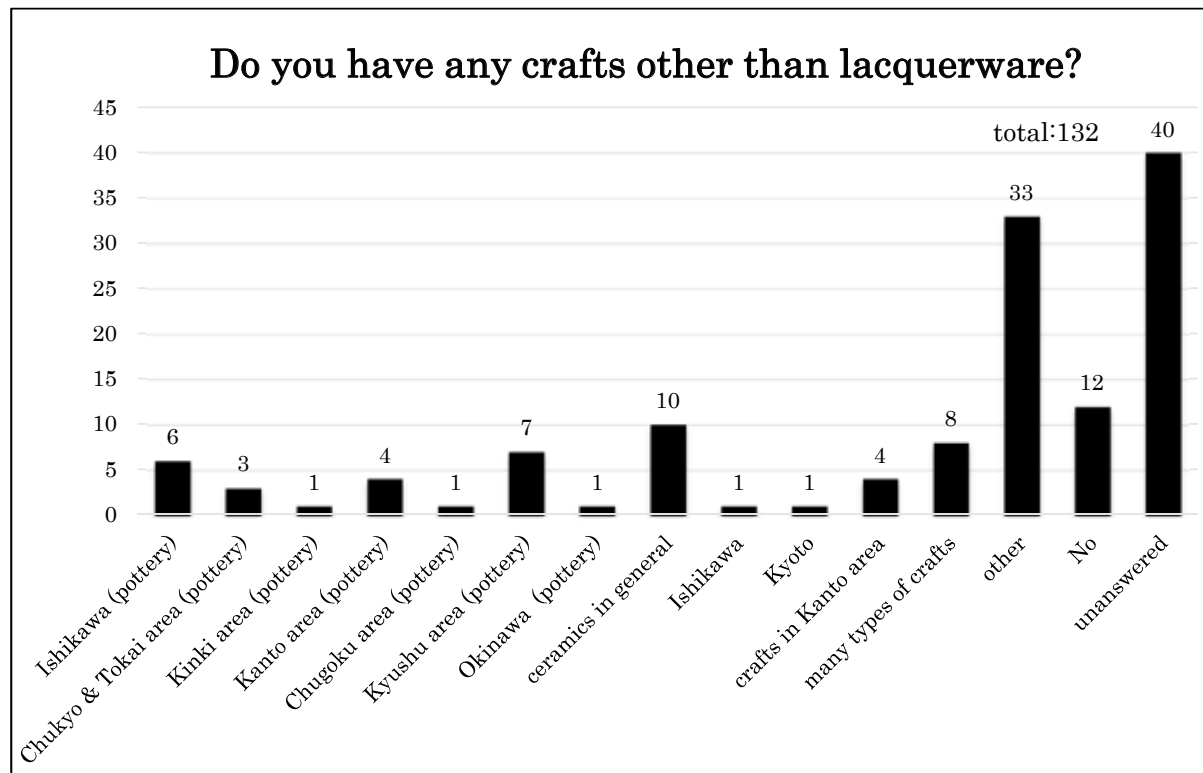
1-11. What purpose do you use it for?



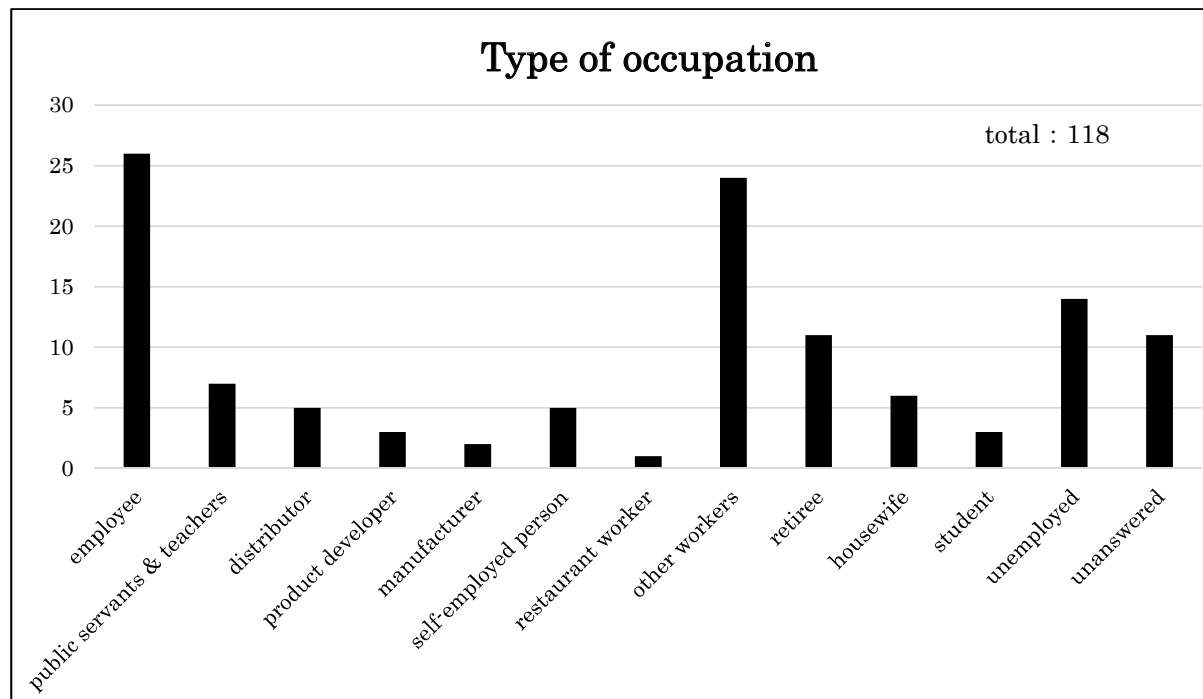
1-12. What do you want to use lacquer ware?



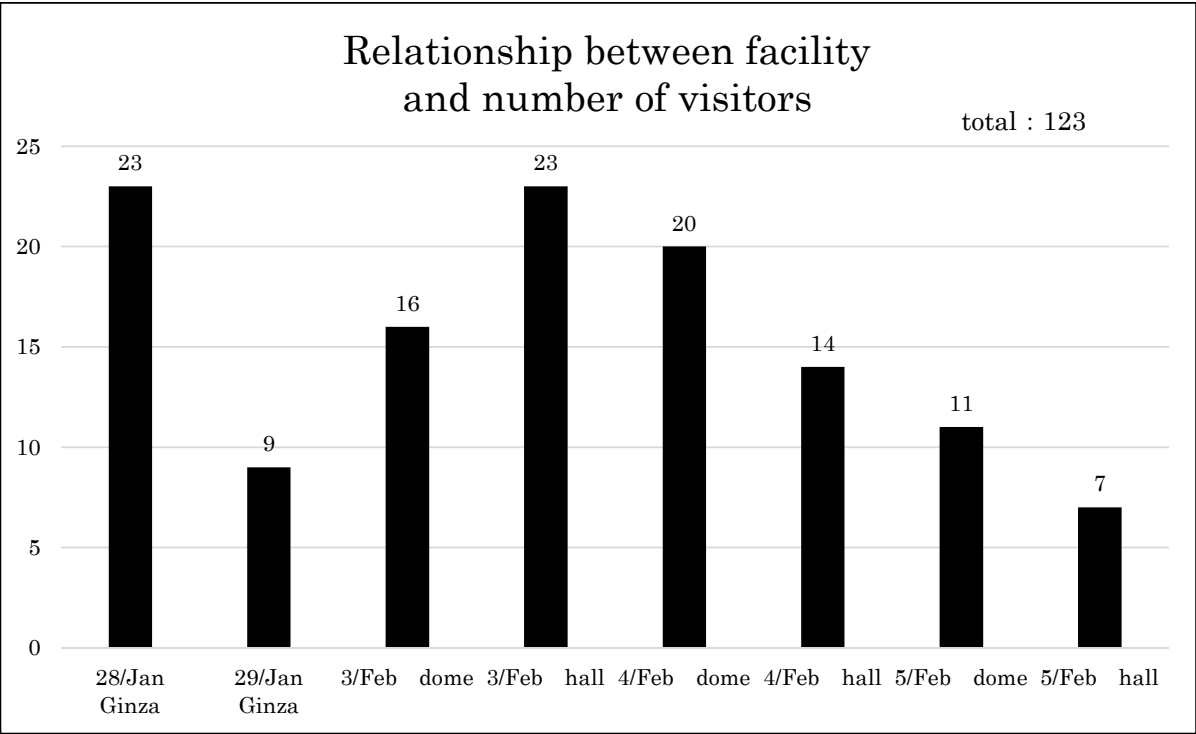
1-13. Do you have any crafts other than lacquerware?



1-14. Type of occupation



1-15. Relationship between facility and number of visitors



Ginza: “*Ginza no Kanazawa* (Tokyo)”

Dome (Tokyo dome): “Tableware festival 2017 – Kurashi wo irodozu utsuwa ten”

Hall (Tokyo dome city Prism hall): “Ishikawa dento-kogei fair 2017”

**Document 2: Tokyo Survey Data 2 (Interviews & Participant Observation Data)**

(Kanazawa Ginza: Blossoming Alongside Urushi – Wajima Up-and-Coming Crafts Exhibition)

○2017/1/28

[Interviewing mainly about reasons for not purchasing]

- Because it looks hard to maintain. I do not know how to care for it. Watching *Asa Dora*, I understood it could be repaired.  
(Female, 50s)
- Because it looks hard to maintain. However, I think that it is beautiful though, isn't it?  
(Male, 60s)
- Even if I were to buy it, it would not be practical. It is not something that can be used in daily life.  
(Male, 70s)
- Even if I were to buy it, there is no way I could use it.  
(Female, 70s)
- It is a matter of money (too expensive). It looks difficult to care for. It seems difficult to put it to everyday use because I am not used to it.  
(Female, 40s)
- It is a matter of money (too expensive)
- It is not what I was looking for.
- I bought one just a week ago, so this time I only came to look. I have developed an interest as I have grown older. *Urushi* wares are quintessentially Japanese.

○2017/1/28

[Interviewing mainly about reasons for not purchasing]

- It is a matter of money (too expensive), and were I to buy it, there is no way to use it. I am trying to buy cheap bowls in particular.  
(Female, 70s)
- It is not what I was looking for (It was not

something that I had in mind). On this occasion, I am only browsing.

- Were I to buy it, there is no way I would be able to use it.  
(Female, 70s)

○2017/1/29

[Interview]

- They learned about this exhibition after meeting a Wajima City craftsman at an exhibition in Yokohama and inquiring about a present for their grandson.  
The wanted to send their grandson *Wajima nuri* as a wedding gift; however, because he is still young, rather than gift tableware, they asked for something suitable in that it was both decorative and required no looking after. Because they were introduced by this *Wajima nuri* craftsman, and he was also exhibiting at the event, they came to visit.  
(Father, (80s or thereabouts), Mother, Daughter)

[Participant Observation]

- When solicited by the staff, they tried handling the products and exclaimed “it's light.” Paid attention to the chopsticks, chopstick rests, and accessories. They were tourists.  
(Female, 50s: 5 participants)
- Spoke enthusiastically with the craftsman who was demonstrating.  
(Female, 60s: 2 participants)
- Watched the craftsman carefully, without speaking, but did not observe the products closely.  
(Male, early 30s; Female, early 30s)
- The man looked carefully at the *urushi* products (In particular, those in the tray section).  
(Male 60-70s)
- One of the men watched intently with a sideways squint. The other man was also carefully inspecting the products one by one.  
(Male, 40s: 2 participants)

- The couple, especially the husband, paid close attention to the main display, but left quickly.  
(Couple)
- The couple was approaching; however, the wife only glanced briefly and left, while the husband spent some time looking at the products.  
(Couple)
- Said they did not have time and left.  
(Foreigners: Father, Mother, Child)

(Tokyo Dome: Table Fair Festival 2017 – Items Adding Color to Life Exhibition)

○2017/2/3

[Interviews]

- A woman came with her husband and three daughters. It seemed as though they wanted a painted plate; a Wajima Kirimoto design product appeared to catch their attention. They emphasized its lightness, and observed that “as one gets older, lightweight plates prove comfortable.”  
(Female, 60s)

○2017/2/4

[Participant Observation]

- There seemed to be some doubt about the everyday use of the products, despite the store’s front staff providing discreet explanations; given the hesitation of the customers to pick up the products and look at them, the staff took the initiative by inviting customers to hold the products while they were given more details about them.
- Many overseas visitors also came, but the English explanations (impact) were entirely insufficient, and many individuals passed by.
- It seemed that there were a great many people who did not know how to maintain the products.
- The explanation of the production process was difficult to understand.

○2017/2/5

[Interviews]

- A woman who lived in America said that the *urushi* wares she brought cracked in the dry air. Returning to Japan a year ago, she visited the event to purchase *urushi* wares. *Wajima nuri* has an expensive and unwieldy image, but after listening to the staff explain the production process, and because she knew of its everyday use, she decided to make a purchase.  
(Female, 60s)
- The woman stated that all her *urushi* wares purchases were done after listening to the staff. Having always enjoyed crafts, she often makes purchases. She has worked as a member of the exhibition staff and after getting to know Mr. Kirimoto at the exhibition, she has come to visit it often.  
(Female, 40s)

[Participant Observation]

- After listening to the passionate explanation of *Wajima nuri* from the staff, she purchased many items.  
(Female, 60s)
- They displayed an interest in new designs; however, they also examined and investigated online and, intent on making a purchase, considered the products again before consulting the staff.  
(Male 30s, Female 30s)

(Tokyo Dome City Prism Hall: Ishikawa *Kogei* Fair 2017)

○2017/2/3

[Interviews]

- A man who was originally passionate about food but had no interest in tableware. 30 years ago, on a business trip to Kansai, he had the opportunity

to use some good tableware, and not averse to the experience of using pottery and porcelain, started seeking only good quality items offering “beauty in use” from his bachelor days onwards. All his children were boys, and after he presented silver paper to the wife of his second son on her birthday, was delighted by her “Thank you papa!” response; over time, he came to develop an interest in both style and hospitality.

- A man who was primarily searching for a long-lasting multi-tiered food box. He spoke forcefully, ‘because items like this (*Wajima nuri*) are heritage.”
- “Young people and the older generation have different ways of thinking. Don’t you think so?” said a woman as she struck a conversation. It appeared that her children were disposing of her *urushi* wares, else dividing sets of five into sets of two each. She herself hopes to acquire some containers and the knowledge of how to use them, but now she is considering ways to dispose of them. Her husband is a doctor.  
(Female, 80s)
- A man said that, “To be honest, I do not feel inclined to purchase, because I do not understand the logic of *Wajima nuri*’s cost.” Though it is often said there are many processes involved, it is unclear how that makes it different. He offered some criticism, that “The impressive parts are really impressive; however, is it not the case that the prices have probably increased because of that?”  
(Male, 40s)
- I want to use something as dinnerware that is not plastic; however its ability to be used in a microwave, etc., is one of my selection criteria.  
(Female, 70s)
- The couple that came by thought that there were functional items they might want; however, being “premium items,” they were obviously difficult to use casually.
- *Wajima nuri* has a high tolerance to everyday use.  
(Female, 40s)

- Learning how to perform a tea ceremony, they had used *urushi* wares at home, not for everyday use, but for special occasions—black-coated for Buddhist services and red-coated for festive occasions, 50th anniversaries etc.
- She came to look at *mizubiki-saiku* (string works) as a gift for their grandchild entering the next stage of his education. They are learning how to perform a tea ceremony.  
(Female, 70s)
- A man who previously worked in architecture. As he was learning how to perform a tea ceremony, he paid close attention to the tea containers that were exhibited.  
(Male)
- Graduates of the Kanazawa Institute of Technology, now concerned with architecture and involved in the construction of temples and tea houses. They are currently learning how to perform a tea ceremony.
- A man learning to perform tea ceremony and seeking a *chawan* (tea bowl) and tea utensils, came to see the pottery.  
(Male, 40s)

## ○2017/2/4

### [Interview]

- A couple visited, and the man was a subscriber to the “Stationary Mania,” a specialist magazine. He spoke enthusiastically. He appeared to have ordered various *Wajima nuri* products, and after seeing a photograph of a fountain pen engraved with the image of a horse, said “The technique of Wajima craftsmen is amazing! E-mail me photographs of crafts like these, and I will make them accordingly.” “Moreover,” he seemed to think, “if the instructions for these were not given, I would not be able to design these.” They possessed a large number of pin brooches and fountain pens and were ordering their own personally-designed motif and personal flower (raised roses, etc.) as contemporary uses for

*Wajima nuri*, rather than the tables and screens they had used up to now; they considered the smaller useable items to be more suitable, “if they were stationary, they might be more widely adopted by the younger generation in their thirties, and if you buy good stationary, you also want containers to put it in, and those too can be *urushi* wares,” they said. Moreover, there are very few items such as these available on the market, and they, have come to be treated as craftsmanship only by authors, where after he emphasized collaboration. It was stressed that what Wajima needed now were designers and coordinators.

(Male, 60s)

- A woman who uses *urushi* wares, even at home, said that her son, still in his twenties, also regularly uses *urushi* wares, likes them, and understands their merit.

(Female, 50s)

- An individual who really likes *urushi* wares, and has been coming to the event each year. “Of late, I think fewer shops are selling *urushi* wares. I hope we are able to use suitably priced dinnerware, as well as tea and coffee cups (of course, because these are expensive), on a daily basis,” he said.
- Speaking closely with the shopkeeper, they were not purchasing from the store, but were thinking of ordering such items online for use in their own shop.
- A man whose hobby is cooking. Speaking with the shopkeeper of Wajima Kirimoto, he was impressed by the sound explanation. Taking out and showing the wine glasses he had purchased at the shopping center, he said that “he was wondering whether there were playful items such as these.”

(Male, 50s)

- A woman who had left the booth returned to purchase sake glasses (*Wajima nuri*). Because she had small children, she was afraid she could not purchase the more expensive items. It was not a matter of choosing based on the name

“*Wajima nuri*,” but rather she had the attitude of buying what attracted her.

(Female, 30s)

- A woman who owned a *Wajima nuri* bowl. Were it possible to use in a dishwasher, she felt it would be much easier to use and was hesitant to use it because of the trouble caused by not being able to put it in a dishwasher.

○2017/2/5

[Interviews]

- One person among those who viewed the exhibits with great enthusiasm said “I really want this; however, because these are expensive I can only buy when the price is around ¥10,000.” When buying *urushi* wares, because I had an interest in this region, I asked “What are you using?” and thereafter purchased. Moreover, I felt it was better to purchase handicrafts while I was still young.
  - A woman operating a company supporting the revitalization of crafts. She said she liked them because, when they touch the skin “I remember feelings I had long forgotten.” Emphasizing their reliability and ease of use, she wanted to show to the children that the natural tones included colors and showed an interest in an environment that raised children with sensitivity. Not buying much at department stores, she mostly purchased at places where she could speak directly to the craftsman.
- (Female, 40s)
- *Makie* (gold lacquer) and *urushi* lacquerware are Japanese arts.