

The Making of *Negeri Laskar Pelangi* (The Land of Rainbow Troops)  
Film tourism as Placemaking in Indonesia



Arni Dewi Boronnia

930406101040



Wageningen University and Research  
Department of Environmental Sciences  
Cultural Geography Chair Group  
Master Leisure, Tourism, and Environment

Master thesis

Thesis title: The Making of *Negeri Laskar Pelangi* (The Rainbow Troops): Film tourism as  
placemaking in Indonesia

Thesis code: GEO-80436

Written by:

Arni Dewi Boronnia

Registration number: 930406101040

Supervisors:

Dr. Karolina Doughty and Dr.ir. Martijn Duineveld

Examiner:

Prof. Dr. Rene van der Duim

22 March 2018

## Abstract

Belitung island considered as the first film tourism destination that emerges in Indonesia because of the popularity of *Laskar Pelangi* (The Rainbow Troops) movie. The film story is about the life story of a Belitung man with Belitung island as the background story. The local government of Belitung island is currently utilizing the popularity of the movie to create a new identity of the island. The local government uses the name of the film as destination branding by mentioning “*Negeri Laskar Pelangi*” (The Land of Rainbow Troops) as the tagline. Film tourism that is emerging within the island creating social dynamic not only between the two districts that come under the aise: Belitung and East Belitung regarding branding competition but also between residents and government regarding the representation of the island.

The focus of this research is to explain the use of film tourism as a destination branding as well as the impact of film tourism phenomena and placemaking practice from the perspective of the residents. This study provides a better understanding not only on how people perceive places materially and socially but also how such identity of a place created and contested by using the key concept of place branding and place attachment to explain placemaking concept further. Based on an in-depth interview with local tourism workers that and local government, this study focuses on people and place relationship, especially within residents’ place attachment and local government tourism developmental agenda.

This study argues that the local government of Belitung use the name of the film in their destination branding tagline to create a destination identity and it was built opportunistically according to the popularity of the movie as it considered as the most representable and marketable image. The local people also base their place attachment through the same economic reasons as it seen in the absence of beliefs similarity on the story of the film which underlies Belitung’s constructed destination identity. It can say that the identity of Belitung island that contained within destination branding is mainly based images that developed in the tourist’s mind.

Thus, the study considers three things that it is important to take into account within film tourism placemaking: taking into account the localities of the place and resident’s culture within the creation of destination identity, keeping the story of the film alive within the people and community not only as an attempt to influence people’s attachment but also to create a comprehensive film tourism destination, and collaboration with various tourism actors in order to maintain the trend of the film which also affecting tourist flow.

Key words: film tourism, film tourism development, placemaking, place branding, place identity, Belitung, Indonesia.

## Preface

During my research journey, reflected on my filmmaking experiences and adjusted my way of thinking about how art is supposed to be produced: it is not only about how to present the beauties and hide the flaws, but how beneficial the art is going to be. Choosing this topic and using Indonesia as the study case area intended to contributing something good for others in my home country based on my experience in filmmaking.

I would like to take a moment to express my gratitude to my supervisor Karolina Doughty, who patiently supervised me during my research. I am also thankful that Martijn Duineveld took over the supervision when Karolina was unable to continue and helped me to complete this research. Next to that, I would thank to *Lembaga Pengelola Dana Pendidikan* (Indonesia Endowment Fund for Education) who willing to fully finance my master study and this thesis research.

The interviewees also played an essential role in this research. I thank to every smiles, hugs, laughs, prayers, homes, foods, and stories that every Belitung people gave to me. To my Belitung aunts, uncles, grandpas, brothers, sisters, and friends who welcomes me with an open heart, I send my highest gratitude.

Last but not least, without the support of my friends and family, I would not have been able to complete this thesis research. I thank to my fellow MLE students for both in silly and serious situations. I would like to thank my Indonesian MLE friends as well for giving me many laughs, but importantly spirit to finish what I have started. Finally, without the endless support of my parents, Ibu and Bapak; both practical but most importantly emotional, I would not have stood a chance. A special recognition I addressed to my deceased grandfather, Eyang Wisnuadji, as I finally finish what he started in The Netherlands, long time ago.

Arni Dewi Boronnia

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## 1. Introduction

As a country which has many world-class tourism destinations, the tourism industry has played a significant role in Indonesian national income. Based on the data from Indonesian Central Bureau of Statistics (2016), the tourism industry has ranked in fourth place after oil, gas, and coal mining and the palm oil industry as the most extensive national income source in 2015 with a value of 12,225.89 million USD. It shows that the government put a lot of effort on promoting various destinations to the world. Related to tourism promotion, Indonesia also currently win two specials awards in UNWTO Video Competition by carrying a tagline "Wonderful Indonesia." As a tourism promotional video, the "Wonderful Indonesia" is highlighting several tourism destinations and cultural events in Indonesia. This video captures the term "tourism as a social phenomenon" by Hultman and Hall (2012) which explain that tourism is a modern force that tends to produce and reproduce places and cultures into packages and market them. This also supported by Holcomb (1993) who argued that the primary aim of place (or destination) marketing as the core of tourism strategy is either to impose the existing image to the potential tourist's mind or developing a new image to minimize the current negative images. In this matter, visual media play as the most powerful force in term of image-creator (Beeton, 2016). Beeton (2015) explained that visual media, especially film, has become the main mass media outlet and has been particularly useful in affecting tourism from early 20th century.

### ***Film tourism in Indonesia***

Destination promotion using popular media such as literature, television programs, and the film indeed becomes a powerful way to motivate people to travel because visual experiences are becoming essential in part in tourism (Shaw et al., 2000; Feighley, 2003). Indonesia has become one of the countries that do not miss the effect of film-induced tourism. There is an increasing number of contemporary Indonesian films that emphasize the nation's landscape. Supported by the increasing of media consumption, traveling into certain kind of destination that is popularized by media, especially film, is becoming a trend. Many regions in Indonesia have to face the wave of film tourists who gradually come. Such films as *5 cm* have proven can increase mountaineering trend across Indonesia in general and in Semeru volcano, Central Java, in particular, where the

film shot (Yaham and Rahmadiani, 2014). Another example is the development of East Sumba tourism because being popularized as the shooting location of a movie named *Pendekar Tongkat Emas* (The Golden Crane Warrior).

A film named *Laskar Pelangi* (The Rainbow Troops) in 2008 has become the third of most popular Indonesian film ever made by reaching a cinema audience of 4.6 million people. The movie which took place in Belitung Island is one of a large successful film-induced tourism example in Indonesia. Before the establishment of *Laskar Pelangi*, tourism in Belitung Island is very underrated. After the movie hit the Indonesian box office, Belitung Island becomes one of the most popular destinations for film tourism as the main attraction. Belitung Island, which consists of two regions: Belitung and East Belitung, has to encounter the massive tourist arrivals during the last ten years as the effect of the film.

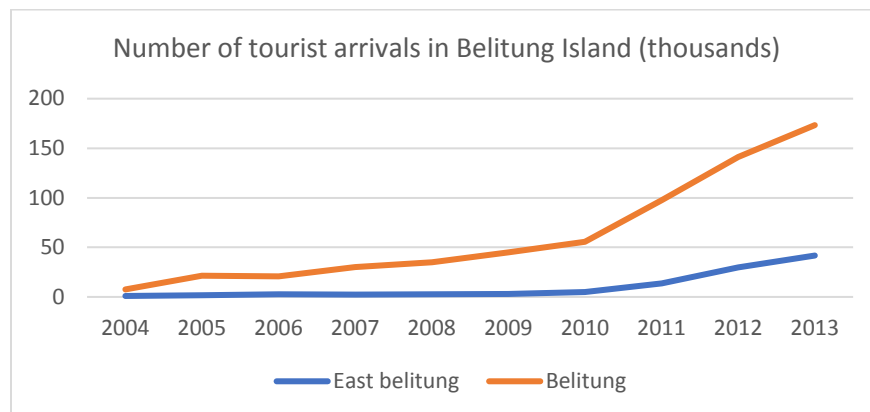


Figure 1.1 The growth of tourist arrivals from 2004-2013

Source: Belitung and East Belitung Central Bureau of Statistics, 2013

### ***The Making of Negeri Laskar Pelangi***

Far before the development of new destination, Belitung Island is previously well-known as a tin mining area since Dutch colonial era which owned by a company named *Billiton Maatschappij*. According to Heidhues (1991), this tin mining company has an indirect contribution to creating the diversity of Belitung socio-demographic and economical since long time ago. Located in the coastal area and far from the center of modern development, Belitung people were living in

poverty and hard to get proper education facilities. This problematic situation inspires Andrea Hirata to write a novel about his childhood memory and later filmed which titled *Laskar Pelangi*.

The strength of the storyline is because it does not only emphasize the local values of Belitung Island but also deliver a moral message never to stop learning and giving up on our dreams. Though the story claimed as a fictional story, it was inspired by the author's real life back in 1970-ish. Currently, the title *Laskar Pelangi* used as Belitung's tourism board promotion tagline. Several places that relate to the film around the island are recreated and renamed under the name of the film.

As some parts of the story based on reality, therefore, some places that described in the book and appear on the film are also real and currently being highlighted as film destinations. Sites and landscapes which related to film scenes are essential assets in a film tourism destination because of the attractiveness. The destination marketing organizations are usually keeping the iconic properties on the filming site as a tourist attraction. Some of them even need to recreate the features to build the firm feeling between the tourist and the film site.

The notion of film destination attractiveness was built since the filmmaking process by the film production house and eventually commodified by local DMOs. This symbolic value of tourism attractiveness, which also includes the locality, that attached to a place is socially constructed as a result of negotiation between different interest on the making of attractive sights (MacCannell, 1976; Quinn, 2006). However, one of the most crucial issues is the inclusion of local communities because tourists are often only come and see a famous site without paying attention to what is local people need (Beeton, 2005). Frequently, a destination brand only delivers a simplistic understanding about the place made by the government as the main DMO and left aside the actual place identity built by the local people (Campelo et al., 2014).

It leads to a value shifting between the actual identity of a place built by local people and the marketed identity of the place. Enhancement of social and economic development of the destination can be achieved by applying a strategic use of place branding techniques (Kotler and Gertner 2002; Anholt 2005). This technique requires reframing the image of the destination

and local values that can strengthen both senses of pride and identity among the residents (Gilmore, 2002). Therefore, the analysis of how places conceived, perceived, and lived, which considered the practice of placemaking (Lefebvre, 1991), in a film tourism destination needs to be done.

In developing countries, especially Indonesia, the increasing number of the tourists who come can be seen as a potential for economic growth by the government. The local government undertakes the role of destination management organization (DMO) through a tourism board. By having the authority to create policy related to tourism, the local government has the power to shape both the natural and cultural environment of film destination as a branding strategy to increase the number of tourists. However, according to many researchers, the use of places that shared by many communities may be contested based on political ideologies and economic realities changes (Hayden, 1995; Molotch, Frudenburg, & Paulsen, 2000; Urry, 1995). In this case, the real local perspective on the identity of their place as tourism destination may be eliminated to build a destination brand based on film tourism.

To comply the sustainable tourism concept, tourism industry must work closely integrated with all the other activities that currently exist in the host region (McKercher, 1993) as well as integrate and collaborate with other stakeholders (Macionis & O'Connor, 2011). Heitmann (2010) argued that the key stakeholders of film tourism destination that needs to consider are the destination management organization (DMOs), the local community, tourists, tourism businesses and the film industry. She later further explains that there are some significant overlaps between the stakeholders that create a different role in film tourism planning which leads to a differing level of involvement and participation in the planning process. The different role and level of involvement of the stakeholder have required the DMO to take into account all the possible tourism stakeholders who have interest in the process of tourism service producing (Sautter and Leisen, 1999; Heitmann, 2010).

### 1.1. Research aims and objectives

Film as one of the most powerful media not only affects generating tourism on the film location. The film also creates a particular kind of place image that either can be an opportunity or

challenge for DMO to unify or distinguish the film-based image and the locality-based image regarding tourism destination development. The research focuses on people and place relationship, especially within place attachment and tourism developmental agenda. This research is aimed to understand the dynamic of placemaking process within the construction of film tourism destination and place identity. The outcome of the study is expected to be a baseline of consideration on the development and management of film tourism destination in Indonesia.

Previous research about film tourism as placemaking in the USA has done by several researchers (Benjamin et al., 2012; Hutchison, 2015; Benjamin, 2011). However, there is no current research related with film tourism as placemaking conducted in developing countries, particularly in Indonesia, although according to O'Connor et al., (2008) it is important that destinations use successful film-induced branding examples to initiate their strategies. This particular condition becomes an important reason to do a study case research about film tourism construction in Belitung island as one of the first film tourism destinations in Indonesia. Therefore, several research objectives formed:

1. To examine the use of film tourism as destination branding in Belitung island.
2. To understand the impact of film tourism as social phenomena and placemaking practices on Belitung people's perspective.

## 1.2. Research question

To meet the research objectives, two research questions formed:

1. How is film tourism being used as a destination branding of Belitung Island?
2. How Belitung people's view on film tourism and placemaking practices that underlie the remaking of Belitung Island into *Negeri Laskar Pelangi* (The Land of Rainbow Troops)?

## 2. Literature review

### 2.1. Film tourism, tourists' imaginaries, place image, and place identity

#### 2.1.1 Film tourism and tourists' imaginaries

Visual image has shown in almost all of the everyday life media. The travel media is also becoming a field which offering experience through visual image promotion. None of the travel media like websites, magazines, and catalogs that are not displaying the visual image of the destination. Since visual experiences are becoming an essential part in tourism (Feighley, 2003), people usually travel to some places that have been popularized by popular media for example literature, television and film to get the virtual experiences (Shaw et al., 2000).

Since the tourist gaze is increasingly media-mediated (Urry & Larsen, 2011), the tourist built their expectation when they set the pre-travel visual experience through popular media. Urry and Larsen (2011) further explain that in a postmodern world, tourists are always profoundly influenced by texts and images when gazing in and upon places, therefore, it is virtually impossible to visit places which people have not traveled to 'imaginatively' at some time. By understanding the visuality of a destination through visual media, tourists can organize the experience to identify what to see and what is worth seeing (Robinson, 2012; Berger, 1972; Boorstin in Wang, 1999). It is clearly seen that through mediation, people can gather and use information from various sources to develop a perception of the destination (Robinson, 2012). The mediation process of tourist has become more depending on how people capture and tell a story about a destination. By framing the destination through camera lenses, the tourist gaze can have more power to commodifying the landscape and local culture. As the result of technology, the e-mediated gaze creates further chance of interpretation on a destination image, depending on the people who stand behind the camera (Robinson, 2012).

One of the famous sources of e-mediated gaze is through the film. Film is believed as an influential media in the processes of producing and reproducing images and imaginaries. In the process of producing images, films are usually framing and oversimplifying the reality that create a pseudo-reality about destination images on the audiences' mind (Featherstone, 2007). The film tourist, who can also be synonymies as symbolic pilgrimage (Roesch, 2009), is who willing to travel to the actual place where the film recorded, to escape his or her everyday life and

experiencing the symbolical experience as presented in film. The more the tourist engage with the experience on the location, the more satisfaction is perceived (Basanez, 2011). According to Beeton (2005), film-induced tourism can be defined as “the visitation to sites where movies and TV programs have been filmed.”

#### 2.1.2. Place images

As one of the most influential media in tourism promotion, the film has also played a significant role in destination marketing through the cinematic images and the storyline that can influence tourists’ travel decision-making. Holcomb (1993) argued that the main aim of place (or destination) marketing as the core of tourism strategy is either to impose the existing image to the potential tourist’s mind or developing a new image to minimize the current negative images. In this matter, visual media play as the most potent force in term of image-creator (Beeton, 2016). Those cinematic images generate further business opportunity for the communities who live in the area. As the increasing of information-based economies within many destinations, the communities transform themselves from selling goods and services commodify the local value to trade their places as products (Kotler et al., 1993). Those places must be strategically designed and marketed, otherwise, the communities have to face the risk of economic decline. By having good destination or place marketing strategies, the area could increase its economic and social development to promote business investment and visitation (Nielsen, 2001; Hall & Jenkins, 1995).

The actual conception of destination’s image is an intrinsic, often unconscious, and not always under the control of the DMOs (Ritchie & Crouch, 2003; Bellini et al., 2010). The image of a place that consists in a place branding has two different representation of a place, either reflects the actual identity of the area or as a ‘product’ of conscious manipulation (Bellini et al., 2010). An image that represents the real identity of a place shows the emotional and rational images produced either by individual or group of actors. This kind of image shows a high degree of people and place bonding through the existence of stereotypes, labels, and myths based on social, economic and historical characteristics narration of the area. As the opposite of the first type of place image, Bellini et al. (2010) explain that an image of a place also can be sourced from a conscious manipulation by taking the current need of the local people into consideration.

Through this particular image, instead of presenting image built from local value, it more expresses the desirable vision that the communities are committed (Hospers, 2006).

Furthermore, due to the attempt to expand the market target of a destination, a competition between images is often happening to control the representation of the story of the area as well as the policy agenda (Bellini et al., 2010). To create a coherence image of the destination, a destination image management is needed. The process of managing images which later being explained by Bellini (2004) is a political process with significant impact in supporting and shaping the scenario by taking into account both perceptions and expectations for innovation and economic policies. As destination moves into the 'new economy' by putting forward collaboration work within actors, destination marketing is now must undertake by local trade, tourism associations and individual operators as well as the government-based DMOs (Bellini et al., 2010).

Since tourist places are not given or fixed, therefore they can appear and disappear, change meaning and character, or move according to how they are produced and reproduced in media cultures (Shields, 1990; Coleman & Crang, 2002; Bærenholdt et al., 2004). In the case of maintaining the image of film tourism destination and widening the tourism economic benefits, a contestation of the concept of image could arise within each tourism actors, either local tourism entrepreneur, tourism associations, individual or large operators, and government-based DMOs. Such debates as creating attraction or maintaining the present assets and the top-down or bottom-up process of meaning and identity creation of a place also could occur behind the phenomena of film tourism.

### 2.1.3. Place identity

In general, place identities acquired through internal attributes and local knowledge such and as historical political, religious and cultural discourses that have shared relationships within the locals (Mayes, 2008; Govers & Go, 2009). The sense of identity, either constructed or inherent, is usually connected to land (Mazlish, 1993; Clayton & Opatow, 2003). Therefore Proshansky et al. (1983) defined place identity as a 'substructure of self-identity' which consists of the knowledge of the physical world. They also stressed the importance of other people in shaping the identities of a place which allow this knowledge to continually evolving through 'selective engagement with



the environment.’ Kalandides (2011) also added that places are full of internal conflicts. Therefore they do not have single fixed identities and not a static construct. By having single identities, the inside of the place will be separated by boundaries from the outside (Massey, 1994).

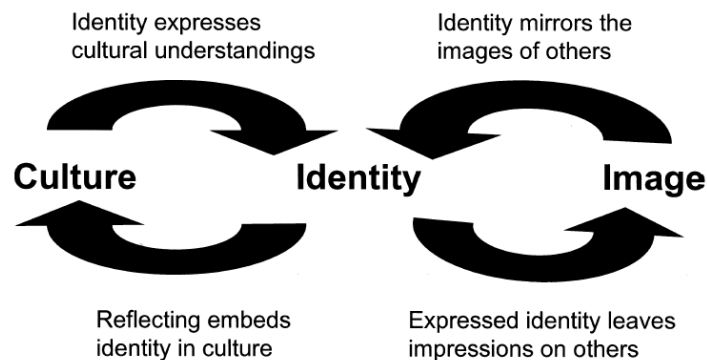


Figure 2.1. The dynamics of organizational identity (Hatch & Schultz, 2002)

Subsequently, Hatch & Schultz (2002) have created a model called 'the dynamics of organizational identity' that explain the dynamic process of place identity formation consists of four sub-processes that take place simultaneously. There are three elements that mentioned and interplayed each other in the model: culture, identity, and image. The definition of identity by Hatch and Schultz is contradictive with the previous definition which stressing about the internalities of a place. They argued that identity is made from the interaction of internal and external views. Furthermore, they also define culture as 'the context of internal definitions of identity' while 'image is the site of external definitions of identity' and 'how these two definitions influence each other is the process of identity.'

The interplay between culture, image, and identity results in four sub-processes. The process of expressing shows that either the identity expresses cultural values or the culture expresses itself through identity formation, therefore, identity is also embedded with cultural values which can be seen in the process of impressing. In the process of impressing, identity that was expressed is believed to leaves impressions on the other. In the process of mirroring, identity mirrors the images from the others (Hatch and Schultz, 2002).

In relation with place identity, place culture, which is experienced and created by the local people of a place, provides an internalities context that is collectively owned, shaped and contained meanings (Kavaratzis & Hatch, 2013; Aitken & Campelo, 2011). However, the interpretation of culture as the production and consumption of entertainment experience (Ashworth, 2005) has occurred since 'the local' has been sought after and articulated both by tourists and industry practitioners (Hultman & Hall, 2012). This kind of interpretation is regarded as simplifying and de-contextualizing the complex meaning of culture. However, this is often used in place branding to hide the politics of place (Kavaratzis & Hatch, 2013; Nyseth & Viken, 2009).

Film, especially the one that is commercially successful, can help establish such an identity and provide a platform to attract the tourists to visit a destination (Bolan and Williams, 2007) because film locations are the prime tool in helping people to connect and create place-identity since a person's sense of identity is frequently linked to land (Mazlish, 1993; Clayton & Opotow, 2003). The desire which created from movies creates a shared pattern of meanings within the community (Jewell & McKinnon, 2008). If a brand is not based on the identity of the place, then it can only create an alienated brand of a place, especially to the residents (Houghton & Stevens, 2010; Therkelsen et al., 2010). Govers & Go (2009) stated that the core of place branding is the connection between identity, experience, and image, therefore portraying a unique identity is crucial for destinations (Morgan et al., 2003), considering that places are not fixed but correlated to multiple tourist gazes (Urry & Larsen, 2011).

## 2.3 Placemaking

### 2.2.1. Definition

Arefi (2014) argued that placemaking is contingent, complex, multilayered and contested. Placemaking is complicated because it focuses on socio-spatial relationships on how people recognize, define, and create the places they often call home (Pierce et al., 2011; Lew, 2017). Moreover, because the socio-spatial relationships consist of meaning based on people's identities, attitudes, perception, and aspirations (Arefi, 2014), therefore, placemaking is also contested. Heitmann (2010) also added that placemaking is complicated because it is ranging

from the organic or unplanned actions of individuals as planned by governments. The organic movement of placemaking is usually associated with bottom-up and local initiatives such as the recognition or naming of place (Light, 2014). On the contrary, planned placemaking is generally from a top-down action and contains a high number of modern elements and marketing influences (Lew, 2017).

The interpretations of placemaking also can be categorized into three groups: physical, social, and political (Arefi, 2014). Physical placemaking tends to emphasize place-building and place-marketing (Ashworth & Voogd, 1990; Page & Hardyman, 1996; Hall & Hubbard, 1998; Teedon, 2001). This category sees the ways physical design strategies and initiatives help redefine the image (Selby & Morgan, 1996) and transfer a place with incoherent character into more cultural representative consumption. Social placemaking sees the linkages between the physical, social aspects of placemaking. Arefi (2014) explained that this category often examined the role of the experts and social groups separately. This because the distinction of who should be responsible for placemaking is considered significant. At last, the political interpretation sees placemaking as 'a set of place frames' (Martin, 2000; 2003; Robinson, 2001) which mediate the physical condition and the daily life experience of the local people. This category also tends to integrate placemaking with local politics and social activism by uniting and motivating local people to do collective action.

Related with tourist attractiveness of a place, especially in film destinations, placemaking is something that needs to be considered. Through understanding film tourism phenomena as a practice of placemaking, it offers further understanding about the construction of film tourism destination and place identities which emerged as place transformation process (Benjamin et al., 2012). The contestation of the meaning of place between the actual local value and the promotional message brought by destination branding is arguably arisen within the phenomena of film tourism. This because the destination branding often more focuses to fulfill what tourist want based on the iconic scenes on the film instead of representing the actual local value of the destination.

### 2.2.2. Placemaking paradigm

What is the importance of placemaking nowadays? Some researcher argue that placemaking can be a way to protect local identity and meaning, to prevent globalization on threatening localities, the rise of “placelessness” (Relph, 1976), and "nowhereness" (Kunstler, 1993). On the other hand, others view placemaking as a critique of the regularization and standardization of place (Ben-Joseph & Szold, 2005). To prevent the rise of alienated feeling from the local's perspective of their area, an understanding of what motivates a placemaking action is needed. Arefi (2014) distinguished three types of placemaking paradigm/approach: need-based, opportunity-based, and asset-based. The main difference between those three paradigms are the reason on why placemaking is needed, who is responsible for conducting it, and what kind of contestation that arises within the action of the particular approach. The need-based approach views placemaking as a response to people’s present and future needs. This government-led placemaking typically use standardized measurement on their way to fulfill the resident’s need. The contestation between preservation and redevelopment of a place often arise within the application of this approach. The second placemaking approach is the opportunity-based approach. Unlike the previous approach that focused on fulfilling the need of the residents based on standardized measurement, this approach is more responding to tangible shortcomings and also tends to capitalize the strong point of a place. In the opportunity-based approach, legalizing and rebuilding discourses are mainly contested. The last approach, asset-based approach, is reflecting the willingness of a community to invest their potentials. What makes this approach different than the others is the more subjective and intangible value that taken into account in the process of placemaking. However, the definition of an asset in one community may differ than the other community. The discourse between affordability and marketability is often contested within this approach.

After going through those three placemaking paradigms, several questions arise about who has an authority to do a good placemaking, how to do it, and which “standard” must be followed. In the case of film tourism, Bandyopadhyay and Nascimento (2010) explained that film destinations as the representation of the pseudo-reality created by e-mediated gaze through film could affect how people and places of destinations consumed by tourists. This is because tourist does not

only interpret the image transmitted from the film, but also take part on creating new meaning through ongoing interactions and performances with other tourists, guides, discourses, buildings, and objects (Urry & Larsen, 2011).

Since a place always been viewed from various perspectives in which there will be difference between how tourists and locals see a place (Urry and Larsen, 2011). An ambiguity and tension can arise from the contestation between the “real” or actual place lives up to the “reel” or imagined place as created through film (Beeton 2001). It is because the marketing and development of film tourism can potentially marginalize some types of travelers or some members of the resident community. Therefore it is worth to understand how people construct, control, and even debate the blurring of real and reel places (Benjamin et al., 2012). As particular physical environment does not produce a tourist place itself, they are economical, politically and culturally constructed through networked mobilities of capital, persons, objects, signs, and information (Urry & Larsen, 2011). Therefore, film-induced tourism development can lead not only to the creation of new place associations but also the loss of old ones (Benjamin et al., 2012) if the destination brand that has been popularized by the DMO could not deliver the actual local value of the local communities.

#### 2.4. The politics of place

Place is often described as local and unique. At the same time, the place is also continuously contextualized to broader physical and social landscapes through social and political processes to define and make it specific (Agnew, 1987; Entrikin, 1990; Relph, 1976; Tuan, 1977, Martin, 2003; Merrifield, 1993). On the other hand, the place is also a “discursive-material formation” because the representation of place is both enables and directs the activities that actively shape the landscape (Davis, 2005). Thus, politics of placemaking are the key to understand how communities conceptualize and motivate their reactions to socio-spatial re-ordering the environment by focusing on local values of a place that can motivate activism (Bradford, 2004; Martin, 2003, 2004; Paasi, 2003, Elwood, 2006).

The processes through which places are negotiated is being explored within the politics of place through representation. There are two distinctions of place representation that is explained by

Lefebvre (1991): 'representations of space' and 'representational space.' Representation is usually built by planners or social engineers and often conceptualized regarding policies in a bureaucratic manner. On the other hand, representational is dealing with the inhabitants of a place and its particularities.

#### 2.4.1. Representation of space

##### 2.4.1.1. *Place branding*

The term place branding and place marketing indeed have a blurred distinction. Some authors argue that branding is the general strategic guideline for marketing (Hankinson, 2010; Kavaratzis, 2004), while other authors argue that branding is a part of place marketing tools series. (Braun, 2008; Kotler et al., 1993). The process of place branding is originated from the local conditions of a place. The place branding formulation process depends on the complexity of the place itself, even though the common major steps are similar with other places, the actual implementation is different one place with another (Ashworth & Voogd, 1990; Kavaratzis, 2008). Kavaratzis (2009) also explain his opinion of place branding process which starts from the formulation of a vision for the place that should open for dialogue for all potential stakeholders. Subsequently, this is followed by relevant actions which related with more infrastructural projects, landscape interventions, and incentives for several stakeholders. The last step has communicated these actions.

A place brand is formed in consumers' minds (Zenker & Braun, 2010) which consist of a multitude of associations that not always aligned but also can be conflicting (Braun, 2008). A brand is embodied both in direct and indirect actions and objects that constitute with the creation of the brand of a place such as the aims, values, and general culture (Zenker & Braun, 2010; Kavaratzis, 2004). Other points that considered as important aspects of place brand are a stakeholder and the design of the place (Hanna & Rowley, 2011; Houghton & Stevens, 2010).

As film becomes the main mass media outlet and has been particularly effective in affecting tourism from early 20th century (Beeton, 2015), tourism organizations around the world quickly

realized the potential of popular 'film geographies' which enables them to invent new destinations or inscribe old destinations with new imaginative geographies or place myths (Urry & Larsen, 2011). Researchers also found out that one of the characters of the film is that it can be used as a tool in destination marketing and place image formation and alteration (Hudson & Ritchie, 2006; O'Connor et al., 2010) because images and perceptions of destination do not change quickly. Therefore it can be used few more years to support the use of the imagery (Uysal, Chen, & Williams, 2000).

However, place branding is no longer in the hands of the tourism industries because tourists are now also taking part in that place-making and experience evaluating process (Urry & Larsen, 2011) and creating conscious manipulation image that shows vision desirably rather than based on local value (Hospers, 2006). Therefore, a promotional remaking of place can just as easily marginalize the cultural identities and livelihoods of other groups, especially those with a history of limited social power or say in the community (Benjamin et al., 2012) if the tourism stakeholders only focusing on fulfilling the need of the tourists without any intention to preserve or maintain the current culture or identity. Some researchers offer a strategic use of place branding techniques (Kotler & Gertner 2002; Anholt 2005) to prevent cultural identities marginalizing by reframing the image of the destination and local values that can strengthen both senses of pride and identity among the residents (Gilmore, 2002).

#### 2.4.2. Representational space

##### 2.4.2.1. *Place attachment*

Place attachment relates with the affective bond or connection between people and particular places as a form of interplay between affects and emotions, knowledge and beliefs, and behavior and actions (Hidalgo & Hernandez, 2001; Prohansky et al., 1983). This means that place attachment is closely related to the local particularities of a place that is embedded within its residents. Rapoport (1977) explained that environmental perception is indeed influenced by culture, belief, and experience.

The connection between people and place can be positive or negative, depending on the one's experience in place (Manzo, 2005). Nevertheless, the most basic form of the place attachment main characteristic is the desire to maintain closeness to the object of attachment (Hidalgo &

Hernandez, 2001). The level of residents' attachment can influence their perceptions of the effect of social phenomena and developmental agenda that happens in a place. Regarding tourism, the attachment level of residents has opposite relationship with their positive attitudes toward further tourism developments (Allen et al., 1988; Lankford, 1994; Liu & Var, 1986). Residents also tend to be more sensitive and concerned about social and environmental negative effects of film tourism that could disrupt the social, physical and environmental characteristics within their communities because of the massive film tourists arrival (Beeton, 2001; Mordue, 2001).

The understanding of place attachment is important to sustain the attraction and avoid losing the meaning of places to the inhabitants that could impact their continued attachment. Thus, place attachment needs to be considered as one of the criteria in placemaking process where community attachment is regarded as the collective value of a place that demands respect (Ujang & Zakariya, 2015).

## 2.5. Film tourism sustainability

The concept of sustainability is often used to promoting environmentally responsible tourism behavior. However, this concept also concerned with social dimensions of tourism by minimizing the inequalities and tensions that have traditionally characterized the tourism industry (Benjamin et al., 2012). Sustainable tourism planning can and should bring historically divided groups together, address ingrained racial disparities, and facilitate minority empowerment and civil rights (Barton & Leonard 2010). Moreover, sustainable tourism is should also sensitive to the impact of tourism on people's identification with the place (Benjamin et al., 2012). The sense of place affects one's sense of belonging to a destination, which can impact local support for tourism as well as participation in the wider cultural life of communities. Belonging, according to Antonsich (2010), is related to the discourses and practices of socio-spatial inclusion and exclusion, a means of defining membership to a group and ownership of a place.



### 2.5.1. Place branding based on place identity

Place branding should be understood the way place identity also did through a process of dialogue between stakeholders. The core of a brand is the culture and the people who live in certain place and create it, therefore brands have an integrative role in relation to place (Aitken & Campelo, 2011). However, this perspective has been critically commented by some researchers who argue that while including the value of place identity, place branding still using a static view of identity which put place identity as the outcome of a process of decision making where somebody can determine what identity is a place must have (Mayes, 2008; Kavartzis & Hatch, 2013). This simplification of a complex process of place identity formation also can be described as 'mass identities of places' where the identity of a place arrangement come from opinion-makers, communicated through the mass media and advertising instead developing from communal and individual experience (Relph, 1976). He added that mass identities are superficial identities of place because they force another identity that destroys the locality as the base of place identity.

The current trend in branding approach is by taking into account the internal audiences and discuss the process with stakeholders which related (Ind & Bjerke, 2007; Hatch & Schultz, 2008, 2009). This current trend, which called participatory branding approach, emphasizes the idea of brand co-creation which focus on branding formation through co-created communication with various people who related with the aim of the brand formation itself. Aitken and Campelo (2011) further explain that the interaction of multiple perspectives, from both internal and external sides, on the place image will generate new meanings for the brand, therefore, a brand should be open and fluid. Kavartzis (2009) also explain his opinion of place branding process which starts from the formulation of a vision for the place that also open for dialogue for all potential stakeholders. Subsequently, this is followed by relevant actions which related with more infrastructural projects, landscape interventions, and incentives for several stakeholders. The last step is communicated these actions. At this point, two things that have been highlighted as important aspects of the process of place branding are the utilization of particular place identity and the involvement relevant stakeholders.

Based on the elaboration on the importance of deriving a place brand from the identity, it can be seen as the initial step to gain film tourism sustainability, considering the term sustainable tourism itself is concerned on social dimensions of tourism and minimizing the inequalities and tensions that have traditionally characterized the tourism industry (Benjamin et al., 2012). Film tourism promotion is more than being a marketing tool and represents a significant and consequential force in reshaping place identity and its material, social, and symbolic components. It is politically consequential in the sense that it gives visibility and legitimacy to certain senses of place and belonging to others (Benjamin et al., 2012).

### 2.5.2 Film tourism stakeholder collaboration

To maintain the trend of the film which also affecting tourist flow, the tourism and film stakeholder should work collaboratively to promote the destination tourism and develop marketing strategies to differentiate their product effectively (Macionis & O'Connor, 2011). The discrepancy of value and the lacking of collaboration within various stakeholder in the destination will lead to an unsustainable tourism atmosphere. This argument is supported in the general sustainable tourism literature where in order to achieve tourism sustainability, the tourism industry must closely integrate and collaborate with all of the other activities and stakeholders in the destination (McKercher, 1993; Macionis & O'Connor, 2011).

Transforming film location into successful film tourism destination requires proactive regulation, planning, and assistance (Beeton, 2008; Buchmann, 2010; Kim & O'Connor, 2011). Therefore, it is necessary for the regional and local government to emphasize film tourism planning and development that need to be initiated before, during and after film production (Kim et al., 2017). To implement it, a collaboration within film tourism stakeholder needs to be done. According to Heitmann (2010), the key stakeholders in film tourism that have to be taken into account are the destination management organization (DMOs), local communities, tourists, tourism businesses and the film industry. She also highlighted the central role of DMOs in sustainable film tourism in the management of relationships between stakeholders and marketing and promoting the destination.

The key of successful stakeholder collaboration to create sustainable film tourism destination is to have a full appreciation of all the groups who involve in the tourism industry, in all level of interest or power held, within the destination in every process and services (Sautter & Leisen, 1999). However, the inclusion and participation of local communities within film tourism planning currently becomes a concern because tourists often come to see famous sites and ignore the communities who live in that area (Beeton, 2005). According to Campelo et al. (2014), local people are frequently excluded in the destination branding process which leads to oversimplifying the understanding of the nature of a place's identity and fail to recognize the core elements that follow the character of the place. Reacting to this, Kim et al. (2017) suggested that media production companies and local government should consider the social responsibilities toward local communities that included within the film. To do so, they should actively work together with the host communities who do not always understand the effect of film tourism phenomenon within their area. Community involvement in the creation of film tourism destination will also put a stronger meaning to the carried destination branding.

## 2.6. Conceptual framework

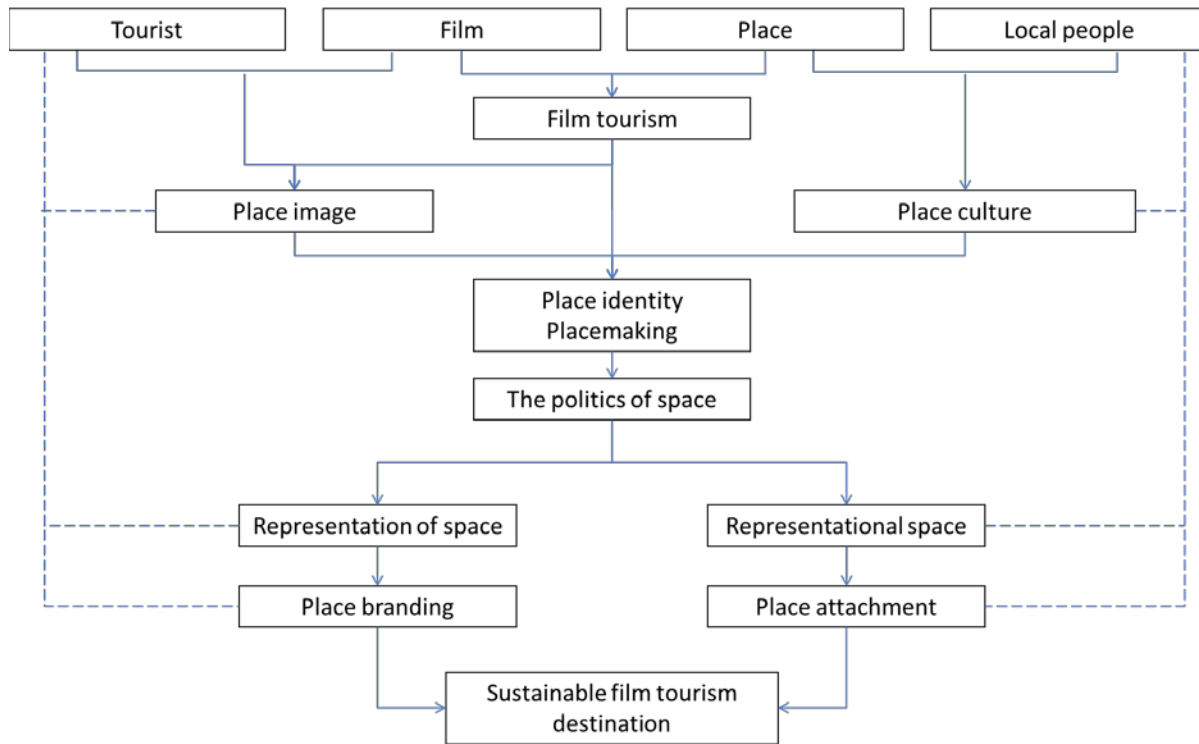


Figure 2.2. Conceptual framework scheme

Based on the elaboration of various concepts that comprise the way of thinking of this research, a conceptual framework is built. Film is believed as the most powerful media in tourism promotion through its cinematic images and storyline that can influence tourists' travel decision-making. The film also influences the establishment of film tourism destination and "the visitation to sites where movies and TV programs have been filmed" is the definition of film-induced tourism by Beeton (2005). Considering the powerful force of the film as image-creator (Beeton, 2016), many researchers agree that film tourism can be used as a tool in destination marketing and place image formation and alteration (Hudson and Ritchie 2006; O'Connor et al. 2010).

A certain kind of place image could occur based on the cinematic images or specific storyline framed through a film that is commercially produced. However, since a place could consist a lot of meanings, perspectives are mattered when it comes to a discussion of a place. On the contrary of place image, an internalities context is experienced and created by the local people of a place within place culture (Kavaratzis and Hatch, 2013). The interplay process between place image and place culture produces the identity of a place (Hatch and Schultz, 2002).

Within the production of place identity, the expressed identity that leaves impressions on others is not always reciprocal with an expression of cultural understanding. In the relation with tourism, Urry and Larsen (2011) wrote that the tourist is now also taking part in placemaking and experience evaluation process. In this sense, film tourism imaginary as a place image that occurred in the perspective of the audience, could be accepted by the local people of the destination as the identity of their place, similar to what was on the research by Beeton (2016) about the case of Sea Change film in Barwon Heads, Australia.

The contestation between place image, place culture, and place identity of a destination is caused by the complexity of destination placemaking itself that focuses on socio-spatial relationships on how people recognize, define, and create the places they often call home (Pierce et al., 2011; Lew, 2017). In other words, the socio-spatial relationships of placemaking are focused on the meaning of a place based on people's identities, attitudes, perception, and aspirations (Arefi, 2014). There are three types of placemaking paradigm that distinguish the reason on why placemaking is needed, who is responsible for conducting it, and what kind of contestation that arise within the action of the particular approach: need-based, opportunity-based, and asset-based (Arefi, 2014).

The understanding of the politics of placemaking help to understand how communities conceptualize and motivate their reactions to the socio-spatial re-ordering of the environment (Bradford 2004; Martin 2003 2004; Paasi 2003). In this sense, an understanding about the distinction between 'representations of space' and 'representational space' explained by Lefebvre (1991) need to be done. He explained that representation of space is the product of a space that is designed by planners and social engineers and conceptualized as policies within a managerial and bureaucratic manner. The production and representation of place through tourism is a co-constructed process shaped by visitors and promoters (Buzinde et al., 2010). A place branding is created based on the connection between identity, experience, and image (Govers & Go, 2009). However, tourists do not simply consume the image that a film destination offer but actively participate in making the transformation socially important and personally meaningful through the bodily enactment and actualization of place identity (Benjamin et al., 2010). Therefore, if a brand is not based on the identity of the place, then it can only create an

alienated brand of a place, especially to the residents (Houghton & Stevens, 2010; Therkelsen et al., 2010).

On the other hand, representational is taken into account the perception of the users and the inhabitants as well as its focus on identity and local history of a place. Within the representational, place attachment considered important because it shows the effective connection between people or individuals and places (Hidalgo and Hernandez, 2001) that indicate the interplay between effects and emotions, knowledge and beliefs, and behaviors and actions (Prohansky et al., 1983). The consideration of internal attributes and local knowledge such as historical, political, religious and cultural discourses that have shared relationships within the locals in representational can lead to place identities acquisition (Mayes, 2008; Govers and Go, 2009).

Film tourism is more than being a marketing tool, represent a significant force in reshaping place identity and creating place brand with its material, social and symbolic components, but also it rises certain senses of place and belonging over others (Benjamin et al., 2012). However, the inclusion and participation of local communities within film tourism planning currently becomes a concern because tourists often come to see famous sites and ignore the communities who live in that area (Beeton, 2005). Accordingly, the core of place branding should be the culture and the residents of the place because the interaction between internal and external sides on the place image will generate new meanings for the place brand (Aitken and Campelo, 2011).

A transformation from film location to successful and sustainable film tourism destination needs proactive regulation, planning and assistance (Beeton, 2008; Buchmann, 2010; Kim & O'Connor, 2011) which consequently require stakeholder collaboration of all groups who involve in the tourism industry (Sautter and Leisen, 1999). Thus, it is important for local government to recognize that film tourism planning and development programs need to be initiated before, during, and after film production by seeking the participation of many film stakeholders such as filmmakers, tour operators, destination marketers, and local communities (Beeton, 2008; Buchmann, 2010; Heitmann, 2010).

### 3. Methodology

This chapter gives an overview of how the study will be conducted in which empirical data will be used to answer the research questions from a qualitative standpoint. Qualitative research methods were used to gather information through in-depth interviews with the tourism workers which include tour operator, tour guide, tourism village communities and tourism service providers such as a driver, souvenir seller, homestay owner, and ship owner, around the film tourism sites and management and staff of film tourism sites and attractions. Besides that, in-depth interviews were also conducted with the tourism board of the two districts of Belitung Island: Belitung and East Belitung as the government-based DMOs.

#### 3.1. Research approach

The methodology used for this study is interpretivist approach. According to Henning (2004), interpretivist studies are concerned with meaning and explore people's perspective on understanding given situations with a descriptive analysis as the final product. Such approach is appropriate with the aim of this research which is to understand the dynamic of placemaking process within the construction of film tourism destination and place identity in Belitung island. With a focus on the inhabitants' perspective of how a place being interpreted and represented through film tourism, meanings, and position within the respondents are considered important in this research as meanings are not fixed or stable but revised on the basis of experience (Gray, 2013).

According to interpretivist approach, the reality can be understood only through social construction such as language, consciousness and shared meanings (Klein & Myers, 1999). In this sense, the interpretive study must consider the relationship between researcher and what is being explored, and possible constraints in the situation that shaping this process (Rowlands, 2005). Therefore, interpretive studies are often inductive and associated with qualitative methods because it allows the participants to talk freely and offer nuances that cannot be captured through quantitative research (Boeije, 2010).

### 3.2. Research methods

The focus of this research is to explain the use of film tourism as destination branding as well as the impact of film tourism phenomena and placemaking practice within the residents' perspective. Considering the purpose of this research to understand/explain social phenomena in relation to film tourism and place meaning and representation contestation, qualitative research needs to be chose as a research method. This type of method allows the researcher to attain descriptive information for the respondents, to interpret their reality and make sense out of their experiences. It is the experiences of the respondents that are explained by existing theory and in which reality is embedded.

To be able to explain the dynamic that is happening in the location, as mentioned in previous chapter, this research attempt to answer two research questions:

1. How film tourism is being used as a destination branding of Belitung Island?
2. How Belitung people's view on film tourism and placemaking practices that underlie the remaking of Belitung Island into *Negeri Laskar Pelangi* (The Land of Rainbow Troops)?

The purpose of this research is to understand the effect of film tourism from the perspective of the people who live in the destination: the workers who encounter the tourist or the local government who work as DMO. Each of participant groups has a different perspective as well as a way of thinking and communicate. In this matter interview is an important tool to be used as a tool to collect insightful opinions and stories from the participants, because the narratives provide lived experiences of people (Seidman, 2013).

### 3.3. Data generation and sources

#### 3.3.1. Research sampling

The sample of my research is determined using two kinds of sampling method: snowball and purposive sampling. The sampling is selected according to the key stakeholders that must be considered in film tourism industry which explained by Heitmann (2010). She explained that actors that need to be considered in film tourism studies are the destination management organization (DMOs), the local community, tourists, tourism businesses and the



film industry. There are two kinds of stakeholder that need to be selected with different sampling method in this study to explain the dynamic of film tourism destination placemaking and place branding: local government as the DMO, local tourism workers, and tourism village management as a representation of local communities. Snowball sampling is employed in a search for interviewees from local tourism workers and tourism management. In the other side, purposive sampling used to determine the interviewees from local government. Twenty-six people have participated in the interview for this research (see Appendix 1). The majority of the respondents are working as tourism workers with various background and profession. Six people out of twenty were interviewed to represent the view from the local government.

Snowball sampling or networking method, is usually carried out by asking the initial number of participants for the names of others who are subsequently approached (Boeije, 2010). There was not much information available about tourism-related types of job that exist in Belitung. Therefore, the interviewees who work in that specific profession was chosen during the visitation of the destinations, after the initial interview and get an overview of various job that is closely related to tourism destination. The interviewees consisted of tourism workers such as tour guides, driver, souvenir seller, homestay owner, boat owner and people who work in a tourist village.

The second sampling method is purposive sampling or purposeful selection. According to this sampling method, the prospect interviewees are intentionally selected according to the needs of the study, because they can tell a lot about the issues and information that important to the research (Boeije, 2010; Coyne, 1997). In this research, the purposive sampling method is being done to select interviewees from local government in both districts, Belitung and East Belitung, as a representation of the DMO in Belitung Island. Having a view from DMOs is important for this research because they play a central role in sustainable film tourism development because they have certain marketing and promotion power of a destination (Heitmann, 2010). The role of DMO in Indonesia is generally being taken over by the government. There is hierarchical order in governmental level which can be used to determine the relatable person or position within the institution to be interviewed to enrich the information needed for this research.

### 3.3.2. Data collection

The data collection of this research is mainly obtained from the interview. There are two data collection methods that will be employed in this research: in-depth interview and participant observation. In-depth interviews aimed to obtain a more detailed, rich understanding of the topic of interest from the interviewee. They usually complemented with participant observation. In in-depth interviews, the participant's experience, behavior, feelings, and attitudes are probed deeply to identify underlying concepts that the researcher analyses to generate a theory surrounding the research topic. The researcher did not reveal all the exact details of the research hypothesis when conducting in-depth interviews, as this may influence or "lead" the qualitative material obtained and create an "anticipated" response from the participants. Only the general area of interest is explained to the participant as part of recruitment and consent, and the researcher directs the interview according to the responses.

A deeper understanding of the actual situation that is happening on the island is needed to complete the main information from the interview. Through conducting participant observation, the researcher can be able to detect meanings, feelings, and experiences (Boeije, 2010). Spradley in Boeije (2010) also added that there are three elements can be distinguished through participant observation: cultural behavior, cultural knowledge and opinions and cultural artifacts. Participant observation is useful in this research specifically to understand how the local tourism workers express their feeling through stories about their life within the tourism industry and how they perceive the movie *Laskar Pelangi*. This practice also helps to determine another related participant, since the snowball sampling method will be carried out in this phase.

### 3.3.3. Conducting the interview

By using semi-structured interview questions to answer the research questions, two interview guides have been created: for the workers and the government (see Appendix 2). The distinction of interview guide is aimed to cover different perspective from different participant groups. Both parts start with an introduction to inform the participant and some introductory question about the tourism destination within the island.

In an interview guide for the workers, questions on work experiences in tourism and personal perspective about the film were asked. Besides, the interview guide for the government is focusing on questions about tourism policies and development planning. A pilot interview was performed to learn if questions were understood and if these questions answered the research questions. This gives more security in attaining useful results.

The questions that were posed during the interview are open-ended questions, to avoid yes/no or rehearsed answers. Due to the long story that expected from the interviewees, the interview will be conducted within 60-90 minutes to avoid tiredness of both the interviewer and the interviewees. As the researcher tried to adopt the perspective of the participants, a further observation related with intonation, expression, and behavior of the interviewees also being done. It is because the purpose of semi-structured interviewing is not to test hypotheses (Boeije, 2010), but at the root of semi-structured interviewing is an interest in understanding the experiences of other people and the meanings they make of that experience (Cresswell, 2007). After conducting several interviews, the results were analyzed and checked if it yielded the useful and new results. During every interview, it was tried to use the same strategy to attain similar results. Open questions were asked for the respondent to speak freely of the experiences. The manner of asking the question, nonverbal expressions, and response were considered to influence the interviewee as less as possible. It was important to stay neutral and not judge the answers to create an atmosphere where the interviewee feels comfortable to tell her/his story.

#### 3.4. Data analysis

To answer the research question, this research will employ a qualitative analysis based on a study case. At the end of the analysis, both analysis from the workers and the government will be combined and compared to explain the dynamic that is happening within the destination. The sustainable discourse will also be brought as the output of the analysis to examine current relevancy of film tourism phenomena and future development possibility of the destination.

Boeije (2010) explained that qualitative analysis is the act of segmenting data into relevant categories and naming the categories with codes while simultaneously generating the categories

from the data. Theoretical understanding of the case will be generated through the categories reassembling phase. In general, qualitative analysis can be carried out through three strategies: categorizing, connecting, and memos and displays (Maxwell, 2005). The main strategy of categorizing is coding. The goal of coding is to “fracture” (Strauss, 1987) the data and rearrange it into categories that facilitate comparison between things in the same category and between category (Maxwell, 2005).

However, before raw data can be categorized, they must be adequately and systematically managed, and the first step of data management is data transcribing. The data from each interviewee is transcribed separately using transcription tool named ATLAS.ti software to create quotations based on the interview recording. All the transcription is in Bahasa Indonesia because the interviews were all in Bahasa Indonesia.

Using the result from ATLAS.ti, open coding will be conducted to contribute to further different techniques of coding. In this part, the quotes will be breaking down into few parts to examine the relations and find the similarities and differences by giving them labels or codes. From this point, categorizing strategy can be started through data segmenting. Segmenting the quotes into a group based on their common values of properties based on the stories from the respondents. The groups are being labeled differently from the previous label and code to avoid confusion on further analysis. On data segmenting, sub-groups from the previous codes can also create and related them to several categories. From the data analysis, some proper themes were derived that served as the basis for the results section. Useful sections were translated into English.

### 3.5. Considerations

As in any other study, I also faced some limitations because social reality is difficult to capture accurately due to the fact that different people come from different background, therefore their perceptions are molded differently. Not only because different persons tell different stories, but over an entire interview, it is often exceedingly difficult to reconstruct or summarize the views of one respondent. This study was also subjected to several practical limitations as well.

First, the majority of the respondents gave their feedbacks in Bahasa Indonesia which often mixed with Belitung traditional language. For some people, especially with a thick accent, it is hard to understand what they meant during the interviews. Hence, during the process of translating and transcribing, there is a chance that I may have misinterpreted their meanings even though the session was tape-recorded. This is crucial because translating and transcribing texts from the original source could never produce original meanings and intention.

Besides, I find that the validity and reliability of the data collected from the fieldwork could be doubtful due to the lack of trust between the researcher and the respondents. As an academician and also an Indonesian, my judgment on the subject could be potentially biased because I might not realize that I indirectly lead the interviewees to give false perception or response about film tourism, consider not everybody understands the term film tourism.

Due to time constraints, I only had a month to conduct the fieldwork in Belitung island. Thus, this prevented me from repeating interviews or undertake additional interviews or to approach a large number of people to be interviewed and limited opportunities to build trust with respondents over time. Consequently, the respondents that I have selected might not suffice to represent the entire population of Belitung (regarding job, age, and gender) to get their perceptions of film tourism. A small sample size suggests that data reliability might also low. The total respondents are only 26 which is, at last, I found it is difficult to take another people time without knowing them except if they volunteer to be an interview. Thus, in the interviews, I tended to prod respondents to give more detailed comments and remarks to have a deeper understanding of responses. Additionally, due to this, the interview does not provide an in-depth understanding of an individual's perceptions due to the fact that a respondent does not have enough time to express his/her opinion during the interview session. Also, the unequal gender distribution among the respondents can be explained by the fact that during my fieldwork I mostly got acquainted with the female respondents and they are more willing to be an interviewee because I am a woman.

## 4. The story about Belitung Island

This chapter discusses Belitung Island, in Bangka Belitung Province, Indonesia. It introduces the island's geographical condition along with the demographic characteristics and economic development. Besides, the chapter also deals as well with the history of the island and the story of *Laskar Pelangi* (The Rainbow Troops).

### 4.1 Geography

Belitung Island is one of the main islands in Bangka Belitung Province, Indonesia. Belitung, together with another main island, Bangka, is included in west part of Indonesia, precisely within Sumatra cluster. This province was formed from a regional expansion of South Sumatra in 2000. Belitung Island is located strategically in Karimata Strait, which is one of the most important sea trade routes between Sumatera, Java, and Kalimantan. Belitung has a total area of 26,354.63 km<sup>2</sup> with the land area only covers 20% of the total. The island is separated into two districts: Belitung and East Belitung. The capital of Belitung district is Tanjung Pandan, and the capital of East Belitung district is Manggar.



Figure 4.1. Belitung island map

Belitung also was well-known as the most prominent tin mining area in Indonesia since the Dutch colonization era. As one of the three "Indonesian Tin Islands", the biggest mine deposit is recognized on Belitung, scattered around the whole island and of various dimensions (Sujitno et al., 1981). As is known, the "Klapa Kampit Deep Mine" on Belitung is the only underground mine for primary tin in Indonesia. The geographical location and the geological condition of the island were causing ethnic/tribe mixing within Belitung people. Some ethnicities that can be traced based on fieldwork interviews are Melayu (from Sumatera or Malaysia), Bugis (from Sulawesi), Chinese, Java, and Bali. Before the massive tourism development, Melayu people usually work as tin miners, Bugis people typically work as a fisherman, Chinese people work as traders, and Javanese and Balinese people work as a farmer.

Nowadays, tourism becomes one of the most profitable jobs besides tin mining, according to the interviewees. Therefore, tourism-related jobs have become the main and the side job of most Belitung people. For example, youth working group under 30 years old is usually fully involved in tourism and make it as their primary job. Besides, the older working group between 30-60 years old typically has two kinds of a job; one is related to his/her previous job, one is related to tourism.

There are two tourism theme segmentations that currently seen in Belitung Island, nature-based tourism (specifically beach tourism) and film tourism. Before the development of film tourism, nature-based tourism is the main point of Belitung tourism. Subsequently, the emergence of *Laskar Pelangi* movie lifted the popularization of the island and raised the number of visitor year by year. Belitung district is often related to nature-based tourism, specifically, beach tourism. Some of the renowned destinations in Belitung districts are Tanjung Tinggi Beach, Tanjung Kelayang Beach, and Lengkuas Island. Meanwhile in East Belitung district, where the story of *Laskar Pelangi* came from, is often associated with film tourism. Varies of special interest destination such as the replica of *Sekolah Laskar Pelangi* (The Rainbow Troops' school) and Andrea Hirata's Literary Museum could be found in this district. There is a significant spatial difference between those two districts, regarding tourism support facilities and amenities. Most of the hotels and shops are in Belitung district as well as the only airport on the island. This

leads to tourism income inequality because tourists are most likely to spend more time and money in Belitung district than East Belitung district.



Figure 4.2. Belitung island film tourism destination map

## 4.2 History and economy development

### 4.2.1 Before 1945, During Dutch colonialization

The history of Belitung Island is closely related to tin mining. The Dutch colonialist's first visit to the island to find a source of tin that can be mined was already started from 17<sup>th</sup> century. At the first attempt, Dutch East Indies government was unwilling to looking for a tin source other than Bangka because they cannot handle the excess tin yield.

In 1851, John Loudon, with support from Prince Hendrik of Dutch Royal family, found a source of tin in Belitung. A year after, his team got mining permits for 40 years from Dutch East Indies Government. Loudon's company began to build Billiton Maatschappij and dominate the history



of Belitung by took control of every tin mining in the island for a century until being closed and taken over its assets by Indonesia Government in 1958. We can see the difference between Belitung and Bangka regarding mining management, where a corporation is managing Belitung. Belitung's tin production also can emulate Bangka's production, even though the area is not as wide as Bangka. The productivity of Belitung's workers is also higher than Bangka. Each year, the company has a contribution of 750 thousand guildens to Dutch East Indies government.

The introduction of mining meant more than increased colonial control: by importing Chinese laborers, the Company changed the ethnic composition of the island. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, importing labor from China was an important part of the mining industry which located outside Java. All tin mining workers in Belitung were Hakka Chinese who came from Southern China. Labor importing determined ethnic composition in Belitung. In 1865, there were approximately two thousand Chinese laborers who worked in tin mining around Belitung and increased to four thousand for the next seven years. In 1920, there were almost twenty-nine thousand Chinese which covers almost a half of population in Belitung. Most of them are contract workers. In terms of management, tin mining workers in Belitung were paid only after they finished their work. The amount was depending on their productivity. Every year, they got a chance to join in a working unit, and after three years, if they did not have any debt, they have rights to be repatriated to China with the cost from the company. The company also build a hospital for the workers.

After the first World War, world's tin price plummeted. Together with other tin producer countries, The Netherlands decided to limit their tin production through *Persetujuan Bandung* (Bandung's Consent) 1921-1924. Since 1924, the company's name changed into *NV Gemeenschappelijke Mijnbouwmaatschappij Billiton* or GMB, and its fifth-eighth stocks were owned by Dutch. According to Heidhues, the impact to Belitung's economy was quite dramatic. In 1930, there was a massive demand from more than 5000 ex-tin miners to be sent back to China. Only the crossbreeds who stayed and they started to farm. However, in the late 1930s, world's tin price began to increase and people, including Melayu and other tribes, flocking to work in tin mining again. This situation did not last long because the World War II hampered the

production. On 10th April 1942, Japan took over Belitung. It was a hard time for the tin mining workers. There was no subsidized rice and health care from the company. They lose their job, and most of the people ran into the hinterland and started to farm to fulfill their basic need. In 1943, Japan built an airport in Tanjung Pandan, Belitung.

#### 4.2.2. 1945 - After Indonesia Independence Day

In 18<sup>th</sup> of October 1945, some of the company's representatives landed in Tanjung Pandan, Belitung. According to Heidhues, Belitung was the first area of Indonesia which pulled back to the colonialist without an allied power transfer. The Dutch colonialist then formed several agreements with local rulers of Belitung. They restored the economy by increasing the tin production and created an autonomous administration to counter the influence of the Republic of Indonesia. At that time, the company held a significant role.

#### 4.2.3. 1945-2000

Heidhues called Belitung as "Company Island" because the company also control the electricity, clean water, telephone, hospital, and other public services. It is caused by the character of Belitung people themselves who too dependent on the company in various levels. Therefore, when the company closed by Indonesian Government, those affordable public services also disappear. In 1949, most of the company's stocks were taken over by Indonesian Government, while the rest was owned by *Billiton Mij* in The Netherlands.

In 1958, the company's name changed into *Perusahaan Negara Tambang Timah* (Nation's Company of Tin Mining) or *PN Tambang Timah Belitung*. Several years later, the national government merges the company with *PN Tambang Timah Bangka (Bangka Tin Bedrijft)* and *PN Tambang Timah Singkep (Singkep Tin Exploitatie Maatschappij)* into *PN Tambang Timah*. It was the pioneer of the current tin mining company called *PT Timah* (Tin Company).

The company is no longer dominate Belitung, but tin continues to rule the economy. In 1978, *Unit Pertambangan Timah Belitung*, the Belitung unit of the government tin concern, employed over twelve thousand persons with an estimated forty-one thousand dependents, which together equaled more than one-third of the island's population. When persons in auxiliary

occupations are added, as well as those working in the private concession in Kelapa Kampit, the dominance of tin in the economy is obvious.

Unfortunately for the island, depressed tin prices have led to cutbacks and the transfer of production elsewhere in recent years. Other efforts to diversify the economy-kaolin and ceramics, pepper, lumber, tourism (the island has a beautiful beach near Tanjung Pandan)-have remained on a small scale. A new wrinkle in Belitung is the opening of some transmigration projects in the sparsely settled south of the island. The economic effects of that effort remain to be seen.

Being a Company island brought some benefits-roads, telephones, early health services, education, electricity to many people of Belitung; some benefits remain. Private, capitalist enterprise, with the exception of the Kelapa Kampit concession, came and went. By the time Belitung was no longer a Company island, most of the benefits had been transferred elsewhere.

#### 4.2.4. 2000-2003

Bangka Belitung province was formerly a part of South Sumatra province but became its own province in 2000. Bangka Belitung province was established based on National Constitution no. 27 of 2000 on The Establishment of Bangka Belitung Province on 21 November 2000. Based on the constitution, Bangka Belitung province consisting of Bangka district, Belitung district and Pangkalpinang city. At that time, Belitung island has not separated into two districts. The capital of Belitung district was in Tanjung Pandan. The governmental agenda within these years was to organize administration due to the governmental transition. Within this period, tourism has not become a priority yet, and the tourism board was still rolled into one with the transportation department. According to Belitung and East Belitung Central Bureau of Statistics, the number of tourist arrival during this period was also still dominated by domestic tourists.

#### 4.2.5. 2003-2018

East Belitung district was established on 23 January 2003 according to the National Constitution no. 5 of 2003 with its capital city, Manggar. Starting from this period, the tourist distribution is divided into two districts, however, because of the number of amenities and infrastructure

availability as well as accessibility to transportation nodes, Belitung district keep get a higher number of tourist arrival compared with East Belitung. In 2005, the novel *Laskar Pelangi* was released, and it caused the increasing number of tourist arrival within both districts. The number of tourist arrival even increased more when the film *Laskar Pelangi* was released in 2008.

In 2016, there are two substantial projects that put more effect on the tourism development in Belitung island: the establishment of Special Economic Zones of Tourism in Tanjung Kelayang, Belitung district by the National Government and the establishment of Belitung National Geopark. Besides of affecting the spatial development, the emerge of those projects trigger the creation of new destinations.

### 4.3 The story of *Laskar Pelangi* (The Rainbow Troops)



Figure 4.3. The scenes from the film *Laskar Pelangi*  
Source: imdb.com, milesfilms.net, and bangkatour.com

*Laskar Pelangi* (The Rainbow Troops) is a 2008 Indonesian film adapted from the popular same-titled novel by Andrea Hirata that first appeared on shelves in 2004, based on his childhood memories. This movie was produced by the production house Miles Films, produced by Mira Lesmana and directed by Riri Reza.

The movie follows a group of 10 schoolchildren and their two inspirational teachers as they struggle with poverty and develop hopes for the future in Gantong Village on the farming and tin mining island of Belitung off the east coast of Sumatera. The film is the highest grossing in Indonesian box office history and won several local and international awards. In 2018, the film becomes the third of most popular Indonesian film ever made by reaching a cinema audience of 4.6 million people.

The movie, set in the 1970s, opens on the first day of the year at a Muhammadiyah elementary school on Belitung. The school needs ten students but is one short until near the end of the day, when a straggler fills out the ranks of their teachers, Muslimah and Harfan. Muslimah dubs the children *Laskar Pelangi* (The Rainbow Troops), and the movie traces their development and relationships with the teachers. The film sensitively captures the struggles of marginalized citizens to achieve their dreams, the beauty of friendship and its ability to save humanity, against the background of what was once one of Indonesia's richest island.

The film reportedly cost 8 billion rupiahs (US\$ 890,000) to make and was a year in production. Most of the child actors in the film are from Belitung, and Producer Mira Lesmana explained that choice by saying: "In my opinion, there won't be any actors with a deeper connection to the roles than those who were born and lived in Belitung their entire life." The Bangka Belitung Provincial government declared some of the locations used in the film as areas of importance to culture and tourism in 2010, and provincial tourism chief Yan Megawandi said the decision was "primarily" made to help raise funds for the Muhammadiyah elementary school on which the film and novel's story are centered.

The film's local and international success fueled a tourism boom in Belitung, with Indonesian airline Garuda reopening direct service from Jakarta to Tanjung Pandan, Belitung's capital. A



provincial government official that month said he had no hard data on the increase in tourist arrivals because of the film but noted that nearly all seats on flights to the island from Jakarta were booked in the first week it was open and that most arrivals were asking for information on how to visit the film's locations.

There are several destinations that related to the story and film *Laskar Pelangi* located in Belitung and East Belitung district. In Belitung district, there is Tanjung Tinggi beach. Tourists can easily re-imitate the scenes where the children artists are running between the giant rocks on the beach. Many signages also built around the area that elucidates that it was used as *Laskar Pelangi* film set.



Figure 4.4. Tanjung Tinggi beach and *Laskar Pelangi* film site signage

Meanwhile, in East Belitung district, where the original story and majority of the scenes were taken, there are *Laskar Pelangi* School Replica and Andrea Hirata's Literary Museum. *Laskar Pelangi* School Replica was built in 2010 because many tourists were come to East Belitung to see the school building that appeared in the movie. However, the real building was already demolished and renovated because it still is used as an actual school. Therefore, Andrea Hirata, as the writer of the story and a resident of Gantung village, initiates to build the replica of the school that has been shown in the movie. Besides building the school replica, Andrea Hirata builds a Literary Museum which is also located in the same village.



Figure 4.5. *Laskar Pelangi* School Replica



Figure 4.6. Andrea Hirata Literary Museum

Source: [museumkataandrea Hirata.com](http://museumkataandrea Hirata.com)



## 5. Tourism as the central point of regional development

The conflict between the two districts that exist within Belitung Island becomes the main discussion in this chapter. It presents the competition between the two districts of Belitung in terms of developing and promoting their destinations. A further discussion about how the dynamic of the phenomena perceived theoretically is also a part of this chapter.

### 5.1. Brand competition within “The Land of Rainbow”

As the film *Laskar Pelangi* hit the Indonesian box office as one of the most viewed movies of all time, the local government took the opportunity to develop tourism in Belitung Island. Both Belitung and East Belitung local district government positioned their self as government-based DMO which organize and control tourism within their area from all lines. According to the interviews with tourism board of the two districts, there are some disagreements in term of inter-district cooperation regarding developing Belitung Island tourism as one integrated destination. The absence of a current clear inter-district cooperation leads to competition in the tourism market. Both districts have their strategy to promote their destination as well as creating a brand and destination alternatives.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, most of the tourism infrastructure and amenities like hotels, shops, and airport are located in west part of the island, specifically in Belitung district. The uneven distribution of tourism amenities development in the island also has an impact on income disproportion within tourism market competition between two districts. To understand the dynamic within the two districts, an understanding of their tourism development priority regarding destination creation and promotional strategy must be examined.

There are two points that appear when it comes to a discussion of destination creation within the two districts: local government's tourism developmental agenda and district's area proximity. By taking a role as the main DMO, local government has supreme authority to set the direction of the tourism development within its area. Therefore, the level of the tourism development in an area determined by the inclusion of tourism in the development priority list. Belitung and East Belitung district have a different strategy to develop and manage their tourism destinations. Belitung district prefers to organize various festivals that take place in tourism destinations as a

way to attract visitors. Meanwhile, East Belitung district tends to promote more cultural events and exposing new natural based destinations. As a district that is located with a high closeness to various transport nodes like airport and harbor, supported by governmental policies that put the tourism sector forward, Belitung district becomes excel in managing its tourism.

Regarding destination promotion, both districts have similar tourism brand which is closely related to the film *Laskar Pelangi*. From the interviews, the people from both districts said that they believe by using the name of the movie as a brand, will make their place easier to recognized and attract more tourists to come. Belitung district claimed their district as "*Negeri Laskar Pelangi*" (The Land of Rainbow Troops) while East Belitung used "*Negeri Sejuta Pelangi*" (The Land of a Million Rainbows) as their brand.

#### 5.1.1. Belitung district

In the previous chapter, there is a tourism segmentation within both districts in Belitung island. Belitung district is famous for its beautiful white sandy and rocky beach. There are four beaches and five small islands that become the primary destination objects in this district: Tanjung Pendam beach, Tanjung Tinggi beach, Tanjung Kelayang beach, Bukit Berahu beach, Pasir island, Lengkuas island, Burung island, Kepayang island and Batu Belayar island. Among those destinations, two destinations are already well known because they were being used as a film location in the movie *Laskar Pelangi* and being popularized by social media. Tanjung Tinggi beach was being used as the movie set of *Laskar Pelangi*. Meanwhile, Lengkuas island reaches its popularity through social media because of there is a picturesque lighthouse on it.

The popularity of those destinations, together with the story of *Laskar Pelangi*, create an image of Belitung island itself. Subsequently, the government of Belitung district take this chance and show the shifting of their developmental agenda from being a tin-producing area into managing tourism destinations. Based on interview and observation, the government put a severe concern on creating attraction to appeal more visitors as well as investors by organizing many festivals. In 2018, there will be several national and international scaled festivals hold in Belitung district: Sail Indonesia 2018, Tanjung Kelayang Festival, Geopark Festival, and Pesona Belitung Beach Festival. Some of the festivals, for example, Sail Indonesia and Geopark Festival, are yearly events. While the others, Tanjung Kelayang Festival and Pesona Belitung Beach Festival, are newly initiated.

The acceleration of the tourism development in this area is probably because of the strategic location and the proximity of the area to various mode of transport nodes such as airport and port. The only airport in the island is located 12.5 km away from the capital city of Belitung district. Besides that, the port of Tanjung Pandan, which is the main port of the district, also located right in the city centers. The closeness of the area to the transportation nodes can directly affect the development of other tourism amenities such as hotels and indirectly influence the duration tourists to spend within that area. Another possibility that may lead the tourism to grow fast in this district is because of the history factor of its place. The order of Belitung district governmental office already well managed, regarding Belitung district, previously was also the capital city of the island, before the establishment of East Belitung district.

In terms of destination promotion, the government of Belitung district was very responsive addressing to the popularization of the movie *Laskar Pelangi*. According to the interview, they asked Andrea Hirata, the writer of *Laskar Pelangi*, to use the name of the movie (and the novel) as a branding. Subsequently, they use the tagline *Negeri Laskar Pelangi* (The Land of The Rainbow Troops) as their tourism branding. However, although the current tourism development strategy, in terms of branding strategy, already seems well planned, the local government is trying to expand their image from the fame of *Laskar Pelangi*. Not only by bringing back the beach and maritime tourism representation, but also creating another tourism branding called WAUU (Wonderful, Authentic, Unique, Unforgettable) Belitong. The creation of new tourism branding is also related to the national tourism agenda that put Belitung as one out of ten National's Priority Tourism Destinations. According to the interview with Belitung district tourism board representative, this new name will be used along with the old one "*Negeri Laskar Pelangi*" as their official tourism branding.

*"We use the name Negeri Laskar Pelangi based on the book of Andrea Hirata as Belitung district's branding because it easily recognized by people" - Head of Destination Development, Belitung District Tourism Board*

*"Negeri Laskar Pelangi (The Land of Rainbow Troops) will never be removed. However, Belitung also has new tagline named WAUU Belitong. WAUU is an*

*abbreviation of Wonderful, Artistic, Unique and Unforgettable. Belitong is how we called our island in our language, Belitong. WAUU Belitong will be the representation of the whole island" - Head of Tourism Marketing, Belitung Tourism Board*

*"Laskar Pelangi indeed made Belitung famous, but for now there is a national government's regulation that makes us even more famous that from the film. Currently, there is a development of ten national's tourism destination. Therefore, we create the tagline WAUU Belitung" - Destination's community development staff, Belitung District Tourism Board*



Figure 5.1. Belitung district destination branding

Source: Belitung district Tourism Board

In addition to creating destination branding, Belitung district has actively using various media to market their destinations. The local government, together with many local tourist operators, participate in travel fairs and actively use social media to promote their destinations. Subsequently, the local government also cooperate with many companies and another region around Indonesia to publicize the representation of Belitung as short gateway destination. The example that the interviewer said is by having cooperation with aircraft companies that provide

flights to and from the island and put an annual advertisement about Belitung in the in-flight magazine.

*"At the end of 2014, we started to partner with many tours and travel agencies in big cities around Indonesia to offer Belitung tourism packages. Our participation in travel fairs like in Bali is already on our agenda" - Head of Tourism Marketing, Belitung District Tourism Board*

#### 5.1.2. East Belitung district

While moving to the east side of the island, there is a quite a lot different situation in terms of regional development priority. Tourism is not the only focus of East Belitung development agenda, but also there are also fishery, palm plantation, and tin mining using dredger. The core of *Laskar Pelangi* story and most of the film sites are indeed originally coming from this area. However, despite the various effort has been made by the local government, primarily by exposing new destinations and cultural activities do not make the district reach an equal tourism income compared with Belitung district.

*"In this current condition, we still hold on to the tin mining. However, we also highlight our tourism sector because it already popularized by Andrea Hirata" - Resistance group of tin mining dredger and East Belitung governmental staff*

There are several main destinations in this district which often visited by tourists: *Laskar Pelangi* School Replica, Andrea Hirata's Literary Museum, Manggar coffee shops, and former excavation pit tin mine called "open pit." There are two destinations that are closely related to the story and the movie of *Laskar Pelangi*: *Laskar Pelangi* School Replica and Andrea Hirata's Literary Museum. Both located closely each other in Gantung village.

Based on the interview and the observation, tourism development in East Belitung district is currently more focusing on emerging more small-scale and community-based tourism. The strategy is by empowering many village communities to build tourism villages, tourism communities and community-based homestays as an alternative destination and offer a more local based tourism experience. The local government is also guiding the tourism village and tourism community candidate from the establishment phase until the promotion. This top-down

initiative is also got supported by the community members so that now there are seventeen tourism villages and tourism communities occur in East Belitung.

*"Since the emerge of The Rainbow Troops, homestays in Gantung Village were operated. The people from The Rainbow Troop are the ones who initiate. They knew that there are empty rooms in my house because there are only three people live here. So, they asked me to open a homestay" - homestay owner, East Belitung district.*

*"The one who first initiates tourism is the tourism board, before the establishment of dana desa (village fund). In the current condition, the board is only taking the role of training and promoting the destination. By the emerging of dana desa (village fund), many people want to start contributing to creating their tourism village" - Head of Destination Development, East Belitung District Tourism Board*

Although the government effort to create various destinations is impressive, East Belitung district tourism cannot be able to compare with Belitung district, regarding the time spent by tourists within the area, the number of guests staying, and the number of tourists' amenities. The low accessibility of the area from various transportation nodes might be one of the cause. The capital city of East Belitung, Manggar, and Gantung Village, where all film-related destination in East Belitung can be found, is located 70 km away from the airport. According to the interviews, tourists, who are usually using tour operator services, are often stay in a hotel in Belitung district and only have one day trip visiting East Belitung district.

*"The low accessibility of road, not strategic location, and problems in land ownership are the causes on the underdevelopment of hotels in East Belitung" - Head of Destination Development, East Belitung District Tourism Board*

The other factor that might be causing the underdeveloped of the tourism sector in East Belitung is because of the lack of funds because of tourism exclusion from local government's development priority. Besides, fisheries and palm oil plantation, tin mining is still considered as

an essential source of regional income. By this time, the tin mining is no longer mine on the ground but in offshore using dredger. The further strife then arises along the operation of tin mining using dredger because it is not only destroying the nature but also threaten the sustainability of tourism in the whole island. The conflict caused by tin mining using dredger generate resistance movement not only from East Belitung people but also from Belitung district. Regarding destination promotion, East Belitung is using a tagline *Negeri Sejuta Pelangi* (The Land of a Million Rainbows) as destination branding. The tagline was inspired by the story *Laskar Pelangi* which originated from East Belitung. However, since Belitung district already take *Negeri Laskar Pelangi* tagline before East Belitung district develops their brand, they should use another word.



Figure 5.2. East Belitung district destination branding

Source: East Belitung district Tourism Board

About choosing destination branding, East Belitung district has a slightly different way of promoting the destinations. One of their strategies that can be recognized from the research fieldwork is the preference of East Belitung Tourism Board to maximizing the utilization of social media to promote its various destinations instead of joining any travel fairs. Subsequently, they also make use of tourism board's office as a tourism gallery which consists of many installations related to a various destination that purposefully to be promoted. They also team up with many tour operators to make the office as one of their compulsory destination in their itinerary.

*"For now, we don't join in any (travel) fair but use social media and print media and partnered with the press" - Head of Tourism Marketing, East Belitung District Tourism Board*

*"Within this year, we update East Belitung's tourism information four times in our local magazine. We still conduct tourism introduction to the communities to create kelompok sadar wisata (tourism communities) and new destinations. The communities in the village are also already initiated the establishment of tourism communities and register it to the local government" - Head of Tourism Marketing, East Belitung District Tourism Board*

According to the staff of the tourism board, using tourism board's office as a gallery and hiring tourism ambassadors are some strategies to saving on operational cost. Local government's limited budget is indeed the most mentioned reason from almost every interviewee. One interviewee also said that this must be closely related to development conflict within the East Belitung local government who supports both tourism and offshore tin mining expansion using dredger.

*"Few new destinations are currently being established, the open pit and this (the tourism board) office. This office is currently being mix also used for promotion gallery and becomes a destination since 2014. We also team up with many tour operators and tour guides, and it's up to them where they will put this place within their itinerary" - East Belitung tour guide.*

#### 5.1.3. Possibility on inter-district cooperation

From the usage of similar destination branding tagline, added with tourism developmental strategy differences, shows that there is a competition between the two districts. Based on the interview with the representations of both districts, there is still no transparent cooperation between them. However, from the activities undertaken by the two districts, the possibility then arises. Two activities signify the potential inter-district collaboration: homestay training and the development of Geopark sites.



According to the interview with homestay owner, there was a homestay training in 2012 held in Belitung district. The participant was composed of people from Belitung and East Belitung district. It was a four days training, and the participant was also paid. The local governments also play a big role in promoting the newly created homestay. However, the following action of the establishment of the homestays is highly depended on the village community's initiatives. Regarding funding and fulfilling the need to create a homestay are completely different from one village to another. One interviewee from a tourism village in Belitung district said that the local government tended to promote the destination project of a place after everything is well. Therefore, the community must strive to fund the initiation of their tourism village by directly meet the Indonesian Tourism Ministry Board in Jakarta.

*"Tourism activity in Terong Village is being used as a pilot project in Belitung district because we were the first village which use dana desa (village fund) to develop tourism. Why we did it, it is because the local government can't help to fund our activity, so we must look for financial support in Tourism Ministry in Jakarta. They only want to help promoting us when the destination and the tourism packaged is ready" - representative of Strong tourism village, Belitung district.*

As the time goes by, the diversity of tourist attraction of Belitung increases. Subsequently, many other destinations also developed not only to attract more tourists but also increase the visiting time and money circulation within the island. Most of the new destinations are nature-based tourism, and one example that has been highlighted by most of the interviewees is Geopark under the name of Belitong Geopark. This newly promoted nature-based tourism is highlighting the geological landscapes of Belitung Island which consists of archeological, ecological and cultural values in it, where local communities are invited to participate in protecting and improving the function of natural heritage. It was initially a project from Geological Engineering Alumni Association of Bandung Institute of Technology, one of the biggest national university in Indonesia. However, it gets a more than positive response from the local government and citizen, even this type of tourism also become one of the main development focus.

*"We are developing a new destination concept on a Geopark with a national scaled. It is also targeted to gain international certification soon. The initiation of Geopark was started in 2015. The management institution of the destinations in The National Geopark Board." - Head of Destination Development, East Belitung District Tourism Board*

## 5.2. Keeping up with the national tourism development agenda

### 5.2.1. Indonesia Special Economic Zones of Tourism

There is a need to increased investment through the preparation of areas that have economic and geostrategic advantages to accelerate the national economic development. That area is prepared to maximize industrial activities, exports, imports and other economic activities that have high economic value. Special Economic Zones development aims to accelerate regional development and as a model of regional development breakthroughs for economic growth, including industry, tourism, and trade to increase employment.

Special Economic Zones of Tourism is an area devoted to tourism business activities to support the organization of entertainment and recreation, meetings, incentive trips and exhibitions and related activities. The development aim of Special Economic Zones of Tourism is to ease the promotion of tourist destinations because of the provision of facilities and incentives for investors. In the implementation and development of Special Economic Zones of Tourism, the National Council of Special Economic Zones cooperates with the Ministry of Tourism. Currently, there are 12 established Special Economic Zones, and 4 of them are Special Economic Zones of Tourism. Tanjung Kelayang Belitung is also included in the list of 10 National Tourism Destinations Priority by The Ministry of Tourism, so it takes togetherness and synergy between the two institutions to be able to realize world-class tourism destinations.

The National Government has officially established Tanjung Kelayang Belitung to be the 9th Special Economic Zone through *Peraturan Pemerintah Nomor 6 Tahun 2016 tentang KEK Tanjung Kelayang* (Government Regulation No. 6 of 2016 on Special Economic Zone of Tanjung Kelayang) on March 15, 2016. Tanjung Kelayang Special Economic Zones located in Binga sub-district. It will be developed on an area of 324.4 ha with an investment plan up to 1.5 trillion rupiahs for the development of the region. Tanjung Kelayang Special Economic Zones itself is expected to attract

tourist arrivals to more than 58 thousand people per year. It is also expected to attract investment of up to 20 trillion rupiahs by 2025 and create new jobs for 23,645 people by 2022.

The holding of the national agenda through Special Zones of Tourism development shows an impact from the external party on Belitung's tourism potential prospect which initially started from the establishment of film tourism *Laskar Pelangi*. However, one interesting thing, in this case, is that *Laskar Pelangi* that is often associated with Belitung island does not become the urge reason to develop the Special Economic Zones of Tourism in Tanjung Kelayang. According to the national regulation, Tanjung Kelayang Belitung was chosen as one of Special Economic Zones of Tourism because the area has potency as a marine tourism object and to be developed into sustainable tourism area with the environmentally friendly concept. From this evidence, there is a clear tendency of tourism destination specification into marine tourism from Belitung district itself and supported by the national government.

*In order to accelerate economic development in Belitung District, Bangka Belitung Province, and to support the acceleration and expansion of national economic development, it is necessary to develop Tanjung Kelayang area as a Special Economic Zone. Tanjung Kelayang area has potential and geo-economic and geostrategic advantages. The geo-economic superiority of the Tanjung Kelayang area is seen from its marine tourism object which is a white sandy beach with exotic panorama and has a closeness of small islands that become tourism destinations. The geostrategic superiority of Tanjung Kelayang area is the existence of the concept of environmental based tourism development with the development of sustainable tourism area. - Government Regulation No. 6 of 2016 on Special Economic Zone of Tanjung Kelayang*

#### 5.2.2. Spatial development

Tourism in Belitung Island has been changing through many eras; colonialism, tin mining, and tourism era. Belitung Island was previously well known for its long history as the most prominent tin mining in Indonesia during the colonial period and early independence era. Even though as the time goes by the focus of the tourism was shifted to natural based tourism, specifically beach

tourism, the tourism development in this island still marginalized when it is still a part of South Sumatera Province and before the establishment of East Belitung district. Previously, tourism development was being focused on Bangka Island.

The emergence of *Laskar Pelangi*, both in book or film version, brings a significant change to Belitung's tourism and regional development. Begins with the increase of tourist arrival number right after the film *Laskar Pelangi* hit Indonesian box office cinema, Belitung nowadays is developing more facilities to support tourism sector as well as creating more destinations around the island. The establishment of Special Economic Zones of Tourism as a national agenda to support the tourism industry is also accelerating spatial development in the island. Several spatial changes that can be seen are the massive development of hotels in Belitung district, road widening, airports status upgrading, and new destination creation.

*"In order to develop spatial infrastructure in tourism, we increase the accessibility of the road and upgrade the status of the airport. For the amenities, we increase the number of luxurious hotels in this district. In the future, there are 15-16 hotel that will be built" - Head of Destination Development, Belitung District Tourism Board*

*"Special Economic Zone has a positive effect on local government in developing regional infrastructure" - Head of Destination Development, Belitung District Tourism Board*

The spatial development because of the emergence of tourism in Belitung also creates an impact to the resident's perception about prospects in the tourism sector. Living in poverty for a very long time, as told in *Laskar Pelangi* the movie, Belitung people complained about the underdeveloped region in their past condition within the interview. People then experience a change of mindset in looking at tourism after they feel the result of the spatial development.

*"Now the roads have been made so that we can go to school easily. We don't have to wait for the crocodile to cross like what's Lintang did in the movie. Belitung might be underdeveloped at that time, especially the school facilities.*

*But after Laskar Pelangi, the development is arising and the school facilities also are noticed” - a tour guide in East Belitung district.*

### 5.3. Discussion

The number of tourist arrival is important for the sustainability of the tourism industry in a destination. In this sense, the DMO needs to market the destination to encourage future tourist's visitation. There are a lot of different strategy regarding destination marketing, one of them in promoting the destination by creating a tagline and destination branding which is considered by Arefi (2014) as political placemaking that mainly accentuate things that are considered as a physical condition and daily life experience of local people. Regarding the high linkage between a destination and locality values of a place, the creation of tagline and destination branding should consider what Arefi (2014) said as an asset-based approach that takes into account more subjective and intangible value of the destination to emerge the representational place. However, the reality that exists in a place is way too complex to be represented in a tagline or destination brand. Therefore a simplification of reality is inevitable. This notion is also supported by Ujang and Zakariya (2015) who explained that representations are rarely innocent, they are not taking representations to reflect what reality exists in the world, but to focus on the partial and selective nature of representations that can contributes to the production of place in people's imaginations by emphasizing some things and ignoring others. In this sense, the creation of tagline and destination branding can be considered creating what Williams (2014) stated as a constructed meaning of place.

Belitung has become an example how a destination can be established and developed because of the film in Indonesia, therefore studying its tourism development dynamic becomes important. It has been known that film tourism has an effect not only on increasing tourist arrival and tourism-related jobs, but also stimulate spatial development within the destination. However, the study of film tourism development in Belitung island has the further result that film tourism also has an effect on constructing a destination identity.

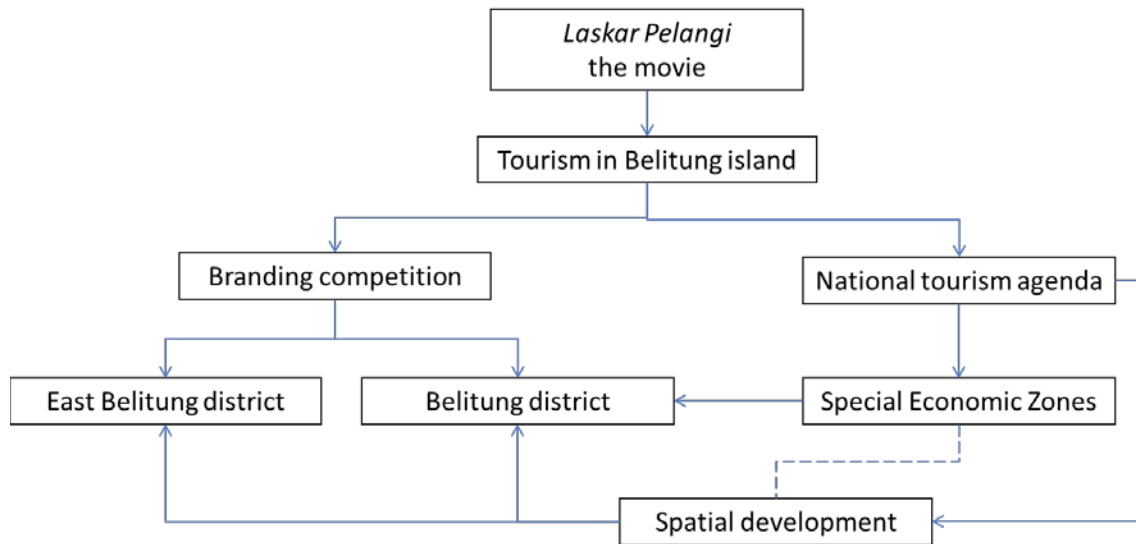


Figure 5.3. Tourism as the central point of regional development in Belitung Island

The figure above explains the dynamic that is currently happening regarding destination branding creation in Belitung island. From the interview, there is a discovery about branding competition within both districts in Belitung island. The difference of tourism development priority between the two districts and the level of accessibility take effect on spatial inequality development. Moreover, the national tourism agenda with its Special Economic Zones plan is also to influence the dynamic between the two districts.

There is an undebatable fact based on the interview that tourism in Belitung island was having a massive growth after the emerge of *Laskar Pelangi* the movie. As the third most watched movie in Indonesia and won many international awards, *Laskar Pelangi* was succeeded in showing glimpse images of Belitung island and attracting people to visit the actual film location. This is a proof of what Beeton (2016) wrote that visual media, in this case, is film, play as powerful image-creator force. In this case, even though the image of the destination was framed by the film, but it was intrinsically and unconsciously built by the tourist as it was explained by several researchers (Ritchie and Crouch, 2003; Bellini et al., 2010).

The local government, as the government-based DMO, took advantage of the popularity of the film and the tourism phenomena that follow it to create an identity of the destination based on

the image that is first build by the audience. Urry and Larsen (2011) explained that such things happened because tourist is now also taking part in place-making and experience evaluation process that creates what is called a conscious manipulation that presenting desirably image over the local based image (Bellini et al., 2010; Hospers, 2006). At the same time when the tourism emerged, the local government attempted to move and replace the tin mining sectors and creating what Urry and Larsen (2011) called as new image inscription of a destination with new imaginative geographies or place myths are. Moreover, the local government, specifically Belitung district, also utilize the presence of national tourism agenda within the area to stimulate spatial development. According to Arefi (2014), this act can be considered as opportunity-based placemaking as a respond to tangible shortcomings and at the same time tend to capitalize the strong point of a place.

Bellini et al. (2010) have explained that regarding the image of a place that attached in a place branding, there are two different representation possibilities, either it reflects the actual place identity or as a 'product' that made through manipulation. Both Belitung district and East Belitung district are currently using the name of the film as a destination branding: Belitung district with its *Negeri Laskar Pelangi* (The Land of Rainbow Troops) tagline and East Belitung with *Negeri Sejuta Pelangi* (The Land of Millions Rainbow) tagline. They agree that the story of the film represents their identity as well as it considered already widely known by many people although the economic reason tends to be more dominant according to the interview. Bellini et al. (2010) is further explained that competition between images happens in a destination is to control the representation of the place and the policy agenda due to the attempt to expand the target market. However, the competition between two districts in Belitung also can be seen as the lack of collaboration between both of them. Macionis and O'Connor (2011) explained the importance of collaborative working between tourism stakeholder to promote the destination and develop marketing strategies as a way to differentiate their product efficiently.

Belitung island consists of various destinations that are not only centralized in a single type of tourism which is film tourism. Nowadays, film-related places visitation in East Belitung takes a small amount of time within the tourists' itinerary. Even the most shared image among and to the tourist is not closely related to the film but the beauty of the beaches and small islands. At

the same time, both districts are also currently trying to expand their destination variety to attract more tourist. Belitung district with its beach tourism while East Belitung district with its cultural tourism. Despite the destination specification that is currently happening, the name of the film is still considered important. Therefore both district still maintains it to be their destination branding. The identity formation based on the name of the film is a simplification of a complex process that is described by Relph (1976) as 'mass identities of places', where the identity created from the opinion-makers, in this case the local government as the DMO, instead of developing from their own locality (Campelo et al., 2014).



## 6. Tourism and *Laskar Pelangi* through the eye of Belitung people

This chapter focuses on presenting and discussing how tourism worked and developed in Belitung from the perspective of the workers. It discusses how tourism workers experience tourism development within their living and working environment. The chapter also contains the story of job shifting in the majority of Belitung society from tin miners to tourism workers and how they live with it. A deeper discussion about how the phenomena being perceived theoretically is also included in this chapter.

### 6.1. From tin miners to tourism workers

#### 6.1.2. Motivation to work in tourism

Belitung island is often associated with tin mining because of its long history with tin mining industry since Dutch colonialization era. Becoming a tin miner and working in PT Timah, an Indonesian tin mining corporation was the common job for Belitung people. The tourism workers that have interviewed were also agreed that the majority occupation of Belitung people before the emerge of tourism in the island was in tin mining. As the time goes on, the tin reserves decrease, and tourism begins to show a promising job opportunity, many people shift their previous job and start to contribute as a worker in the tourism industry. There are various of reasons behind the job shifting based on the explanation from the interviewees.

One of the most influential reasons that have been mentioned by the interviewees upon a question of what motivate them to work in the tourism sector is that working in the tourism industry is an easy job. Most of the interviewees claimed that they enjoy working in tourism sector because it is not tiring and has low risk. People who previously worked as tin miner also agree that in comparison with working in the field as a coolie, working in as tourism worker feels a lot easier and more prestigious.

*"If I look at the amount of the money I got, the mining gave more, but regarding workload, I prefer being a driver" - rented car driver in East Belitung district.*

The impression of the easiness workload also influences most people to choose tourism as their side job to use their spare time. The people who stated this reason are usually has a more static job, a more regular and closely related to a daily routine that does not need high mobilization. People who work as souvenir seller and homestay owner usually have this kind of view. Some of

them already have another job, for example by running small food stalls. While others confessed that by working in the tourism industry, they could help their husband to increase family income or to make use of their pension time.

*"Yes, this is good for a side job to help my husband, because I have pretty much free time" - souvenir seller in Belitung district.*

The other factor that has been motivating Belitung people to work in tourism is because they make use the popularity of the island and *Laskar Pelangi* story. Even though the number of respondents that explicitly mention this reason is rather small, the act of taking advantage of the image of the place can be easily seen. In fact, most of the local government policies that related to tourism were presumably made for this reason as a strategy to move away from the tin mining industry.

*"I open this shop because I think Andrea Hirata's Literary Museum brings a good opportunity for this business" – Souvenir seller, coffee shop owner, Andrea Hirata's sister.*

By the reason that the popular image of the island is considered as important by the local government, the communities are also being actively influenced by top-down initiatives to synchronize the point of view on tourism. The two districts in Belitung island indeed have different ways of influencing people to move from tin mining into tourism. However, despite homestay training that has been held in Belitung district, East Belitung district seems to have more intention to introduce the people and communities to tourism. The Tourism Board of East Belitung district is currently hiring some of tourism ambassador finalists as their official tour guide. From the perspective of the tour guides themselves, a job opportunity that given by the local government has brought them a chance to get a proper job rather than become a tin miner and open many job opportunities.

*"The tin miners now are willing to work in tourism. Like us, if there's no tourism, we'll probably end in the tin mine. I was joining Bujang Dayang (tourism ambassador selection) East Belitung when I was offered by The Tourism Board to become their official tour guide. The tourism board registered all of us to the tour guide certification, so we qualify for guide the tourists besides the job from this office. The certification was paid by the tourism boards. Because of this*

*some of us also got the opportunity to work with many travel agencies" - a tour guide in East Belitung district.*

The external motivation that leads Belitung people to contribute to tourism cannot only come from the local government but also from the private sector. An interviewee confessed that a destination's caretaker has convinced him to start running a homestay in his house. He added that at the beginning it was more like helping the neighbor but in the following time, the tourism village initiator enabled him to manage the business better.

*"This homestay was not opened upon on my will, but because he (Andrea Hirata) asked me to give up some spaces in my house for his guests. It wasn't an actual homestay. After that, I officially open a homestay" – homestay owner in Gantung village.*

Nevertheless, soon after the people begin to recognize the benefit of working in tourism and start to choose their role within the tourism industry, they trap in a comfort zone by having an insufficient upgrading skill. Only a small number of interviewees that feel the need of innovation of their working skill and Belitung tourism industry in general. The behavior to do business, as usual, it might be profoundly influenced by the local culture of Belitung people itself who get used to having a "tin mining" habitual.

*"Well, my job routine is only picking up or dropping off clients, eating, and sleep while waiting for the clients. I learned things about driving and talking to people from my senior, and that is enough for me now" - taxi/rented car driver, East Belitung.*

The emerging of this habitual cannot be separated from the long history of the tin mining industry in the island. Before the establishment of tourism, 80-90% of Belitung population worked as tin miners. There was just a small number of people who work as a farmer not only because the revenue was very profitable, but also all the essential needs of the worker already provided by PT Timah. Therefore, people tended to work as tin miners soon after finishing elementary or secondary school. As the amount of tin in Belitung decreased, PT Timah began to reduce the number of its workers in large numbers. However, even though the livelihoods of Belitung people are now more varied, the "tin mining" culture still strongly holds.

*"Most of the people here used to be all work on mining company. PT Timah was a huge success, so everyone was working as the worker. PT Timah also ensures all basic needs of the worker. They imported all basic need stuff from outside the island. Everything was regular when PT Timah still take over the island. In the past, there was also no obligation to pay water, electricity because it's already borne by PT Timah" - a member of a tin mining resistance group.*

*"The awareness of the people itself is very difficult. People's mindset is to become miners. They want an instant result. If they can make money today, they will spend it at the same day. They think that there is still tomorrow" - a tour guide in East Belitung.*

#### 6.2.2. Tourism-related job in Belitung Island

The shifting of the tin mining-related job to tourism put forth various types of occupations. Those jobs mainly engage in service sectors. Some tourism-related jobs that can be found on the field are tour guides, rented car or taxi driver, souvenir maker, souvenir seller, homestay owner, and rented boat charter provider. Among those professions, the tour guide plays a prominent role by having an ability to connect with other tourism-related jobs. A tour guide can use a rental car's service or hire a boat charter to be included in the trip itinerary. A tour guide also can help to promote local businesses such as souvenir selling and homestay.

People who work as a tour guide play a crucial role to create tourists' impression of a destination by promoting places and framing stories. Most of the trip that has been done by tourists in Belitung were using the service of tour guide which approximately take three days and four nights long. Tour guides also have many cross connections with many other occupations and destinations. Therefore, the job of tour guide in Belitung tourism industry is considered as crucial. The tour guides that have been interviewed in this research are stated that they did not master the hospitality competence in guiding the tourist from formal education but rather a self-taught.

*"We're the one who chooses the route of the trip, in the beginning. However, our clients are the one who decides it. We also help to promote new destinations or tourism village, but the problem is not every tour operator agrees on the same idea" – tour guide from Belitung district.*

*"I learned it myself, about the hospitality and the destinations. We supposed to know at least a little bit information about the destinations before explaining it to tourists. The same case for Laskar Pelangi story, every tour guide in this island*

*must know about the story, how's the character and what's the beginning" – tour guide from East Belitung district.*

*"We also ask the tour operators to put those new tourist villages on their packages" – The Head of Destination Development Manager, Belitung district tourism board*

However, even though most of the tour guides know the story well, they usually have difficulties in delivering it to tourists because of the language barrier. Belitung people are originally speaking Melayu in their daily basis and rarely speak the national language, Bahasa Indonesia, even English as the international language. Therefore, people who work as a tour guide are usually young people who have ability and willingness to learn to speak in Bahasa Indonesia and English. Due to the limited of a learning resource, the number of tour guides is currently still limited and only centralized in Belitung district.

*"One of the biggest obstacles for the tour guide is language. Not every Belitung people can speak English, even proper Bahasa Indonesia" - a tour guide in Belitung district.*

Car rental and boat charter drivers are two kinds of a profession that highly needed in Belitung tourism industry as well as have many intersect with the tour guides. Considering that Belitung island's tourism destinations are located separately in two different districts, it requires tourists' high mobility because they usually have a limited time to visit all destinations. On the other hand, the demand of mode of transport is always increasing. Therefore, the inclusion of the owner (and driver) of rental vehicles in the itinerary trip is mandatory. The increasing number of the tour operator and a number of tourist visitor in the island make this job very needed at this time.

### 6.2.3. Belitung island, a well-packaged destination

Belitung island is like a well-packaged destination. It has both natural destinations with its white sandy beaches with many small islands and cultural attraction such as *Laskar Pelangi* film tourism. Due to the area of the island that is not too wide, it is possible for tourists to visit all the most famous destinations within a short period. Belitung, along with what the local government framed in their tourism development plan, is suitable for short stay or weekend trip, a gateway from the crowded life in the capital city in a small and beautiful island.

However, because the location is quite remote with a significant distance with the capital city, the island is lacking public transportation. The information about routes and alternatives on destinations and accommodation is also limited. Therefore, the tourists depend on the only source of information from the tour operator. The important role of a tour guide in Belitung cannot be separated with the tour packages offered by many tour operators in the island. Most of the tourists who visit Belitung are usually book the trip in a packaged tour with average visiting time 3-4 days.

The high number of the packaged tour also has an impact on providing new jobs and supporting job alteration among Belitung people from becoming tin mining to be tourism worker. But on the other hand, this phenomenon also creates a comfort zone for the workers because the constant, even increasing, number of tourist arrival. The workers feel that they do not have to make improvement and prefer to rely on the government regarding improving tourism within the island.

The high dependency of Belitung tourism on the role of a tour operator that provide tour packages also enhance the inequality on district's tourism income that once caused by the concentration of hotel development in Belitung district. The tourists only spend approximately half until one day of the total of their trip to visit East Belitung district, to see *Laskar Pelangi's* movie set. The rest will be spent in Belitung district.

*"They're all want to stay at the hotel because of the tour package. If it's included in a tour package, they will be fully guided in any levels, from the hotel, transportation, and the trip. They only come here to take photos several minutes then they go somewhere else" – Souvenir seller and maker, East Belitung district.*

## 6.2. *Laskar Pelangi* in a real life

The story *Laskar Pelangi* has undoubtedly left huge effects on Belitung island, either it is economically regarding providing jobs through tourism or socially by changing the local people perception of their place. Some values embedded by locals after getting to know the story about their island and there are other values that being expressed in following of the embedded values.

### 6.2.1. Embedded value

There are two forms of value embodiment of the story that occurs within the people that were interviewed: attachment with the place and engagement with the story. The place attachment feelings that occur based on the interview mainly show satisfaction on the spatial changing that happens within the island. While the engagement feeling with the story is more about the personal expression that occurs after being exposed to the story *Laskar Pelangi*.

Belitung people are very proud of the fame of the story, Andrea Hirata (the book writer who is also originated from Belitung) and their island. The interviewees, especially who come from East Belitung district, are like to mention about people and places that appear on the film when being asked about the story. They showed stronger emotion when telling their feelings about the story. Some of them even also engage with the actor or actress of the movie because they live close to each other or meet in the destination.

*“The actors also have visited us here. The actor who plays as Mahar is just passed away, right? He’s not older than my son. One day the actor who played Trapani also visited us here and asked me many things. He said that he would finish his bachelor soon” – souvenir seller, East Belitung district.*

*“Andrea Hirata’s parents’ house is not far from here. I know him because he used to play with my children back then” – homestay owner, Gantung village, East Belitung district.*

Some of the interviewees even said that they regard Andrea Hirata as a local hero because they acknowledge that he made the island famous by writing the story of *Laskar Pelangi*. They enjoy the popularity of their island as much as the increasing number of job opportunity that occurs. According to them, Belitung was nothing compared to the current condition. The island was usually unknown or is was known as another region by people from another part of Indonesia, until they mention *Laskar Pelangi*.

*“When I was in Bandung with my husband to attend my son’s graduation, other parents asked me where I came from. When I answered that I’m from Belitung island, they didn’t know. When I told them that I came from where Laskar Pelangi was took place, they were super excited!” – souvenir seller, East Belitung district.*

*"What makes me proud is because our small island now becomes popular. Now there is much positive progress since the emerge of Laskar Pelangi and so far, we already get the result of it. The most important thing is job availability itself" - a tour guide in East Belitung district.*

*"We are so thankful to Andrea Hirata. Because he wrote the story and brings many tourists to here" – rental car driver, Belitung district.*

The satisfaction feeling of the story of *Laskar Pelangi* is highly affected by the local culture of Belitung people called legal or. Begalor culture is the value of openness and assumes that all of the people who live in Belitung island is a part of their family. This culture is also affected by the geographical condition of the island which is quite small that result in the feel of closeness within its people.

*"It is hard to make trouble in Belitung because everyone knows everyone. Because in Belitung there is a custom of begalor. We are very open to other people, both locals or outsiders like we've been known each other for a very long time. However, the language usually becomes the barrier between the locals and the visitors. Whereas if they could understand Belitung's language, we will give anything they need without even asking" – a tour guide in Belitung district*

In terms of the truth of the story, most of the interviewees also agree with the condition which described in the background story of the film. Some of them shared their memories in line with past condition that was portrayed in *Laskar Pelangi* the movie, either the social or the spatial condition of the island. Meanwhile, another participant still doubted how the story framed the image of the island. There was an interviewee who even stated that she did not believe in the originality of the story since they know that the story was written only to be sold.

*"I watched the film from TV. I visited the place where they shot it too. It's still unbelievable that Belitung was looking like what's in the movie. But if we visit that place it will leave us speechless because the condition of the school was so bad" – homestay owner, Burung Mandi village, East Belitung district.*

*"The condition was exactly like that when PT Timah was still controlling the island. The social separation was clear, and I felt it when I was still in middle school" – Terong tourism village representation, Belitung district.*



### 6.2.2. Expressed value

The film is not only creating a place imaginary for the audience who do not live life around the movie set, but also the people who attach with the place in their daily life. There is a difference between the audience's intention after watching a movie with the people who live in the actual place. Film audiences create their imaginary about a place and have an urge to experience the actual impression that they imagined before in the actual place where the film was shot. While the people who live in the actual place gain connection easily because the similarity feeling that occurs after certain kind of symbol is portrayed on the screen. The intention of expressing the value they gained from the movie also highly depends on the economic benefit they can get. From the interviews, there are two ways of expressing the value: preserving the story of *Laskar Pelangi* and the emergence of environmental responsibility.

For the people that have interviewed, especially the one who already have children after the establishment of *Laskar Pelangi*, they tend to pass on the story to their children. They believe that the moral story will increase children's eager to learn. The learning media that they used is mostly from the movie. In Gantung village, where most of the film shot, the film was showed in an outdoor cinema called "*layar tancap*" built in a field so many people can come and watch for free. Meanwhile, other people outside Gantung village and its surrounding only watched the film from TV, some time after the film release on the national cinemas, because there is no cinema available in the island. There is a different delivery mechanism of the story of *Laskar Pelangi* for the grownup people, Belitung people get to know about the story from a social encounter with other people in public sphere, coffee shops. This indicates that there is a role of oral culture within the effort of preserving *Laskar Pelangi* story.

*"We as parents must introduce about the Laskar Pelangi mainly because of its education moral story and because there is already a patron, namely Andrea Hirata. It is important because the children nowadays are ignorant. At the beginning of the opening of this place, the film Laskar Pelangi was ever screened. Several years after that the village also screens it as a remembrance."*  
– souvenir seller, East Belitung district.

*"We can get any information in a coffee shop. Especially for people who never watch the movie, after visiting the coffee shop, they will finally know the story"*  
– a tour guide in East Belitung district.

Besides the belief that *Laskar Pelangi* story can inspire and uplift the life spirit, Belitung people also aware that there is an economic benefit that they can gain from it, especially from tourism. For the people who have high income dependency with tourism, the environment becomes one of the most important issues. Especially because both districts are currently moving from tin mining to tourism. Nowadays, there is a tension within Belitung people, especially who actively work in the tourism sector, and local government of East Belitung district because the emergence of offshore tin mining using dredger. This mining method is not only endangered natural biodiversity of the island but also threaten the tourism industry because one of the main attraction of the island is the clear blue sea water.

*“We must save the environment to support tourism. We had protests twice because of the usage of the dredger. Because Belitung island is small, so the impact from East Belitung can reach here quickly. We sell a coastal tourism destination icon, if the water becomes muddy and the coral reefs and the fish are not there, what we want to sell? From where we can get money if the tourism ruined because of that tin mining? Therefore, we organize a protest”. – ship rental owner, Belitung district.*

*“The tin mining dredger cause a lot of damages here especially for the fisherman, because one of the leading sectors in here is fisheries. When the dredger comes in, the sea creature is wrecked, especially the coral and the fish” – East Belitung governmental staff and tin mining dredger resistance group member.*

### 6.3. Discussion

Film as a visual media is believed has the most powerful force in term of image-creator (Beeton, 2016) that can motivate the audience to visit the actual film set and stimulate the emerge of film tourism destination. However, the film has a different effect on the people who live in the film tourism destination that can be distinguished into two: internalization and externalization. Internalization of the film story is associated with the nostalgic feeling that mainly influenced by the similarity of the historical and cultural background between the story and the reality. Meanwhile, externalization is associated with a more opportunistic action that occurs as a respond of the popularity of the film as explained by Kotler et al. (1993) when the communities commodify their local value and to sell their places as products.

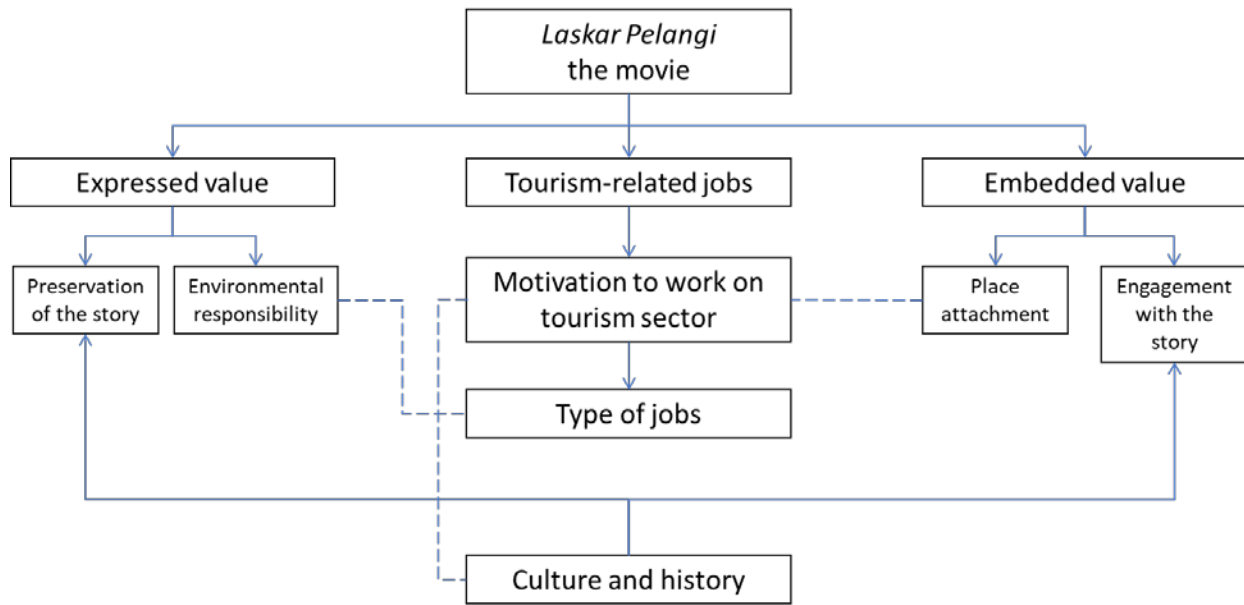


Figure 6.1. Tourism and *Laskar Pelangi* through the eye of Belitung people

According to the result of the interview, Belitung people show a positive place attachment to the destination which shows within embedded and expressed value and motivation to work in the tourism sector. This constructed place meaning is influenced by the movie *Laskar Pelangi* which shows familiar spatial, physical and cultural values to them.

The resident's level of engagement with the story of *Laskar Pelangi* itself is varies depending on such factors like where they live and their closeness with the background story or the story writer. Interviewees who live in East Belitung district, especially in Gantung Village, where the film takes place the most, were showing higher emotion when being asked about their opinion of the film. On the other hand, the interviewees who live far from Gantung Village, generally did not show big enthusiasm when telling their perspective about the film. The frequency different from encounter people and the environment that is part of the story might affect the people's experience and belief which stated by Rapoport (1977) that it also would affect the environmental perception. However, despite the number of people who are work in the tourism sector, only a group of people who work as a tour guide that has deep and detailed knowledge about the story of *Laskar Pelangi*. This is because the tour guide plays an important role as someone who can involve in direct destination marketing to the tourists.

Even though the same pattern or belief on understanding the story does not appear within Belitung people, they show a high sense of pride towards their residence because of the popularity of the movie. They mainly highlight the massive difference they felt between the previous condition before the tourism emergence and current condition. Lerner (1985) explained that this could happen because human psyche generally needs to belong to a collective group. The sense of identity, whether constructed or inherent, is usually connected to land (Mazlish, 1993; Clayton & Opatow, 2003) and in this case, Belitung people's sense of pride of their place is constructed by the new cultural landscape from the film industry. The attachment feeling then develops into place dependence because of economic reason. This corresponds to what Kim et al. (2017) explained about the positive relation between local people's support on local tourism development occur because tourism brings the economic, social and environment benefits.

Based on the interview, there is still a small number of Belitung people who can critically think about the over simplification of value for a commercial matter that showed in the film. The economic reason that majority underlie the knowledge and perception of Belitung people on *Laskar Pelangi* story is what Arefi (2014) explained as opportunity-based placemaking, which focusing on capitalizing the story as a strong point of the island in order to respond the poverty issue.

In this current situation, destination image is determined by tourists as the consumer while the local government, who tend to focus on regional income based on tourist arrival, agrees and create the destination identity as a respond to the demand. This can be dangerous, especially for the destination that begins to depend a lot to tourism, because it cannot be resilient by offering other tourism alternatives if the trend changes and create confusion on destination branding that exists now. An identity should make from the interaction of internal, which is the culture itself, and external views, which is the destination image (Hatch and Schultz, 2002). Therefore, as a respond to what is currently happening within the society of Belitung, cultural and history reenactment is one of a crucial thing to do in order to create destination image and identity.

A further connection of place dependence of Belitung people based on economic reason also creates an impact on the emerging of environmental responsibility as a reaction of conflict in

relation with current tin mining industry that is also threatening tourism. According to the information narrated by interviewees, Belitung people already have an attachment to nature exploitation because their long history with the tin mining industry, therefore the environmental effect of film tourism does not become a problem. Place attachment based on economic reason within the tourism sector is currently exceed previous tin mining related place attachment. This can be seen from the rising of offshore tin mining industry resistance group. Most of the member of the group are people who work in the tourism sector. What is happening in Belitung does not fit with previous studies which explain that the stronger the local residents attached to a place, the more likely they resist the further tourism developments discursive (Allen et al., 1988; Lankford, 1994; Liu & Var, 1986).

Tourism was something that never occurred in the history of Belitung island or embedded in Belitung people culture. It was tin mining that gave subtle traces in relation to the spatial and cultural matter because of the long historical attachment. Even the mindset of being a tin miner is still holding strongly by Belitung people nowadays when the majority of their livelihood is currently changing to tourism. This kind of conditions that makes the workers and DMOs cannot be as innovated yet as places that already have strong connection with tourism since a long time such as Bali or Yogyakarta. As one of the first destination that established and developed because of the film in Indonesia, Belitung island still have a long process to be done especially in order to develop and engage film-tourism destination community in destination development.

## 7. Rethinking of *Negeri Laskar Pelangi* as the identity of Belitung island

This chapter focuses on discussing the creation of place identity and place branding based on film tourism in Belitung island by taking into account the perspective from local government as the DMO and the local tourism workers. Based on the elaboration of current destination identity and brand a further discussion about the notion of sustainability in film tourism will be elaborated.

### 7.1. Place identity and place branding through film tourism

Belitung island was previously well known as a tin mining island because of its long history with the mining industry since Dutch colonialism. In the present days, the island is better known as *Negeri Laskar Pelangi* (The Land of Rainbow Troops) because of the popularity of the film *Laskar Pelangi* that took place on this island. The movie *Laskar Pelangi* is recorded as the third most watched movie in Indonesia and it has won several national and international film awards. Some places that showed on the screen have become tourism destinations. It is explained by Bolan and Williams (2007) that the commercial level of the film can help establish an identity and provide a platform to attract tourist visitation from a wide market base.

The image of Belitung island that was first constructed by the film audiences is taken into account by the local government as a starting point to create a destination identity through destination branding. This process is later explained by Bellini et al. (2010) as conscious manipulation image that expresses the desirable vision rather than built from the local value (Hospers, 2006). Belitung people are indeed not having a very deep attachment to the story of the movie while the attachment with the place also mainly based on economic reason without any historical or cultural background to be mentioned. The disproportion between image portrayed by tourists or film audience and local values leads to an artificially constructed place identity of Belitung island that does not fit with the place identity formation process explained by Hatch and Schultz (2002) where identity must be made from the interaction between internal and external views.

The movie *Laskar Pelangi* is currently being used by the local government as destination branding because the images and perception of a destination do not change quickly and can be used few more years which support the use of the imagery (Uysal, Chen, and Williams, 2000). The current film tourism-based destination brand that created by the local government roughly corresponds

with what attachment that is currently felt by the majority of the interviewees. However, it can be clearly seen that economic reason is the main factor. Belitung people, especially who work in the tourism field, generally do not have enough knowledge about the governmental tourism development agenda.

Placemaking and experience evaluating process are now involved by tourists as place branding is no longer only in the hands of the tourism industries (Urry and Larsen, 2011). This lead to a further tourist-oriented tourism development that tends to ignore the localities of the place because the tourism promotor is only focusing on the economic factor. Therefore, a promotional remaking of place can just as easily marginalize the cultural identities and livelihoods of other groups, especially those with a history of limited social power or say in the community (Benjamin et al., 2012) if the tourism stakeholders only focusing on fulfilling the need of the tourists without any intention to preserve or maintain the current culture or identity.

From this stance, in order to preserve the authenticity representation of the destination and enhance more people's engagement with the place and tourism, it is important to consider the localities of the place and resident's culture within the creation of film tourism destination identity and destination branding. It is also important to keep the story of the film alive within the people and community not only as an attempt to influence people's attachment but also to create a comprehensive film tourism destination. Those two points are found missing within the creation of film tourism in Belitung island.

## 7.2. Film tourism sustainability

Considering that local residents of the destination are rarely familiar with the possible economic, social, cultural, and environmental effects of film tourism, Kim et al. (2017) highlighted that it is important for regional and local government to be responsive to film tourism planning and development before, during, and after the film production. Other researchers also suggest to involve many stakeholders other than the government that plays a role in film tourism destination developing, such as filmmakers, tourism operators, and local communities (Beeton, 2008; Buchmann, 2010; Heitmann, 2010). In this case, Belitung island is still lacking collaboration with various tourism actors in terms of film tourism destination development. One of the

important collaboration that needs to be addressed within the island is a collaboration between Belitung district and East Belitung district.

The current interaction between the local government and the tourism workers that can be found from the interview are through promotion and skills training. The local governments as the only DMO in Belitung island play role to initiate the tourism development and introduce the work in tourism to Belitung people through organizing tourism work-related skills training such as hospitality and language training. The local government also actively promote their tourism destinations through various ways, mainly through social media and collaborate with other medias. One of the promotional strategies is by collaborate with Belitung island's tourism agencies and operators to promote new destinations or tourism villages. Tourism agencies and operator, through the role of tour guides, have the highest scope that can reach both the tourists and other tourism workers and at the same time have the biggest chance to frame the story of the place to tourists.



## 8. Conclusion

### 8.1. Conclusion

A film is a form of visual media that have powerful force to influence people to travel to visit the actual film set and create what is called film tourism. Many film tourism destinations were not a touristic place at first, therefore tourist arrival and tourism development that occurs may lead to the social dynamic within the local resident and local government. Many types of research have been done in film tourism destinations that occur as the effect of the worldwide film box office. However, there is a lack of investigation in relation to film tourism destination in developing countries, especially in Indonesia.

This study is aimed to understand the dynamic of placemaking process within the construction of film tourism destination through a study case in Belitung island. Belitung island was chosen not only because it was the first destination that established the effect of the film, but also it has a unique history as a non-touristic place at first. The result of the research is intended to be a reference in film tourism destination development in Indonesia.

The study has found that film tourism has been used by local government as a brand by using the name of the movie in the destination branding tagline. The objective of this strategy is to create a destination identity using the most marketable image of the island, which is the film *Laskar Pelangi* itself. This brings in impact from the external side, which is the holding of the government agenda within the island, and causes impact to internal side, which is the rising awareness of Belitung people of the tourism sector.

From Belitung people's perspective, the study found that film tourism placemaking creates a positive attachment to the people because this phenomenon is considered to be able to expand the job opportunities and regional development. There is no pattern or belief in understanding the story occur within the people, even though the main tourism attractiveness in Belitung is the story of *Laskar Pelangi*. This leads the local government to be more focus on between districts competition in developing destination branding and tourism destination expansion in order to pursue the regional income instead of preserving the existing value.

At last, there are three recommendations that made based on the study. First, it is important to consider the localities of the place and resident's culture within the creation of film tourism destination identity and destination branding. Second, it is also important to keep the story of the film alive within the people and community not only as an attempt to influence people's attachment but also to create a comprehensive film tourism destination. Third, collaboration with various tourism actors in order to maintain the trend of the film which also affecting tourist flow.

### 8.2. Limitation and future research

The coverage of local resident perspective who is not working in tourism sector would be one of the weaknesses of this research. As it is mentioned before that the place attachment of local people, either they work on tourism sector or not, is important as the representational place. The tourism workers have a bigger chance to know about the film and gain attachment to the place, however the perspective of other residents whom live and work far from tourism might be different and still questionable. To overcome this shortcoming, future research could be done by visiting non-touristic places around the film tourism destination and interviewing local people who do not work in the tourism sector.

The employment of another method to gain a different point of view is also possible in planning for future research. An oral history research method could be used as an alternative to conduct a research about film tourism by putting the role of tour guide as the main point. The role of tour guides become important because they must gain a certain kind of attachment to the destination which is probably highly influenced by local value and at the same time their job require to frame a more commercial point of view to the tourists.

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## Appendixes

### Appendix 1: Overview of the interviewees

Twenty-six people have participated in the interview for this research. The majority of the respondents are working as tourism workers with various background and profession. Six people out of twenty were interviewed to represent the view from the local government.

No	Gender	Job/Profession	Neighborhood	Age
1	Male	Head of Tourism Marketing, Belitung Tourism Board	Belitung	30-60
2	Female	Homestay owner	Belitung	30-60
3	Male	Ship owner/rented ship driver/fisherman	Belitung	30-60
4	Male	Taxi/rented car driver	Belitung	30-60
5	Male	Tour guide	Belitung	-30
6	Male	Satam stone seller/fisherman	Belitung	-30
8	Female	Staff of destination's community development, East Belitung Tourism Board	Belitung	30-60
9	Male	Head of Destination Development, Belitung Tourism Board	Belitung	30-60
10	Male	Representation of village-owned enterprise Lenggang Village and homestay owner	Belitung	30-60
11	Female	Head of Tourism Marketing, East Belitung Tourism Board	East Belitung	30-60
12*	Female	Head of Destination Development, East Belitung Tourism Board	East Belitung	30-60
13*	Male	Representative of Destination Development, East Belitung Tourism Board	East Belitung	30-60
14	Male	Taxi/rented car driver	East Belitung	-30
15*	Female	Souvenir maker and seller	East Belitung	-30
16*	Female	Souvenir seller	East Belitung	30-60
17	Female	Souvenir seller, coffee shop owner, Andrea Hirata's family	East Belitung	30-60
18	Male	Representation of tourism village of Lenggang	East Belitung	+60
19	Female	Representation of tourism village of Lenggang	East Belitung	30-60
20*	Male	Homestay owner Gantung Village	East Belitung	+60
21*	Female	Homestay owner Gantung Village	East Belitung	30-60
22	Female	Homestay owner Burung Mandi Village	East Belitung	30-60
23*	Male	Tour guide	East Belitung	-30
24*	Female	Tour guide	East Belitung	-30
25 *	Male	Tour guide	East Belitung	-30
26	Male	East Belitung district governmental staff and representation of resistant group of tin mining dredgers	East Belitung	30-60

\* This was one interview with two or three interviewees

## Appendix 2: Interview questions

There are two kinds of interview questions that has made due to the different purpose of interview from each respondent groups: the local government and the local tourism workers. All of the questions were all originally written in Bahasa Indonesia, the English translation that is written in this section is aimed to ease the reader.

### Question to local governments

1. How is the history of Belitung island's tourism?
2. What kind of tagline is the district use as destination branding? Why it is chosen?
3. What kind of tourism developmental and promotional policies or strategies that have ever done by the government?
4. Who are the actors that play a role in Belitung island's tourism sector? How those actors involve in the tourism policies?
5. What kind of destination that is now primarily being promoted and developed in this district?
6. What kind of problems that occur during the tourism development and promotion in this district?
7. What is the future tourism development plan of this district?

### Question to local tourism workers

1. What is your main job?
2. How long you have been working here?
3. What motivates you to work in tourism sector?
4. How do you feel about your current job?
5. Have you ever seen the movie *Laskar Pelangi*? If yes, how do you feel after watch the film?
6. How is the history of Belitung island's tourism?
7. What kind of changes that you feel after the emerge of tourism in this area?
8. What kind of governmental tourism agenda which addressed to this area that you know?