

# Consideration on improvements and authenticity of regional culture tourism resources triggered by TV drama:

## A case of tourism to experience wedding and life culture in Kaga/Noto tradition

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### Abstract

The case study of this research was a project supported by the Japan Tourist Agency [2021] titled, “Demonstration project for promoting coordination within the region through improvements of regional tourism resources” which was aimed at a recovery from the decline in tourism demand due to COVID-19 and also revitalizing the regional economy. The Peninsula Wide Area Tourism Association in Nanao, Ishikawa applied for the project and it was adopted as the responsible organization. This was a newly developed tourist plan. This research is characterized by the improvements of regional tourism resources through the use of scenes from a TV drama. The method adopted in the project was created through promotional movies which collaborated with a location of a TV drama and the local spot, and tourists who actually visit the place can watch and listen to the movies. This study aims to verify how much the value of regional culture tourism resources can be improved by using promotional TV drama scenes. For analysis, the discussion of Wang, who advocates the consideration of authenticity, was focused on. As for surveys, a survey of tourists who joined the adopted demonstration project, local people who planned and created tourism products, and the producer who created the movies for tourist promotion were conducted and also consideration was based on a questionnaire survey of participants in the monitor tour. As a result, it was revealed that positive feelings were created and good effects were brought about even among those who did not watch the drama by visiting and seeing firsthand the scenes where the drama was shot.

### Keywords

*cultural tourism, regional culture resources, TV drama, authenticity, community-based tourism*

### 1. Introduction

This study aims to verify how much the value of regional culture tourism resources can be improved by using promotional movies of TV drama scenes. The study focuses on authenticity and considers it through Wang’s theory. “Cultural tourism” refers to tourism aimed to observe “tangible/intangible cultural properties and other resources related to cultures,” hereinafter called cultural resources, and to deepen understanding of the culture through experiences and other activities related to cultural resources [Digital Agency, 2021]. Urry [1995] discusses that “places are chosen as the objects of being gazed at” and cites TV and movies as a “variety of non-touristic practices that create gaze.” For example, “Spanish Steps” where the main actress of the movie “Roman Holiday” (1953), Audrey Hepburn eats gelato, and “Mouth of Truth” where she had a pleasant exchange of words with Gregory Peck are famous tourist spots even for those who have not seen the movie. On the other hand, when we actually go to a certain location of a TV drama broadcasted in the past, some of the local people say, “The images and films of the drama scenes that we expect would be used for publication were not actually used even though we cooperated with drama shootings by letting the crew use our local places.” Certainly, we rarely see images and films of a broadcasted drama scene as they are in the actual location. However, it can be wondered if the existence of films and images of a drama scene is more effective in improving the value of cultural tourism. Is

it also effective for tourists who have not seen a certain drama? For the background in this study, it was decided to do exploratory research, set a hypothesis, and conduct demonstrative verification based on a survey of local people, the producer of the tourist promotion movie and its crew members on a project adopted for support by the Japan Tourist Agency.

### 2. Research literature

#### 2.1 Contents tourism

Many studies on contents tourism in which people make a location tour of a “TV drama” can be seen. According to the Academy of Contents Tourism [2011], contents tourism refers to “adding a story or theme as a region-specific image created through contents to the region, and utilizing the story as a tourist resource”. Although traditional “film-location tours” [Kaneko, 2022; Dai et al., 2015] as well as “anime pilgrimage” [Masubuchi, 2010] are included in contents tourism, those fans mainly make self-motivated actions. On the contrary, contents tourism includes the meaning of attracting tourism. Yazawa [2019] performed research on “the roles of movie museums in the revitalization of the city,” and also research literature on contents tourism as well as museums and galleries. In the study, he points out that a movie “has intrinsic value in the movie works” and “movie museums are only the materials that support the contents.” Although the author of this paper performed research literature exploratorily, as far as can be seen, it was not possible to find research verifying how much the value of regional culture tourism resources improves by the use of original films with scenes of broadcasted TV dramas, which is the purpose of this study.

In addition, there are some reasons why the case study was adopted as a support project by the Japan Tourist Agency. According to staff of the agency, “One of the reasons is the matter of copyright and the people living near the location cannot use a movie of the drama as it is. That should be solved.” Therefore, in the adopted project, the broadcasted drama was used as it actually is. Another reason is that the number of case studies themselves is small.

## 2.2 Resources

Shikida et al. [2011] discusses eco-tourism management and claims that resources are something that can be used or consumed in given ways. He also says that they are “things that should not be dealt with as resources from the beginning”, but “the process to turn something into resources is needed”. “Turning something into resources” means “the process to work on.” In addition, more cases can be seen in which tours were planned and formulated by combining materials collected by tourist agencies through the process of mechanization, but nowadays, there are more cases in which a community side plans and formulates tours called “community-based tourism.” This study case is also community-based tourism.

## 2.3 Authenticity

Culture becomes a product when it links to various inputs [Goto, 2013]. According to Throsby [2001], cultural capitals are properties that materialize, accumulate and provide cultural values in addition to economic values that the capitals have. Cultural values include autistic value, mental value, social value, historical value, symbolic value and true value (authenticity).

As for “authenticity,” one of these cultural values, many previous studies can be seen. In the context of the tourism area, Shikida [2021] says, “I am seeing the cases in which experts reevaluate and give meanings to a landscape which was put a value on by non-experts of tourists through SNS, etc,” and “even in a tourist spot where its values have been recognized objectively by experts who can evaluate value based on authenticity such as tangible cultural assets.”

Hashimoto [2018] conducts a logical explanation of “regionality” and “regional culture” considering the relation between the discussion of “authenticity,” and refers to regional cultural tourism as “the transmission of a regional culture where people try hard to nurture things that seemingly looked ‘fake’ but that discovered, newly created by local people, or in some cases, borrowed from another area into things authentic.”

Kwon [2016] analyses tourism-objectification of popular culture from the viewpoint of cultural building, and says “authentic culture as an object is needed for tourism to be established.”

Also, contemporary tourism has been creating authentic culture and authenticity has been established through social interaction [Kwon, 2012].

Zukin [2010] says, “Authenticity has two notions; one is that all generations are ‘original’ as they are always there and the

other idea is that the new generation creates on their own.” He also says, “Where it comes from has almost nothing to do with recent years and it starts to take on the meaning of style,” and “the way of thinking of authenticity is shifting from the quality of people to the quality of a thing, and furthermore in recent years, to the quality of experience.”

According to Wang [1999], the complicated natures of authenticity in tourism can be classified into objective authenticity, constructive authenticity, and existential authenticity. Objective authenticity is generated by the recognition that the object to be seen is authentic. Constructive authenticity refers to one projected to the tourist subject by tourists and tourist agents from their viewpoints of the images, expectations, preferences, beliefs, and powers, which means the authenticity of tourist objects is actually a symbolic one. Existential authenticity includes personal feelings and indirect/direct feelings that are stimulated by tourist activities. It is also subjective, and also one’s own authenticity, but has nothing to do with tourist objects.

As for what the author of this paper learned from the research literature above, local culture is something that is nurtured and authentic culture is an objective needed for tourism to be established. Authentic culture has been always constructed through social interaction and is given “meaning” at times.

Zukin [2010] discusses this “meaning,” that it is shifting to “the quality of experiences.” This is equivalent to existential authenticity in the discussion of Wang [1999]. If tourists joining the monitor tour have not known or seen a drama, the existence of drama movies and pictures of the place they visited would create an authentic culture of “the quality of experiences” and bring about better values of regional culture tourism resources.

From the above, the research questions of this study are as follows:

- Question 1:  
The way an authentic culture is given meaning is different between local people and non-local people who are TV drama producers through the process of making tourist products.
- Question 2:  
Those who join the monitor tour create authenticity by simulating not only real-life cultural experiences but also TV drama images.
- Question 3:  
Those who join the monitor tour feel some kind of authenticity and experience regional culture tourism.

## 3. Demonstration research

### 3.1 Case description

The project proposed to the Japan Tourism Agency was “Life-culture tourism, a cultural experience of Kaga and Noto’s tradition. Wedding tourism learned from Hanayome-noren.” The agency publicly supported it until July 8th, 2021, and the project continued from after the selection to March 4th, 2022.

The result of the selection was notified to the project leaders in the middle of September 2021. In addition, the author of this paper was involved with the project and joined it as a volunteer on the condition that research at the author's university would be made after gaining permission that participant observation would be conducted and the activities would be reported from the organizer, participants and those who were concerned.

In addition to participant observation, a survey of tourists who joined the adopted demonstration project, local people who planned and created tourist products, and the producer who created movies for tourism promotion was conducted, and consideration was based on a questionnaire survey of monitor participants. Incidentally, the detailed information on participant observation and survey are omitted for convenience.

### 3.2 Outline of the proposed project

“Customs,” “practices,” “traditional arts,” “Shinto rituals and festivals,” “unique fishing methods” etc. including “Hanayome-noren,” a traditional wedding custom, have been practiced in the area of Kaga and Noto Peninsula. The demonstration project was conducted under the concept of “Wedding Tourism” and aims to introduce regional life culture by playing the TV drama “Hanayome-noren” scenes and images of regional life shot in the drama by the use of QR code while the copyright for the drama, which was made and broadcasted in the area of Noto Peninsula before, is used for free. Hanayome-noren (Figure 1) is part of the wedding custom that originated in the former Kaga-state areas of Noto, Kaga and Echchu, and the *noren* curtain is hung in a Japanese-style room in the house of the bride and groom where a Buddhist altar is placed and the bride crawls through the *noren* curtain. Landladies in the Ipponsugi Shopping Street in Nanao changed the use of “Hanayome-noren which had no chance to be used after a wedding and left behind in the closet” into tourist resources in 2004 and hosted the “Hanayome-noren Exhibition.” About 10 thousand people visited the event in the first year and the number of visitors there exceeded 100,000 in 2011 and it exists to this day.



Figure 1: Hanayome-noren

The title of the TV drama is named after the custom.

A monitor tour for two nights and three days was conducted from December 9th (Thu.) to 11th (Sat.), 2021. The eligible participants were a trio or a pair of 20-year-old or older females who were family members or friends of each other from the viewpoints of preventive measures of infectious diseases, and they applied for it on the webpages of Noto Peninsula Wide Area Tourism Association [n.a.] (mentioned above). All 15 applicants joined the event as planned. Applicants were from various areas in Japan, such as Tokyo, Saitama, Kanagawa, Mie, Nagoya and Ishikawa. The tour was enjoyable and the participants dressed in bridal costumes and went under “Hanayome-noren,” while they experienced life and food culture broadcasted in the TV drama (gold-leafing, fish-handling, Wajima lacquerware, landladies, soy-sauce squeezing, wedding cuisine, and other experiences). In addition, QR codes in which the movies linked to the drama were placed at 30 drama locations in the area. The QR code (Figure 2) is an actual example of “Torii Soy-sauce Shop.” The participants met at Kanazawa Station and the fees were free during the whole schedule.



Figure 2: QR code sample

### 3.3 The tour schedule

- 1st day: December 9th (Thu.), 2021  
10:30; Gathering at Kanazawa Station = chartered bus = 10:45; Stroll in Kanazawa Castle Park = 11:40; Lunch around Higashiyama area = Film location tour (Higashi-Chaya District/Kazue-machi Umeno-hashii bridge etc.) = 14:00; Kanazawa Bikazari-Asano (gold-leafing experience) = 16:30; Minsyuku (inn) Notojimaso (fish-handling experience/fisherman, wedding cuisine/ life/cultural learning).
- 2nd day: December 10th (Fri.)  
5:30; Notojimaso · · Enome fishing port (viewing of fish-landing-breakfast) = 9:45; Wajima morning market = 10:45; Wajima Nuritaro (Wajima lacquering experience) · · 11:50; Viewing of the house of a lacquerware master · · 12:35; Lunch = 14:20; Shiroyone Senmaida (rice terraces) (The world agricultural heritage) = 16:30; Accommodation Kagaya (wedding cuisine).
- 3rd day: December 11th (Sat.)  
7:00; Breakfast · · Seirinji temple (it is possible to find on Instagram) · · 9:30; Landlady experience from “Hanayome-noren” the TV drama supported by Kagaya = 12:00; Lunch at Hanayome-noren Hall · · Talk Event/ Hanayome-noren experience · · 14:30; Torii Soy-sauce shop (soy-sauce squeezing experience) · · Stroll along Ipponsugi Shopping Street

= 16:05 Wakura Onsen St. = 17:54 Leaving from Kanazawa Station.

### 3.4 Questionnaire survey

#### 3.4.1 Purposes

The survey aims to measure the level of satisfaction of participants on the monitor tour and implementation of QR code movies. The questions referred to six indices of the causal models of the Japanese Customer Satisfaction Index (JCSI): customer expectations, perceived quality, perceived value, customer satisfaction, recommendation intention, and loyalty. JCSI was developed in a national project under the support of the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry to strengthen the competitiveness of the service industry, and was open to the public in 2009. It is trusted and the indices are proven. Customer satisfaction means some kind of satisfaction that can be felt through goods and services when customers purchase products or receive a certain service.

#### 3.4.2 Survey subjects

Twelve of the fifteen participants joining the monitor tour answered the questionnaire. Among them, those who have seen the “TV drama” was 7; those who have not seen it was 5.

#### 3.4.3 Validity of number of questionnaires

As for the sampling method, judgment sampling was adopted. It is the method of choosing a certain factor intentionally at a researcher’s own discretion. It is often used in test marketing and it is possible to judge in a market whose property is close to the one of the whole market that is chosen [Onzo, 2011].

The monitor tour was solicited publicly and the applicants visited the webpage of the Noto Peninsula Wide Area Tourism Association to apply for it. The fee for the tour was free. The eligible participants were a trio or a pair of 20-year-old or older females who were family members or friends of each other from the viewpoint of preventive measures of infectious diseases, or were interested in the life culture of Noto Peninsula. Public relations were performed through public media such as newspapers, TV, SNS, etc. As a result, the total number of applicants was 15. The 15 applicants were from various areas in Japan: 7 from the Kanto area; 2 from the Hokuriku area; 3 from the Tokai area, and 3 unknown.

At the time, the tour itself was not merchandized and was a test case. So, the applicants were early adopters. Whether this tourism product will become widely used or not, it is left to business judgment in the future. However, the opinions of the participants who joined the monitor tour voluntarily are precious and it can be judged that the validity of the number of questionnaires answered was secured to some extent.

#### 3.4.4 Survey method

Questions on how the applicants thought about the monitor tour were online. The method is checking type and open questions.

#### 3.4.5 Survey items

- What is the place or thing you like or you do not like most? (checkbox on the site of the itinerary/multiple answers allowed)
- What should be improved in the entire monitor tour? (Likert method/5 scales)
- How much were you satisfied with the tour? (open question)
- How much were you satisfied with the individual items? For 4 items of “accommodation,” “life cultural experience,” “wedding culture experience,” and “life culture learning” (Likert method/5 scales)
- What do you think about experiencing QR code movies? (open question)
- How much were you satisfied with the efforts of QR code movies?
- How meaningful are the monitor tour and QR code? (choose between the two)
- What impression did you have about the whole sightseeing in Kaga and Noto and the entire monitor tour? (open question)

#### 3.4.6 Questionnaire survey result

All participants were females, and 42 % were 40 years old or older; 25 % in their 20s, 33 % in their 30s, and 42 % had not seen the TV drama. Also, 33 % came to Ishikawa Prefecture for the first time. As for the most popular tourist destination in this monitor tour, Kagaya (an accommodation) was ranked 1st with 92 %, and Higashi-chaya (restaurant and accommodation) was ranked 2nd with 58 %. Conversely, the least popular one was Kanazawa Castle Park with 42 %. Many answered that too many things were crammed into the tour, which should be reviewed in the future. However, all participants were satisfied with the tour contents, and 83 % of them answered that the recognition of wedding tourism changed as a result.

As for the demonstration experiment of QR codes, 75 % said “meaningful,” and even those who said “meaningless” had certain reasons such as “the poor internet connections” and “insufficient PR of the QR codes.” Therefore, all were satisfied with the movies’ content. There were various comments such as, “just like experiencing the drama scenes!,” “I had fun instantly jumping into the drama scenes and the location-related information.” Even those who had not seen the drama enjoyed “simulated experiences” of the drama scenes.

As for the feedback of the whole tour, the words “experience,” “Noto,” “culture,” and “attraction” were extracted in many cases, and many participants said in the comments that, “I enjoyed the good experience.” “Those experiences were fun!” “I’d like to enjoy the local’s unique festival.” “I felt that everybody loved their local places very much and was touched by their hospitality.” “It is full of attractions to see, experience and eat so I want to come back again.”

### 4. Consideration

The research Question 1 is a consideration of the partici-

Table 1: Feedback for the tour (from the list of extracted words of KH-coder)

Rank	Extracted word	Frequency
1	think	18
2	experience	10
3	join	7
4	culture	7
5	thank you	5
6	tour	5
7	wedding	5
8	time	5
9	Noto	5
10	attraction	5

part's observation of the process of making tourist products. At the time of the shooting of the QR codes of "Torii Soy-sauce Shop," the director said that, "We will shoot the scenes that would be good publicity for your store." Then, the shop manager said, "I don't know that it is good publicity for the shop. The building is old and the machines have been handed down from predecessors. We live here and that is our daily life. Just shoot the films as you like." Also, as for soy-sauce squeezing, the manager said, "It's for our life, so I'm worried if participants can really enjoy this experience." Conversely, the shooting staff said, "The tour participants had precious experience since they have never squeezed soy-sauce." In this manner, the meaning of authentic culture is different between local people and non-local people who are TV drama makers. As for the recognition of the objects of the movie shooting, it was objective for local people, and constructive authenticity for the filmmakers. However, the tour participants were all satisfied with the movies' content as a result, therefore, it seemed important to produce from various discussions for creating tourist products.

As for research Question 2 and 3, from the result of the questionnaire survey, tourist objects were projected just like the participants enjoy simulated-experience TV drama movies in addition to the original life-culture experience in Question 2, while "feeling experience" such as "joy," which is "the authenticity of experience" according to Wang [1999] is categorized in existential authenticity. Cultural tourist products in the region associated with the drama scenes broadcasted in the past were invented as the products of community-based tourism and verified by conducting the monitor tour. From such a result, it can be said that the efforts had some effects. And thus, it let those who had not seen the drama enjoy the event. As for new discovery, even those who had not watched the drama generated a positive feeling and brought about a good effect by watching the drama scenes that were shot in the local area. Meanwhile, the participants enjoyed the life-culture experience, one of the aspects of local culture tourism. Those who had not watched the drama are categorized in not only constructive authenticity but also existential authenticity, according to the classification

of Wang.

## 5. Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to develop tourist products from the scenes of TV dramas broadcasted in the past, conduct a monitor tour and reveal the effects. The research questions were based on research literature on "cultural tourism" and "authenticity." As mentioned in the consideration for Question 1, the real life of local people and the images that people from other areas envision are different. However, all participants in the tour were satisfied and it is important to create tourist products from the ideas of various participants. Then, as a result of questionnaire surveys, Question 2 was "constructive authenticity" according to Wang [1999] while tourist cultural experiences of Question 3 were the experience of feelings such as "joy" and both turned out to be effective. In addition, as a new discovery, even those who had never seen a TV drama could generate positive feelings by watching the drama scenes shot in the location, which brought about a good effect in addition to the cultural tourist experiences in the region. According to Wang, it is "experience-type authenticity" which is categorized as existential authenticity. It was revealed that, according to this categorization of authenticity by Wang, it cannot be clearly divided, and it is related to each other and maybe overlapped. This suggests that re-categorization should be considered.

Further, regarding a discussion of "authentication" by Cohen and Cohen [2012] and others, authenticity should be further discussed. "Authentication" is the process of verifying what is "original" "authentic" and "reliable."

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