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## Film tourism impacts: A multi-stakeholder longitudinal approach

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## **Film tourism impacts: A multi-stakeholder longitudinal approach**

### **Abstract**

This study examines multiple local stakeholders' perceptions of film tourism impacts to shed light on the complexities of film tourism planning and development, using a longitudinal exploratory research approach. The Japanese TV series *Mare* (2015) was chosen as the case study. Qualitative interviews with various local stakeholders were conducted over a 21-month-long period of a film tourism development project in Ishikawa Prefecture, Japan. The study found that this film tourism project was initiated with high expectations. However, due to several incidents, such as the controversial rebuilding of a local highway road for promotional purposes, the audience's mixed reception of the series' storyline, and a sexual harassment scandal involving one of the main actors, the film tourism development did not progress as planned. The study also revealed that consultation which included a diverse range of local stakeholders and long-term planning embedded into a larger regional development strategy were key factors for successful film tourism planning and development. We contribute that an investigation of local stakeholders' consultation, diversity, inclusion and long-term embedding is reflected in perceptions across the pre-, during- and post-production stages. These four complexities provide valuable insights and even explanations for local's dynamic perceptions of film tourism impacts.

### **Keywords**

Local community, rural revitalisation, daily TV series, Japan, celebrity scandals

## **Introduction**

The film tourism literature presents a narrative that film induces tourism (Beeton, 2006, 2016; Connell, 2012; Hudson & Ritchie, 2006). It highlights a causal relationship between the two that has permeated relevant stakeholders such as government offices, consultancies and the general media in relation to film tourism planning, development, and management (Beeton, 2008; Connell, 2012; Croy, 2010; Croy & Heitmann, 2011; Croy, Kersten, Mélinon, & Bowen 2018; Heitmann, 2010; Kim, Long, & Robinson, 2009; Kim & Nam, 2016). These previous studies have indeed made an impact, and as such, if filming is announced anywhere, one of the first considerations of responsible stakeholders is to consider tourism consequences.

It is, thus, evident in a range of countries such as South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, UK, Singapore, and others with government agencies even combining film and tourism and/or creative and tourism industries-related offices (e.g., Hudson, 2011; Kim & Nam, 2016; Long & Morpeth, 2016; Ooi, 2007; Wattanacharoensil & Schuckert, 2016). For example, the Thai government recently initiated its national support and master plans and policies to leverage the connection between the tourism sector and the creative economy including film and media production (Wattanacharoensil & Schuckert, 2016). Similarly, the Taiwanese government introduced the Law for the Development of Cultural and Creative Industries in conjunction with tourism industry in 2010 (Chang & Lee, 2014).

Despite the above, there are still important critical gaps in the way film tourism impacts have been approached by the previous studies. Among these, four concern us here. First, most studies on film tourism have focused on exceptional successful examples such as the *Lord of the Rings* in New Zealand and *Daejanggeum* and *Winter Sonata* in South Korea (e.g. Buchmann, 2010; Connell, 2005b; Kim et al.,

2009; Yoon, Kim, & Kim, 2015), and it is yet documented that the vast majority of films do not create visible tourism consequences of note (Beeton, 2016; Croy, 2010; Croy & Heitmann, 2011; Kim, Kim, & Heo, 2015; Kim, Kim, & Oh, 2017; Yoon et al., 2015). Nonetheless, the socialised truth or perhaps myth has placed pressure on key stakeholders in that no action would be perceived as negligence, even if it is often documented that the film tourism impact(s) might not last long (Beeton, 2016; Connell, 2005a, 2012; Croy, 2010; Kim et al., 2015; Kim et al., 2017; Yoon et al., 2015).

Secondly, and related to the above, is the importance to look at the phenomenon in a more comprehensive way and to include examples that describe the drawbacks and failures of film tourism to generate a better understanding of film tourism impacts (Beeton, 2016; Maruta, Kanehama, & Tamayose, 2014; Suzuki, 2011; Yoon et al., 2015).

Thirdly, most previous studies on film tourism impacts have focused on a limited portrayal of a certain peak tourism period at the post-broadcast stage - i.e., when the influx of tourists or its spin-off effects were remarkable -, and have mainly involved one-off cases of the perceived impacts of film tourism (Connell, 2012; Croy & Heitmann, 2011; Kim, 2012a; Yoon et al., 2015); thus there is a paucity of longitudinal studies on the perceived or actual impacts of film tourism from pre-production to post-screening (Kim, Suri, & Park, 2018; Yoon et al., 2015).

Lastly but not least, apart from a few exceptions, such as Beeton (2007, 2016) who adopted a mixed-method approach, the previous studies were mainly conducted using either a qualitative case study or a quantitative survey approach, and identified a set of site-specific impacts relating to the nature of media programmes (e.g., British soap operas, children's TV programmes, and films) and the destinations associated with them (e.g., already established tourism destinations or newly-created destina-

tions) (Connell, 2012). While the impacts of film tourism from a tourist perspective has been one of the most heavily researched areas (Connell, 2012), only a handful of studies have attempted to understand the impacts of film tourism on local communities from a resident perspective, loosely applying the social exchange theory (Beeton, 2001; Connell, 2005a, 2005b; Mordue, 2009; Riley, Baker, & Van Doren, 1998). Of particular note is the scarcity of film tourism impact research from multiple stakeholders' perspectives in the context of local community of film tourism location, which has resulted in our asymmetric and atomistic understanding of film tourism impacts.

Acknowledging these 'gaps' forms a useful context and starting point for this research which investigates, within a longitudinal study mode, a Japanese periphery-region's film tourism planning and development response to a serial television series, from pre-production to post-screening phase from a multiple local stakeholder perspective. It aims to examine local stakeholders' perceptions of film tourism impacts to shed light on the complexities of film tourism planning and development, which will make a significant original contribution to our currently limited knowledge of the impacts of film tourism more holistically.

Commencing with a relevant literature review on planning, impacts and stakeholders of film tourism together with the introduction to social and cultural contexts of film tourism development in Japan, this is followed by examination of *asadora*, the Japanese morning TV series format that has been barely documented. The adopted research design of qualitative longitudinal approach is justified. The findings of the study present a complex portrayal of film tourism impacts and its dynamics, demonstrating both positive and negative aspects. Discussions and key contributions of the study are presented and concluded.

### **Planning, impacts and stakeholders of film tourism**

Film tourism is usually described as a phenomenon that begins with the broadcast of a film or TV series, and as a development that can often be rather surprising for local communities at filming locations, due to unexpected spin-off effects. The activities of local communities at film tourism destinations, therefore, often emerge in a sporadic and ad-hoc manner in response to the sudden and unexpectedly long-lasting interest of fans (Beeton, 2008; Connell, 2005a, 2005b; Heitmann, 2010; Kim et al., 2017; Mordue, 2009; Yoon et al., 2015).

For instance, Connell (2005a, 2005b) examined the local tourism business community's perceived impacts of a popular children's TV program *Balamory* (BBC TV) shot in Tobermory, Isle of Mull, Scotland. A major concern of the case of *Balamory* was that no or little consultation with relevant stakeholders such as the local community and tourism organisations was attempted at the pre-production stage. Consequently, the locals were ill-prepared for the sudden increase in tourist demand for film tourism within a short timeframe. This illustrates the importance of appropriate consultation with all relevant stakeholders in film tourism planning in order for them to prepare for film tourism impacts.

In comparison, Yoon et al. (2015) adopted the use of a multiple destination approach by undertaking an empirical, comparative study of the local residents' perceived film tourism impacts between successful and unsuccessful film tourism locations in the South Korean context. Their study confirms the existence of different magnitudes of local residents' perceptions of film tourism's adverse impacts, being supported by previous studies that local residents tend to be more sensitive to and concerned about negative effects of film tourism (Beeton, 2001; Mordue, 2009). Such diversity within the stakeholder groups in particular, among the often perceived ho-

mogeneous 'local communities', should be assessed in the planning of film tourism. To some extent, the differences in stakeholders' perceptions often depend on the level of success of film tourism locations in relation to "tourism demand, development, management and maintenance level, infrastructure level, and dependency on tourism" (Yoon et al., 2015, p. 308).

The planning of film tourism is, thus, commonly considered to be a difficult task, depending on various internal and external factors. Media such as newspapers and TV shows play an important role in establishing the supposed 'power of film' as a driving factor in attracting or deterring tourists (Beeton, 2006). While utilising the image of a location/region initiated by a film or TV series, strategic destination management should carefully consider several factors such as the interests of fans/tourists, the needs of local stakeholders, and the conditions of the infrastructure (Croy, 2010; Heitmann, 2010).

For the above reason, while a single film can hardly emerge as the only planning tool for economic tourism development, it should be implemented as part of a diversified strategy (Wray & Croy, 2015). Such a diversified strategy would include different stakeholders such as film companies, local citizens, and tourism operators; negotiations and cooperative planning among stakeholders are important for a more sustainable film tourism (Heitmann 2010). This should be also long-term oriented, i.e. for several years or even a decade, and include sophisticated timing for promotional events as well as a succession of new attractions, as media's and public attention for the film decreases over time (Croy & Heitmann, 2011; Kim et al., 2017; Yoon et al., 2015). The utilisation of promotions expertise and the implementation of an extensive image strategy through proactive collaboration between a filming location and a film's promotional team are important for successful and sustainable film tourism

(Croy, 2010; Hudson & Ritchie, 2006). Therefore, such an embedded long-term planning approach is highly preferable over ad-hoc or relatively short-term strategies.

However, Kim et al. (2015) criticised that in the peripheral areas of South Korea the local government officials had political incentives to subsidise the development of TV drama or film towns to fulfil the political desires such as their re-election with no clear long-term agenda and plan that resulted in deteriorating profitability and the demise of many production towns, given that the construction of increasing numbers of film tourism towns in the peripheral areas in particular led to fierce competition in the mid-2000s.

Furthermore, local communities' participation is seldom observed in film tourism planning, development, and management and thus general local residents have little or no control over film production, including construction of outdoor filming sets and associated activities (Beeton, 2007, 2016; Heitmann, 2010; Kim et al., 2015; Kim et al., 2017; Yoon et al., 2015), although the inclusion and participation of local residents in film tourism planning and development process is considered to be of paramount importance in the research literature (Beeton, 2016; Heitmann, 2010). The common denominator of these previous studies, however, was that their research samples were generally local residents only without the inclusion of all equally important local stakeholders such as local or regional governments and local tourism operators. Thus, it is suggested that the inclusion of stakeholders in the planning and implementation of film tourism offers a more desirable approach that could be supplemented by appropriate consultation with all relevant stakeholders, as previously discussed.

To summarise, we identify four key complexities of film tourism namely, stakeholder consultation; diversity of stakeholder groups; embedded long-term plan-



ning approach; and the inclusion of all relevant stakeholders. They are all important considerations for film tourism planning and development as well as film tourism impacts.

## **Film tourism and rural revitalisation in Japan**

### ***Emergence of early film tourism in Japan***

Although film tourism has only begun to receive significant attention in the academic literature over the last twenty years, there have long been examples of lively film tourism. In the Japanese context, trips to the West were influenced by Hollywood movies early on, notably *Roman Holiday* (William Wyler, 1953) and *Breakfast at Tiffany's* (Blake Edwards, 1961), which led Japanese tourists to travel to Rome and New York respectively, following in the footsteps of Audrey Hepburn (Yasuda, 2015).

From the 1950s onwards, domestic film productions also inspired Japanese audiences to travel. Yasuda refers to an early example of this in the classic movie “Twenty-Four Eyes” (*Nijū-shi no hitomi*, Kinoshita Keisuke, 1954), which continues to attract people to the island of Shōdoshima to this day (Yasuda, 2015; Seaton, 2019). Although no exact figures are available for these early examples, and one has to be careful not to overestimate the economic effects in rather vague cases such as these (Beeton 2006), they still show that film tourism at this time was not limited to the UK or US and that the emergence of this film tourism phenomenon should be examined in a global context.

Later, in the popular movie series “Tora-san” (*Otokowatsuraiyo*, Yamada Yōji, 1969–1995), the loveable tramp Tora-san travels all over Japan, giving Japanese viewers manifold impressions of the country. Tora-san’s “hometown”, Tokyo’s Shi-

bamata district, has long been popular with tourists (Seaton et al., 2017). Recently, the touristic potential of this series has been rediscovered, and some of the other filming locations are now promoted at the annual “Tora-san Summit” in Shibamata (The Mainichi, 2016, Torasan sammito jikkō iinkai, 2018).

In addition to cinema, TV has long played a major role in film tourism in Japan (Beeton, 2016). Above all, the series formats of the *Taiga dorama* (a year-long historical fiction) and the *asadora* (Japanese morning TV drama), both TV productions made by the national broadcaster NHK, developed touristic relevance from their early days (Tsutsui, 2013, Seaton, 2015, Jang, 2016, Seaton et al., 2017). Despite this long history, research on these formats of Japanese TV series in the English language from a film tourism perspective is still limited (Seaton, 2015, 2016; Sugawa-Shimada, 2015; Tajima, 2018).

Similar to Western and other Asian cases of this phenomenon mentioned earlier (Beeton, 2008; Connell, 2005a, 2005b; Heitmann, 2010; Mordue, 2009), local communities were often surprised by the unexpected influx of tourists to their regions, but as awareness of the economic potential of film tourism has increased, filming locations have begun to carefully prepare themselves with proactive participation and the engagement of local communities, which can differentiate the Japanese cases from other previous studies of film tourism mentioned earlier. Thus, the touristic effect of *asadora* was already widely known in 1977, when Tendō City, the filming location of the TV series *Ichiban Hoshi*, embarked on various tourism marketing activities (Yomiuri Shinbun, 1977). Commercial film tourism reached its first peak with the morning drama series *Oshin* (1983/84); Yamagata Prefecture, where the protagonist grew up, was widely marketed as a film tourism destination. In May 1983, a large advertisement in the national daily newspaper *Yomiuri Shinbun* promoted a film tour-

ism tour to “Oshin’s home”, including visits to Sakata City and the Ginzan Onsen (hot spring hotel district) as well as a “cherry harvest experience” (Yomiuri Shinbun, 1983a). Locations associated with the filming of *Oshin* were thus combined with local attractions that did not have a connection to the series. Japanese tourism agencies that sold such *Oshin* package tours were very successful at the time (Yomiuri Shinbun, 1983b). However, these activities were not only marketed by big national stakeholders but also by the city of Sakata, which prepared for the rush by developing sightseeing spots, as well as local merchants who included special souvenirs such as *Oshin* dolls in their range of goods. Although it may be difficult to retrace the series’ production and its planning of film tourism in all details after more than 35 years of the broadcast, the mentioned descriptions of *Oshin*-induced film tourism suggest the importance of consultation and inclusion of local stakeholders in the Japanese context.

### ***Stakeholders’ participation and recent film tourism growth in Japan***

Close cooperation between various stakeholders, long-term planning and public-private partnerships are considered fundamental pillars of sustainable tourism planning (Heitmann, 2010). Accordingly, in Japan, as well as the Japanese government who promotes the benefits of film tourism for regional revitalisation, various companies and local stakeholders have also participated in the project of film tourism development. In this way, various networks and special media channels have been developed through which information for the successful implementation of film tourism can be exchanged.

The company ChiikiKassei, for example, has been publishing the bimonthly magazine “Location Japan” with a total of 35,000 copies of every edition since 2003 (ChiikiKassei, n.d., a), targeting young women interested in travel as well as people

working in the media and entertainment industry by featuring film tourism locations and local cultural features such as handicrafts and local food from all over Japan (ChiikiKassei, n.d., b).

There are also government-initiated working groups on film tourism such as the ‘Location Tourism Council’ that includes members of local interest groups. In addition, in the case of *asadora*, there is a special network made up of different communities from locations used by the broadcaster NHK in recent years. This “Asadora location network” was founded in 2012 after the shooting of the series *Carnation* in the city of Kishiwada near Osaka. Since then, several other communities have joined, such as the city of Kōfu (Yamanashi Prefecture), where the series *Hanako to Anne* (2014) was shot. In this network, local communities from filming locations have shared their experiences of filming and the subsequent use of local tourism resources.

All in all, there have been strong efforts made by various stakeholders in Japan in recent years to make the best possible use of film tourism for regional redevelopment and revitalisation, in particular in the peripheral areas. The very active role of local communities, both during the filming process and later during the promotion of the location for tourism, is a peculiarity that has existed in Japan since the 1970s but has been expanded and further institutionalised in recent years with the establishment of film commissions, working groups and networks. However, the question remains how much this special kind of quasi-institutionalised film tourism in Japan, which brings together various stakeholders, actually develops sustainable perspectives for local communities and economies that go beyond theoretical idealism within the context of film tourism. Whilst consultation and inclusion of all possible local stakeholders often occurs in film tourism planning in Japan, the underlined diversity within the stakeholder groups are often perceived as a homogenous group of people under the

term ‘local communities’, and an embedded long-term planning approach remains unidentified in many Japanese case studies. In this regard, the current study will make an original contribution to the current film tourism literature that has been missing the dynamics of Japanese film tourism phenomenon.

### ***Asadora, Mare and Wajima: the research context***

The Japanese TV series format known as “morning drama” (Japanese: *renzoku terebi shōsetsu*, the so-called *asadora*), has been broadcast daily by the public broadcaster NHK since 1961. Even today, these *asadora* achieve audience ratings of around 20 percent. While these dramas generally have a strong presence in everyday life in Japan, viewers over 60 years of age are particularly dedicated to this genre of TV, in which the life story of a female protagonist is told over the course of six months. Often, part of the plot takes place in an actual rural region of Japan, which is accurately depicted in the series, with its local dialect, culinary specialties and tourist attractions (Tajima, 2015; Scherer & Thelen, 2017). This also makes *asadora* the perfect tool for generating awareness of certain rural regions of Japan as attractive travel destinations from a film tourism perspective. Since *asadora* are consumed not only in Japan, but also in other Asian countries, they also offer potential for international tourism.

*Mare* (2015), the main focus of the current study, tells the story of the protagonist of the same name, who goes from the small city of Wajima on the Noto Peninsula to Yokohama, the second largest city in the country, to be trained as a pâtissière. She has the opportunity to progress her career abroad, but eventually decides to return home, where she supports her family and opens a small café. The most important filming location is Wajima City, a remote municipality of 27,000 inhabitants located

on the northern coastline of the Noto Peninsula. In the national media, this city is usually designated as the “home of Mare”.

We have chosen this series for two reasons: (1) it was aired during our fieldwork period, giving us the chance to study its impacts in real-time; (2) we had previously conducted research in the region where the series was filmed, so we were familiar with its particularities and had good access to the local communities. Therefore, this case is expected to provide complex, contextual insights into film tourism planning strategies and their practical implementation from a multi-stakeholder perspective.

## **Method**

This study aims to interrogate local stakeholders’ perceptions of film tourism impacts to shed light on the complexities of film tourism planning and development. It adopts an exploratory qualitative approach, applying a combination of site-visits to the filming locations and semi-structured interviews with key local stakeholders. This approach aids the research context in which site-specific discourses and narratives unfold. It is also important to note that our understanding of film tourism impacts have context-specific contingencies, given that a social and cultural phenomenon such as film tourism is culturally and socially framed (Kim et al., 2009).

Similar to Sue Beeton’s (e.g., 2006, 2008, 2016) seminal work on an Australian TV series *Sea Change*, this paper adopts a longitudinal study to collect research data covering an extended period of time. A qualitative longitudinal approach serves best to capture the complexities and dynamics of film tourism occurring on the local level, with regard to the various roles the local stakeholders can play in this context. In addition, this study employed a triangular approach to film tourism stakeholders

loosely adopted from a series of previous works such as Beeton (2016), Heitmann (2010), and Yamamura (2015). However, while Yamamura (2015) summarises all local stakeholders under the term ‘local community’ in his approach, we suggest a further differentiation of the key stakeholders (see Figure 1), given that the local community itself encompasses a variety of actors that are heterogeneous in their roles and decision-making powers.

Consequently, the local stakeholders in this study are categorised as (1) the regional/local government, (2) the film tourism working group, (3) the local tourism industry/association, and (4) local residents. The interviewed actors were selected to reflect these four categories of local community, while also taking into account possible overlaps, that is, the diversity within these stakeholder groups. Our interviewees therefore include a range of local residents in addition to key informants who were involved in the process of film production as expert consultants.

### **FIGURE 1 HERE**

Ten interviews in total were conducted, as shown in Table 1. The high quality of the interviews as well as the in-depth analysis of stakeholders’ perceptions of film tourism impacts justifies this relatively small sample size. For example, the case of local resident and craftsman (Mr. Yamada, pseudonyms have been used for all interviewees) who was firstly involved in the series’ production and later sold related souvenirs; clearly illustrates the complex and multiple roles that one stakeholder can play in film tourism planning and development. This is also supported by Heitmann (2010) who also emphasises the importance of considering the overlapping of stakeholders’ roles in the context of film tourism. Although the focus was on local people in the

area of Wajima City, (being the main film location in *Mare*), the trans-local network of stakeholders taking part in the development of film tourism also included the regional government of the prefecture (Mr. Kimura) as well as a tourism consultant based in Tokyo (Mr. Shimada). Additionally, one of the authors lived in the region during the broadcast period, and informal talks with local people and impressions from the public life during that time further supported the upcoming findings.

### **TABLE 1 HERE**

The fieldwork for this study took place on several days between July and September 2015, in October 2016, and in March 2017 on the Noto Peninsula in Ishikawa Prefecture, Japan, where most of the filming locations of the *asadora Mare* are located. One of the authors had lived and worked for two and a half years in Ishikawa Prefecture and thus was very familiar with local customs and ways of thinking. The study covered a time span of 21 months (07/2015–03/2017) and thus provides a longitudinal study from a multiple stakeholder perspective to fill the major research gaps in film tourism impact studies, as highlighted in the introduction. The interviews lasted between 30 minutes and one hour, and were conducted between July and September 2015, in October 2016, and in March 2017. The aim was to encourage the interviewees to freely express their thoughts and experiences about *Mare* and its related film tourism impacts. All of the interviews were conducted face-to-face in Japanese; as the interviewer is essentially fluent in Japanese and is familiar with the local dialect, no issues concerning language or communication were experienced.

The data collection was divided into three phases according to the proceeding of our field research. The first period of investigation included the production of the



series and preparations for its promotional campaigns; this extended up until March 30<sup>th</sup>, 2015, when the broadcast of *Mare* began. The second period was set during the broadcast of the show, from March 30<sup>th</sup> to September 26<sup>th</sup>, 2015; during this time, the tourist campaigns related to the series reached their peaks. The third and final period began after the broadcast, i.e. after September 26<sup>th</sup>; for several months, many of the associated tourist events continued until the funding for these promotional campaigns ran out, and shortly afterwards a scandal involving one of the main actors seriously affected the series' public image.

## **Findings**

The findings examining local stakeholders' perceptions of film tourism impacts and the complexities of film tourism planning are presented in three sections. The first considers the pre-broadcast period (i.e., before March 2015), which covers the planning and production of the series, including how the locals were involved in this process and how they perceived film tourism impacts. The second section focuses on the summer season of 2015, when *Mare* was aired nationwide and the inflow of tourists reached its peak so the locals perceived film tourism impacts in more visible ways. The third part reflects upon the series' legacy in the region and the long-term impacts on the local community.

Within these different periods, it became clear that there was a shift from a positive forecast or anticipation of the impacts of the series on the development of the region to negative aftermath, characterised by a short-term tourism boom in 2015 and a detrimental loss of the region's image.

### ***High expectations of film tourism potential (before March 2015)***

Prior to the filming, interviewees had positive expectations regarding potential for increased attention on the local area and perceived beneficial tourism impacts. Ms. Miyashita (35, local resident) demonstrated the interviewees' enthusiasm, though tempered with elements of caution:

“The *asadora* next year will be a big project to promote this area of countryside. The heroine’s model was the famous pâtissier Tsujiguchi from Nanao [a city in southern Noto]. But the story of the series will take place in Wajima [northern Noto] and commodify the city for tourism.”

From the beginning of the production phase, the series was seen by both the residents and the government as a means of revitalising the local tourism industry on the Noto Peninsula. For example, the tourism division of Wajima City Office, i.e. the local government, included a film commission that was a side project of a clerk in the division, and involved helping the media production team to get in contact and negotiate with local people regarding potential filming locations. The rather expensive local handicraft of lacquer-ware (*Wajima-nuri*) received steady exposure in the series, and is probably the city’s most popular touristic resource and is central to the city’s long-term regional development strategy. The media producers also consulted with the local craftsman Mr. Yamada (65) as a role model and expert advisor, and thus his actual home-workshop was even used as a filming location. He proudly commented:

“I received the series’ scripts for corrections regarding handicrafts and the local dialect, but I didn’t have to make many corrections. I have put the original

scripts in my atelier's showroom and some customers like to read them because they want to know how the story will progress.”

The production team of *Mare* also comprised a group of local experts in order to ensure the authenticity of the locality, and thus were able to use local “edited” dialect that contained characteristic expressions from the region whilst still being understandable for a national audience. The numerous local references such as food items, songs, and proverbs not only created an element of authenticity but also allowed the local stakeholders to identify themselves with the upcoming media product. For instance, local resident Ms. Tada (18) whose family house was served as a filming location, pleasantly remembered:

“They [the filming crew] filmed parts of *Mare* inside my family's house. They were very friendly. It was great fun for us. I was also able to appear as an extra when they filmed a recreation of our village festival.”

Furthermore, the prefectural government planned and launched the reconstruction of the last section of the highway to Wajima City into a singing road in early 2015; with a length of 1.2km, this singing road is the longest of 30 such roads located all over Japan. The term “singing road” means that grooves are carved into the asphalt so that when a car runs above them, a certain melody plays, in this case the opening song of *Mare*. The prefectural government covered the cost in its budget plan as a ‘traffic safety’ measure for the region; locals suggested an approximate amount of 42 million Japanese Yen (around US\$ 360,000). However, many residents harshly criticised this top-down project, which was launched without appropriate planned consul-

tations with local residents. Even Mr. Kimura (65), a tourism coordinator and consultant for the regional government who was optimistic about the *asadora*'s impact, critically commented on the singing road reflecting the local's view on this:

“Although it is a great technology, it was unnecessary and expensive in my view. If you ask me, the money would have been better spent on something else.”

Prior to broadcast, the Development Bank of Japan forecasted the economic value of the series for the region to be as high as 6.6 billion Yen (approximately US\$ 55 million) (Travelvoice, 2015). It is unclear whether this optimistic estimate, the highest such forecast for an *asadora* at that time, has been achieved as no data were available. Such positive forecasts in the news and ensuing media attention during the production process nurtured high expectations among the local stakeholders for the upcoming broadcast and film tourism, as commented by local resident Ms. Miyashita (35) below:

“I have recently read in the [local] newspaper that even the abandoned town hall building of Ogi Town [ca. 45km East of Wajima] was used [and renovated] as a filming location. Like that, there's a lot going on because of this *asadora*. It's all a kind of advertisement for the region. [...] Well, as there are not many attractions here, I think that's good.”

To summarise, before the broadcast, all interviewed local stakeholders held high expectations for the ensuing national media attention that derives from being the

location of an *asadora*. The consultation of local residents as experts and their inclusion as extras in the production process as well as government's large investments in the infrastructure and promotion, consequently nurtured optimistic hopes for the future by the local communities.

***Film tourism promotion during the broadcast (March to September 2015)***

When *Mare* went to air (that is, March to September 2015), the interviewees continued to report positive feedback and feeling. For example, local resident Mr. Abe (22) responded as follows:

“First, I was enthusiastic about *Mare*, because our region made it onto TV screens. I actually only watched it to see our local places, and I felt a bit proud.”

However, besides the *asadora*, another maybe even bigger regional event dominated the public attention at that time. Only two weeks prior to the broadcast's start, a new high-speed train track, the so-called *shinkansen*, connecting Tokyo to Kanazawa City, the prefectural capital that is about 100km from Wajima, was opened. In Japan, the new opening of such high-speed train tracks is always a prominent topic in national news and is seen as an important means of increasing regional tourism. At a public speech in Wajima City in July 2015, the prefectural governor called *Mare* the greatest success for the prefecture in that year, alongside the opening of the new high-speed train track. The coincidence of the high-speed train track's opening and the broadcast of the first episode of *Mare* was strategic in order to generate synergies. This was highly evident inside Kanazawa station: for the duration of the series'

broadcast, a *Mare* souvenir corner was installed near the entrance of a huge souvenir shop, just on the opposite side of the new train track's platform (see Figure 2).

## FIGURE 2 HERE

Furthermore, the tourism associations and governments of the Noto region made their own attempts to benefit from the *asadora*'s attention. Thanks to temporary subsidies from the prefectural government for the year 2015, the municipalities of the Noto Peninsula and the related chambers of commerce established a "*Mare* promotional group" to utilise the media content to enhance tourism in the whole region. Mr. Shimada (40), a tourism consultant at the state's former tourism agency, namely Japan Travel Bureau based in Tokyo, was engaged by the *Mare* promotional group for the planning and implementation of film tourism for the fiscal year 2015. An important aspect of this work was to secure the legality of local film tourism products, as he explains:

"The issue of copyright is complex and difficult. The brand *Mare* and the actors in the series abide by a complex legal system which barely allows the series to be used for local enterprises, as NHK produces its own commercial goods through subsidiary companies." (Mr. Shimada, 40).

Eventually, to avoid potential legal ramifications, the group created its own logo inspired by the official *Mare* logo, which the NHK permitted only for non-commercial usage, such as posters and banners. Regarding souvenirs and other promotional merchandise, NHK's rather strict copyright system limited the production of

local creative goods related to *Mare*. Furthermore, the *Mare* promotional group created a webpage that offered significantly more information about local features compared to the official NHK webpage, and also organised two rallies for tourists. The first was a Twitter photo rally that encouraged *Mare*'s fans to upload photos of five filming locations using a special hashtag. The second rally involved asking tourists to collect three stamps on a postcard, which were placed at famous tourist spots in Noto.

Whilst the limited options to officially commodify the film tourist resources were one setback identified by the interviewees, a more crucial issue turned out to be the series itself. As the story progressed, the very conservative gender roles and social ideals of *Mare* became obvious; the heroine eventually proves to be a rather submissive woman and sacrifices her burgeoning international career in order to fulfil her supposed duty as a wife and mother. The collective disappointment of the local communities can be seen in the comment of local resident Ms. Nakamura (25):

“First, I watched *Mare* because of the many references to the Noto region...the production team did indeed pay great attention to the authenticity of local customs such as the dialect and food. But then, after watching it for a few weeks, I felt that the story became boring, and I was somewhat disappointed by the old-fashioned messages and gender images.”

In a similar vein, another local resident, Mr. Sato (60) commented:

“Normally, the *asadora* shows modern and progressive types of women. *Mare*, however, was different, and that's the reason why many people don't like it anymore.”

A nationwide survey of NHK confirms this impression; out of a sample of 1,000 viewers, there were complaints about the flow of the narrative (26%), the script (23%), and the heroine's character development (16%) (Nihei & Sekiguchi, 2016). The series received average nationwide audience ratings of 19.4 percent (Sankei Shinbun, 2015), close to the usual 20 percent audience rating, though still the least popular Japanese morning drama series since 2012.

As such, the aforementioned comments demonstrate the changes in local residents' perceptions and attitudes towards the impacts of film tourism generated by *Mare* – from highly positive anticipation and support to somewhat disappointment. In comparison, the regional and local governments still kept an optimistic view on the positive impacts of *Mare* that had yet to be realised. Below is a related comment of the tourism coordinator and governmental consultant Mr. Kimura (65) at that time:

“The story is one thing, but I think many people will learn about the region's attractiveness and uniqueness and thus want to travel here.”

Similarly, stakeholders of the local tourism industry did not perceive the series' impact negatively. For example, the local lacquer-ware craftsman Mr. Yamada (65) produced large quantities of chopsticks with a simplified *Mare* sign on them for tourists in the summer of 2015 and he commented:

“These ones are selling quite well; my assistants produce them nearly the entire time.”



However, these chopsticks, which cost between 2,000 and 3,000 Yen (around US\$ 15-25), are by far the cheapest products of local lacquer-ware, normally an elaborate and time-consuming process. Therefore, although they seem to be a popular souvenir, one can expect narrow profit margins for the craftsman as a result. During the summer of 2015, the number of visitors to Wajima City increased by 30 percent compared to the previous year (Wajima, 2018). Yet, it is hard to be sure whether this was due to *Mare*, the new train track, or other reasons, such as one-off events.

To summarise, when the series was initially broadcast, the interviewees, such as local residents felt positive about the series' impacts, and this was amplified by the coincidental opening of the new high-speed train track. Subsequently, two crucial drawbacks materialised, which affected the local stakeholders' perceptions, in particular the group of local residents. These were, the legal limitations of utilising resources officially related to the series; and secondly and more importantly, dissatisfaction with the storyline's development and thus less confidence in the positive impacts of *Mare*. In contrast, interviewed stakeholders of the government and the tourism industry still seemed satisfied by the series' positive impacts.

#### ***Unlucky heritage (after September 2015)***

After the broadcast of *Mare*, all interviewed locals noticed that the series' impacts were fading; although this can be viewed as a normal process, the unpopular storyline probably accelerated this development. For instance, even the tourist coordinator and government consultant Mr. Kimura (65), who was still positive about the series' impact just after the broadcast, commented in early 2017:

“Everybody has already forgotten about *Mare*; it’s normal that when the next *asadora* starts, the craze [surrounding the last *asadora*] is over.”

Indeed, during the post-broadcast stage, most of the tourism activities related to *Mare* by the local stakeholders came to a sudden, but partly intended end. The *Mare* promotional group and its budget were limited to the year 2015, particularly the six-month period of the series’ broadcast. Therefore, the two rallies, the special information homepage and the collaboration with the Tokyo-based film tourism consultant Mr. Shimada (40), were terminated by the end of 2015. Similarly, a minibus tour organised by the local tourism organisation ended at that time. The 30 percent increase of tourists during the broadcast 2015 proved to be rather short-lived: In 2016 and 2017 the number of visitors to Wajima City fell by about 10 percent respectively, while in 2018 and 2019 visitor numbers plateaued at a level slightly higher than before the broadcast (Wajima, 2019).

Only the tourism office of Wajima City attempted to continue the series’ film tourism by opening a memorial house (see Figure 3) in June 2016, where some elements of the film set were exhibited and a small stock of licensed NHK goods were sold. Although the memorial house’s opening was more than half a year after the series’ finale, TV reruns, DVD distribution, and a broadcast of the series on satellite TV in Hong Kong and Taiwan were expected to attract a small but steady number of extra tourists to the region. Ms. Kato (45), a staff member of the memorial house, remembers the healthy number of visitors after the opening:

“When the drama’s memorial house was opened in the summer of 2016, about 700 people per day visited this place on weekends and holidays.”

### FIGURE 3 HERE

However, the series' legacy received an unexpected blow in August 2016. One of the leading actors (who had actually received rather positive feedback in viewer surveys) was accused of sexual harassment; this was reported by the mass media and NHK subsequently cancelled any plans for a TV rerun of *Mare*. The effects of this scandal were detrimental for film tourism in the region, as described by memorial house staff Ms. Kato:

“Now [March 2017], there are no more than 150 visitors on weekends and holidays. Although the winter season is less attractive for tourists, that scandal is probably also an important reason.”

The scandal affected anything related to the series including local stakeholders' perceptions. Local resident Ms. Nakamura (25), for instance, provided the following advice, which shows how much the scandal damaged local self-confidence:

“You [one of the authors] had better stop talking to local people about *Mare*, it's embarrassing for them [because of the scandal].”

In addition to the aforementioned singing road, one can be sure that *Mare's* unfortunate legacy will be hard to ignore for local stakeholders in the future. In early 2017, another popular actor from *Mare's* main cast suddenly abandoned her career in order to devote herself to the controversial new religious movement “Happy Science”;

in reaction, the media began to discuss the possibility of a “*Mare* curse” (News-Kosatsu, 2017).

In summary, while there was evident tourist number increase, the interviewed local stakeholders revealed their disappointment with the series' impact. The disappointment started during the second half of the broadcast due to the storyline's conservatism, and grew even stronger after the two celebrity scandals. Eventually, local residents refused to talk about *Mare*. The film tourism planning, which was not embedded into a long-term approach but limited to the broadcast period (with exception of the memorial house), resulted in the local stakeholders' initial optimism towards film tourism being depleted as well as the series' mixed impacts.

## **Discussion**

To achieve the study's aim, the findings are now compared with the reviewed literature. As with the findings, the discussion will follow the three stages of film tourism, namely pre-, during- and post-broadcast.

Firstly, before the broadcast (that is, before March 2015), all interviewed local stakeholders (the regional/local government, the film tourist working group, the local tourism industry/association, and the local residents) had high expectations for the upcoming national media attention that would result from being the location of an *asadora*. The consultation of locals as experts and their inclusion as extras into the production process seemed a positive and promising start. The proactive collaboration and positive feedback of local stakeholders are of paramount importance for a smooth production process and for creating a sense of authenticity and locality. Many local residents in particular were integrated into the filming process as extras for outdoor scenes, such as a local village festival, which is similar to the case of *Eat Pray Love*

film tourism in Ubud, Bali (Kim et al., 2018). Furthermore, the prominent depiction of local references like the Wajima-nuri lacquer-ware, which is crucial in the image management strategy of the region (Croy, 2010), enhanced the local's collective sense of pride and individual self-esteem and engendered a positive attitude towards the production process of *Mare* (Kim et al., 2018).

Nevertheless, although inclusive consultation with local stakeholders in this study is commendable and commonly regarded as a key to successful film tourism in the long term (Beeton, 2008, 2016; Heitmann, 2010; Mordue, 2009; Yoon et al., 2015), the participation and engagement of local residents here was somewhat limited to operational aspects of media production and film tourism development, with few opportunities for them to contribute to the actual decision-making process. In the end, only a few local residents had the opportunity to actively influence the production, like Mr. Yamada, as he checked scripts for mistakes regarding the depiction of his craftwork. This is consistent with Kim et al.'s study (2015) in which local residents often had little or no control over the construction of TV drama or film production towns in their communities, as these deals were made solely by the local authorities, politicians, and media production companies.

Regardless, local media reporting on the production and the regional government's large investments in the infrastructure and promotion nurtured optimism for the future among the local stakeholders. This corresponds to the results of previous studies that contributed to raising somewhat false or too enthusiastic hopes – 'film induces tourism' (Beeton, 2016; Kim et al., 2015; Kim et al., 2017.) The example of the singing road proves that the regional government had great expectations for the series' spin-off effects on tourism and the image regeneration of the region through the TV series. However, the government-related stakeholders such as Mr. Kimura

voiced their concern on this expensive project. At this juncture, a disagreement between the regional and local governments and local residents became obvious. Fundamentally, film tourism planning and development from the government perspective was largely top-down, meaning the locals felt ignored in the decision process. The consultation with and inclusion of all relevant stakeholders in the production process does not necessarily mean that they are automatically given an equal opportunity and voice in decision-making processes.

Later, during the broadcast, the interviewed local stakeholders still felt positive about the series' impacts, which were reinforced by the coincidental opening of the new high-speed train track to the prefecture's capital (ca. 100km away from the main filming locations though). This strategic scheduling of the broadcast surely provided synergetic effects for the local tourism industry. However, the regional and local governments' approach to rely on these two factors alone – the series and the new train connection – without a long-term view to generate tourism, later proved to be rather one-dimensional.

Since the national government has put film tourism (i.e. “contents tourism”) on its agenda as a means of regional (re)development (Yamamura, 2015), an immediate tourism boost appears to be a quasi-natural process when a peripheral region becomes a film tourism destination based on a series broadcast on national TV. This approach taken by the local stakeholders of *Mare* film tourism bears similarities to other unsuccessful cases in a highly competitive film tourism market of the same period. Case studies from South Korea (Kim et al., 2015; Kim et. al., 2017), comparably demonstrate how the limited impacts of film tourism were generated by similar types of TV media genre.

*Mare* was not integrated into a diversified strategy for regional development, as suggested by Wray and Croy's study (2015), in which popular movies only present the peak of decades-long planning assessing various local conditions and resources. The prominent depiction of lacquer-ware was intentionally introduced into the series, as Wajima City puts a lot of effort on various levels to promote this local handicraft. However, one might harbour doubts that this expensive luxury product has the potential to become a solid pillar of regional (re)development, as the material costs and working hours for the production are rather high, while only cheap products like chopsticks were selling well.

The formation of the *Mare* promotional group including numerous local governments, the related chambers of commerce, and the employment of a professional tourist consultant, presents a good approach to encompassing diversity within the stakeholder groups. Although it is out of the current study's scope to trace the exact working patterns of this particular film tourism working group and its members, the approach to include representatives of the local governments and chambers of commerce to create a common plan in conjunction with the assistance of an expert in the field of film tourism is recommended, as previous studies have also suggested (Croy, 2010; Hudson & Ritchie, 2006). However, the projects offered by the *Mare* promotional group such as the Twitter rally may not have been the best strategy, considering that the target audiences of *asadora* are often elderly people.

Furthermore, the legal limitations to officially utilise touristic resource related to the series were perceived as one crucial drawback by the interviewees, which had a particular impact on the film tourism working group and the local tourism industry. As such, the copyright issue in the case of *Mare* limited the local stakeholders' possibilities for economically benefiting from fans' interests in the TV series-themed mer-

chandise and memorabilia. Because of the strict copyright policy of the broadcaster NHK, the local tourism industry could only offer their own souvenirs on a limited scale, and visual indicators of the series on location were also strictly controlled by the broadcaster. Similar copyright problems in the tourism marketing for the *asadora Jun to Ai* (2012/2013) in Okinawa (Maruta, Kanehama, & Tamayose, 2014) and some Western cases (Beeton, 2016) have also been documented. Local businesses were required to pay high royalties for the use of the official logo, which made the production of special *asadora* souvenirs less attractive for them due to unexpectedly high design and production costs.

Thus, successful negotiations and compromises between media producers, copyright holders and local communities are an important factor which varies from case-to-case, and thus could limit the potential economic benefits and success of film tourism campaigns involving local communities (Yamamura, 2015). To our knowledge, the dynamics and complexities of copyright and royalty issues have not been yet exclusively examined in the context of film tourism literature with a few exceptions such as Beeton (2016).

The second, perhaps the more important drawback affecting local residents in particular was the dissatisfaction with the series' storyline development. During the last half of the broadcast, the local stakeholders' perceptions as well as the general audience's reception changed to the worse. The initial hype surrounding this morning TV drama series on national television slowed down with the following main reason – the unpopular storyline development and use of conservative gender stereotypes. This is consistent with Kim's study (2012a, 2012b) that confirmed that story(line) and character are the most significant media attributes keeping audiences engaged with TV series, both emotionally and behaviourally. Heightened engagement then leads to



a likely increase in the visitation to filming locations. Reijnders (2016) similarly argues that the fans' love for a certain story and their identification with the character become major motivations for film tourism; but if a large part of the audience, as in the case of *Mare*, feels dissatisfied with the story, the potential for film tourism is equally limited.

In contrast to the changed perceptions of TV viewers and local residents, the representatives of regional government and the local tourism industry still seemed satisfied by the series' positive impacts at that time, because the number of tourists had increased during the broadcast (even though the number usually increases during the summer season) and at least the cheaper souvenirs sold unexpectedly well. Thus, one cannot deny that from a short-term economic perspective, *Mare* and its film tourism impact was successful for the region, at least during the time of the broadcast. These different perceptions during the same period, oscillating between disappointment and satisfaction, illustrate the importance of investigating the diversity of opinions and attitudes within the stakeholder groups.

Last but not least, the disappointment felt generally by local residents about the series' impacts grew even stronger because of the two celebrity scandals at the post-broadcast phase. The unfortunate legacy surrounding the series strongly impacted both the media producers and local stakeholders. In other words, the "power of film" generated by other media can have the opposite effect and actually also deterred tourists (Beeton, 2006).

Although such events cannot be foreseen, it is still important to note that such incidents associated with celebrities can happen at any time during the development of film tourism, and their impacts can be adverse and far-reaching. Whilst some prior studies have shown how celebrity and celebrity-worship can be a factor that stimu-

lates tourism demand (Kim, Kim, & Han, 2019; Lee, Scott, & Kim, 2008; Yen & Teng, 2015; Yen & Croy, 2016), the opposite – when a celebrity negatively affects travel behaviour, as in the case of *Mare* – is a phenomenon that has thus far been under researched and thus the current study makes important contributions to this paucity of current film tourism impact studies. In particular, the #metoo scandals involving some Hollywood actors and Korean celebrities in recent years have shown that a strong work ethic and social responsibilities of media celebrities are prerequisites of their fame (Xu, Reijnders, & Kim, 2019). Thus, public opinion towards celebrities has come to have a greater impact on products related to them. Consequently, media celebrities play an even more important role in creating both positive and negative impacts of film tourism, as evidenced by Kim et al. (2019).

In the case of *Mare*, most film tourism-related local events were limited to the six months of the series' broadcast with little future implementation, reflecting a one-dimensional strategic planning approach. Certainly, the scandals played a crucial role in lowering the local stakeholders' interest in further promoting *Mare*-related tourism, but a long-term perspective seems to have been missing from the outset. The only considerable measure that was implemented after the broadcast was the opening of the memorial house, which in general may have been a good option to create a connection through media coverage to the location. Opportunities for fan interaction such as this memorial house, which is ideally suited to staging photos, are an important factor in generating interest. Other options would be handicraft experiences or guided tours by people involved in the shooting of the programme who can share behind-the-scenes stories and recollections, as suggested by Kim (2012a, 2012b) in his study of the Korean TV drama series *Daejanggeum*. Ultimately, however, in the case of *Mare*

one might argue that it was fortuitous not to put much effort into a long-term engagement with the series, taking into account the unfortunate post-broadcast incidents.

### **Contributions and Conclusion**

The study aimed to examine local stakeholders' perceptions of film tourism impacts to shed light on the complexities of film tourism planning and development. Firstly it identified that previous film tourism studies primarily focussed on the successful immediate short-term impacts from a singular, local stakeholder perspective. Consequently, we reviewed, discussed and highlighted four key complexities that assist in analysing the impacts of film tourism more holistically. Namely, these are stakeholder consultation, diversity within stakeholder groups, an embedded long-term planning approach, and inclusion of all relevant stakeholders.

Furthermore, film tourism planning and development in the Japanese context, demonstrates a dominant interpretation of film tourism as a means for economic (re)development of peripheral regions or areas. The current study examined the film tourism impacts generated by a Japanese morning drama series *Mare*, examining the perceptions of the various local stakeholders from a longitudinal qualitative approach. Divided into the three stages of pre-, during, and post-broadcast, the local stakeholders' perceptions of film tourism impacts progressively changed from early optimism to final disappointment. The four key complexities played an important role in assessing the film tourism impacts from a local stakeholder perspective.

Importantly, this study contributes the dynamism of locals' perceptions of film tourism impacts, which have been unfortunately missed in numerous snap-shot studies. Indeed, we have demonstrated that locals' perceptions of film tourism impacts change in impact type, the direction (positive to negative, or vice versa) and im-

portance. This indicates that a one-point-in-time assessment of locals' impact perceptions may misrepresent the longitudinal changes, powerfully demonstrated in broader tourism impact studies. Therefore, it is recommended, as demonstrated by the identified key complexities, that consultation and inclusion of local stakeholders should not exist on a superficial level; it is not enough to ask them to appear as extras or limit them to checking the scripts. It is instead more desirable to carefully and continuously collect and reflect upon the different needs and ideas of varying local stakeholders, particularly when it comes to large-scale projects or investments such as the singing road referred to in this study. Film tourism planners should therefore address the inherent diversity within the stakeholder groups and refrain from homogenising them as a single entity of 'local community'. In addition, film tourism projects should not be centred on time-specific short-lived events such as an *asadora* or the opening of new train tracks. Instead, it should be part of embedded long-term development approach corresponding with local resources and capabilities.

Despite the aforementioned theoretical and practical contributions, this study is also vulnerable to limitations. First, an overall small sample size and uneven distribution between the stakeholder types of interviewees need to be improved by future studies. Second, while the current research provides rich contextual insights into film tourism planning strategies and their impacts and practical implementation in Japan, it limits to one specific genre of TV programme, so-called *asadora*. Third, the celebrity scandals in the current study were unpredictable events that largely affected the local stakeholders' perceptions towards the film tourism impacts; however, even if many similar cases emerged worldwide in recent decades, such events cannot be taken into account in initial film tourism planning due to the complex nature of film tourism itself.

For future research, one can expect that a comparative study will provide more solid evidence of how particular the supposedly unique *asadora* is through the lens of film tourism. It will be even more beneficial to undertake cross-cultural studies, given similarities with daily TV series in other cultural contexts, such as telenovelas in South America or TV drama in Turkey exist (Anaz & Ozcan, 2016). Such cross-cultural studies will further opportunities for the development of film tourism in marginalised areas, such as favelas in Brazil (Rêgo, 2014).

Having acknowledged the above limitations and thus recommendations for future studies, this study finally concludes that a qualitative longitudinal investigation of local stakeholders' perceptions, which assesses their diversities and heterogeneous voices, can provide valuable insights into the complexities of film tourism planning and development. These insights can then offer new opportunities for film tourism researchers and practitioners to better understand the dynamic nature of film tourism.

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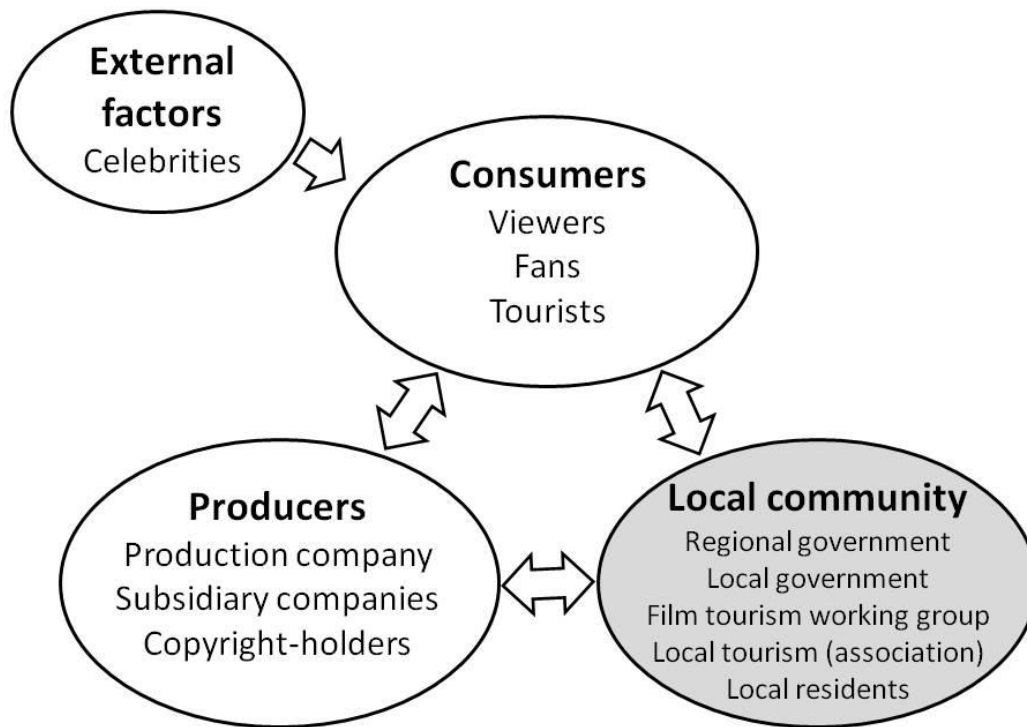
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**Table 1 Profile of interview participants**

Time Period	Pseudonym	Gender	Age	Profession	Stakeholder Type	Description	Interview Date
1	Miyashita	Female	35	Researcher (rural development)	Local resident	Active in grass-roots movements	Jul 2015
1,2	Tada	Female	20	Care-worker	Local resident (involved in the filming)	Home was filming location	Jul 2015
1, 2	Shimada	Male	40	Japanese Travel Bureau (JTB) staff specialized on media tourism	Film tourism working group (based in Tokyo, no personal relationship to the locals)	Consultant for local touristic campaign of the <i>Mare</i> Promotion Group in the fiscal year 2015	Sep 2015
2	Abe	Male	22	Student (rural development)	Local resident	Investigating rural revitalization	Apr 2015
2	Yamada	Male	65	Craftsman	Local resident (involved in the filming and regional tourism development)	Producing and selling souvenirs, role model and technical advisor	Sep 2015
2, 3	Kimura	Male	65	Coordinator and consultant for the regional and local governments	Representative of regional and local governments (involved in media and tourism development)	Active in regional and local promotion projects, former journalist of the regional TV channel / newspaper	1) Sep 2015 2) Mar 2017
3	Sato	Male	60	Farmer	Local resident	Local spokesman	Oct 2016
3	Nakamura	Female	25	PhD student (heritage studies)	Local resident	Investigating rural revitalization	Oct 2016
3	Kato	Female	45	Staff at the drama memorial house	Local resident and tourism officer	Selling souvenirs to film tourists	Mar 2017



**Figure 1:** Triangular model of the stakeholders of film tourism (adopted and modified from Beeton (2016), Heitmann (2010), and Yamamura (2015))



**Figure 2:** Mare souvenir corner in Kanazawa station, May 2015 (Source: Authors, 2015).



**Figure 3:** The morning drama memorial house in Wajima City, March 2017 (Source: Authors, 2017)