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日本動畫作品的關鍵成功因素

及其在各個受眾群體間的差異

Key Success Factors of Japanese Animation Work
and its Difference per Audience Group

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Audience Group

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Abstract

This thesis aims to derive key success factors of animation works and tries to answer the question of what factors contribute to the success of animation works. As an assumption, success here means an outcome status where the work becomes popular, a broad audience chooses to watch it, and the work nature loyal audiences who take action like recommending the work to others or purchasing related merchandized goods, which eventually brings long-term financial returns. We define the methodology in two steps. The first step is to identify possible success factors as hypotheses through a literature review. The second step is to survey whether the success factors defined in the first step function properly and whether the evaluation differs by audience group. As a result of the first step, we identified five factors, entertainment, character, story, message, and artistry, to evaluate anime work. Then, we collected opinions on ten anime works through surveys in Taiwan and Japan. We found that the framework with these five factors functions well in evaluating anime work.

Keywords: Creative Industry, Animation, Contents Development, Intellectual Property

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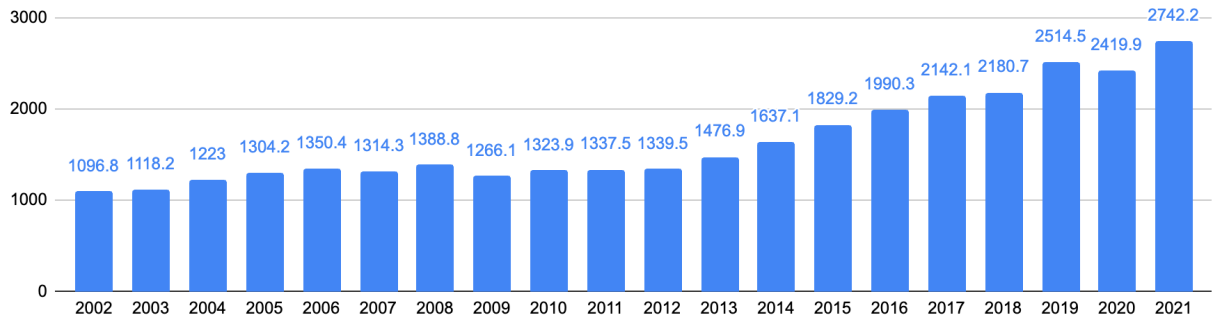
Chapter 1 Introduction

Industry Outlook

Today, the animation sector is one of the essential segments of the creative industry, and it also shows consistent growth, strengthening its economic importance. Ma, Qian, Liu, and Zhu (2018) define the industry as one of the sectors in the creative industry that highlights original design, technology innovation, and market diversification, overlapping with the design, game, and TV industries. The authors also describe that this industry has expanded rapidly due to the availability of the Internet, satellite TV, mobile devices, social media, and a growing demand for entertainment, gaming, animation movies, and visual effects. Saputra, Manongga, and Hendry (2021) also support the prominent growth of the industry by describing that the popularity of mobile Internet devices such as smartphones, efficient interaction, and the convenience of new media have changed people's consumption patterns and lifestyles. The consumption structure has begun to lean towards the consumption of services and entertainment and has significantly impacted the animation industry.

Looking at the actual market size of Japanese animation, Figure 1. shows the size of the broad market. Anime Industry Report 2022 (2023) describes, “The pandemic continued into 2021, but profits grew dramatically to 2.74 trillion yen, 113.3% of the previous year. 2021 created a new record of 9.1% over 2019’s 2.51 trillion yen, the previous record, and it is believed that the effects of COVID-19 were firmly stopped in their tracks”

Figure 1. The Japanese Animation, Broad Market Size (Billion Yen)
 (Modified from Anime Industry Report 2022)



Note. The data is from “The Japanese Animation, Broad Market Size”, by The Association of Japanese Animations, 2023, *Anime Industry Report 2022*.

The Anime Industry Report 2022 (2023) also continues that the fields that drove the growth in 2021 were internet distribution, merchandising, and overseas. Together, these three fields increased by 275 billion yen from 2019 to 2022. However, movies, amusement, live viewing, and other fields declined; thus, the total industry increased by 228 billion yen from 2019 to 2022.

Figure 2. Breakdown of Japanese Animation Markets (Billion Yen)
(Modified from Anime Industry Report 2022)

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	YoY
①TV	90	96	102.7	111.6	107.3	105.6	106.1	113.7	94.8	84	90.6	88.5%
②Movie	28.5	40.9	47	41.7	47.7	66.3	41	42.6	69.2	55.4	60.2	89.2%
③Video	107.6	105.9	115.3	102.1	92.8	78.8	76.5	58.7	56.3	46.6	66.2	82.8%
④Internet Distribution	16	27.2	34	40.8	43.7	47.8	54	59.5	68.5	93	154.3	135.8%
⑤Merchandising	594.3	573.2	598.5	655.2	579.4	552.2	503.7	500.3	586.8	581.9	663.1	99.2%
⑥Music	32.5	28.3	29.6	29.2	32.4	36.9	34.4	35.8	33.7	27.6	31.7	81.9%
⑦Overseas	266.9	240.8	282.3	326.6	583.4	767.7	994.8	1009.2	1200.9	1239.4	1313.4	103.2%
⑧Amusement	202.6	227.2	242.7	298.1	294.1	281.8	268.7	283.5	319.9	263	305.6	82.2%
⑨Live Entertainment	-	-	24.8	31.8	48.4	53.2	62.9	77.4	84.4	29	57.1	34.4%
Total	1337.5	1339.5	1476.9	1637.1	1829.2	1990.3	2142.1	2180.7	2514.5	2419.9	2742.5	113.3%

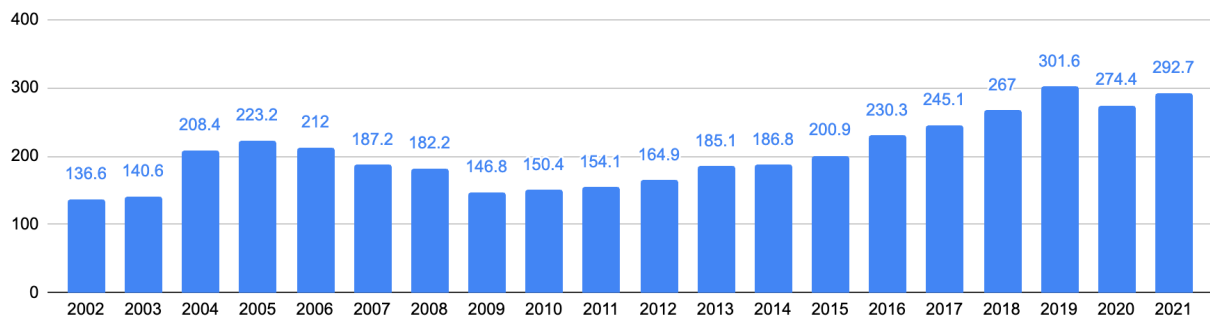
Note. The data is from “Breakdown of Japanese Animation Markets”, by The Association of Japanese Animations, 2023, *Anime Industry Report 2022*.

As shown above, the Japanese animation market size shows prominent growth backed up by environmental change, and the segments that showed robust growth are streaming, merchandising, and overseas. Here, it is worth mentioning that these three segments are forms of diversification from the anime production itself, in the sense that “streaming” is a channel penetration, “international” is geographical market penetration, and “merchandising” is an application of Intellectual Property (IP) arisen from the anime work. We can say that these diversified business areas are the source of growth, and this also shows the prominent potential of how strong anime content can bring market expansion and profit to the industry.

Industry Challenges of Japan Animation

While the Japanese animation market has maintained robust growth, as mentioned in the previous section, this section shifts the focus to the respective figures of its creators' market. The creator's market indicates the market of firms that create animation works. Figure 3. shows the growth of its market size. The Anime Industry Report 2022 (2023) describes that in 2021, this market increased by 18.3 billion yen (106.7%) compared to COVID-stricken 2020 to 293 billion yen. It did not reach the record high of 2019, which was 302 billion yen, but it can be said that the market is returning to its pace of growth before the pandemic.

Figure 3. The Japanese Animation, Creator's Market Size (Billion Yen)
(Modified from Anime Industry Report 2022)



Note. The data is from “The Japanese Animation, Creator’s Market Size”, by The Association of Japanese Animations, 2023, *Anime Industry Report 2022*.

The creator's market size is also showing constant growth; however, it is not as robust as the entire Japanese animation market, and the creator's market size remains at one-ninth of the entire market as of 2021.

This animation creator's industry also has some severe internal challenges. The Anime Industry Report 2022 (2023) refers to comments taken from animation

production studios; these studios say, “Because of soaring labor costs due to work style reforms, there has been a sharp rise in unit costs when hiring contractors, so anime production costs are rising at a faster speed than the costs for orders. Additionally, since there is a constant shortage of creative staff, it is very difficult to establish a proper organizational structure for production. Moreover, the standards required for anime production are steadily growing, which is a primary factor in the increase in cost.”

One of the thesis authors also had experience working with a Japanese animation studio, and the challenges mentioned above were also consistent with the studio. Traditionally, the animation studio’s revenue sources are fixed amounts per episode they create, and it depends on the contract if these studios can enjoy the profit from the diversified business of streaming or merchandising. In most cases, the studios obtain only a minor proportion of the entire earnings because of the lack of business function and right to manage the diversified business. At the same time, as shown in the comment above, technological improvement of visual development tools requires the studios' continuous effort to catch up and consider the integration with their traditional drawing, and the audience's expectation toward the quality of work dramatically sores. These external environments put these production studios under more pressure and make it more challenging to secure sustainable growth.

Purpose and Motivation

As explored in the previous chapter, the Japanese animation sector suffers from internal distortion on the balance of production effort against financial return. One of the root causes of the distortion is the massive uncertainty on the common question, “Will it be a hit?”. Because it is difficult to predict how much popularity and the

following financial success each work can gain, the industry keeps its responsibility diverse across functions such as content creation, distribution, streaming, merchandising, etc. The difficulty of foreseeing hits can be imagined from the perspective of one audience, too. Even if one animation work made a massive success in terms of popularity and financial return, it is still hard to say if there is logic behind the success, nor can content developers apply it to other works.

If we capture success factors comprehensively, there are various factors, from scenario development, character design, animation and art quality, distribution channel arrangement, and marketing and promotion. More precisely, not limited to what is mentioned above, various factors combine and result in financial success. However, most people would agree that the most fundamental element is whether the animation works are attractive enough without being helped by channel arrangement, marketing, and promotional efforts. Therefore, this thesis will focus on the animation work and try to derive the best possible success factor they have in common as content. In addition, the thesis will further examine whether those derived success factors can be recognized across different audience groups.

Scope

As a scope for this study, this thesis focuses on only Japanese animation created mainly by Japanese studios, excluding works done by other international studios. Furthermore, the animation work here mainly means 2D animation, excluding 3D animation.

Based on the purpose and motivation mentioned above, this thesis tries to derive “what key factors of successful animation works” inductively. On the flip side, this

thesis does not focus on “why those animations were successful.” Because of the limited number of theories about this study area, this thesis positions deductive reasoning out of scope.

Lastly, as an assumption, successful animations here mean an outcome situation where the work becomes popular, a broad audience chooses to watch it, and the work nature loyal audiences who take action like recommending others or purchasing related products, which brings long-term financial returns as a result.

Methodology

As the first step, through a literature review, this study identifies a few factors that are considered essential to make the work successful.

As the next step, the thesis takes a survey to observe whether the success factors defined in the first step will differ by audience. The survey’s target geographical area is limited to two countries, Japan and Taiwan, with primary respondents being Japanese and Taiwanese, respectively. By deriving insights through these steps, this thesis aims to derive and define possible factors for successful animation work from observation.

Chapter 2 Literature Review

This section summarizes insights from literature about the success factors of animation and to what extent they have already been revealed.

Possible Success Factors

According to Saputra, Manongga, and Hendry (2021), ideas are a major factor in the success of developing IP in the animation industry. In general, animation studios first come up with an initial idea, after which they build a concept, which normally includes a story summary, characters, and a first set of storyboards. This literature refers to “ideas” themselves as significant success factors that lead to developing IPs, which is a significant source of bringing financial return from peripheral industry segments of animation creation, such as merchandising, advertising, or gaming.

In terms of “storyboards,” the criticality of storytelling is well-known in the business scene too. Zak (2014) describes that many business people have already discovered the power of storytelling in a practical sense – they have observed how compelling a well-constructed narrative can be. This article emphasizes that recent studies have proved that a well-structured narrative can influence people’s behavior significantly.

As shown above, a few pieces of literature indicate that factors such as “concept,” “summary,” “characters,” “story,” and “narrative” are the critical success factors. However, few clear definitions are given as to what these factors mean exactly. There still are gaps that have not been adequately explained in terms of what factors enable animation content to succeed. Therefore, this thesis tries to approach this gap and

seek one step clearer insight into it.

Furthermore, the following literature indicates some standard features of successful animation works. Fujitsu (2019) indicates factors such as “entertainment” values, which skillfully combine elements such as humor, action, and romance to entertain the audience. He also mentions that “message”, the anime work’s conveying deep themes and arguments, also leads to successful results. According to him, the message is often linked to social issues, ethical dilemmas, friendship, or personal growth, which resonate with viewers and evoke empathy and emotions.

In another literature, Hikawa (2023) mentions some other factors. For example, he mentions that appealing “characters” are crucial for the success of anime works. Characters to whom audience can relate or find attractive in terms of appearance and personality enhance the work's charm. He also raises the importance of “artistry”, especially taking an example of recent animation works. He emphasizes that anime works' artistic elements, such as beautiful artwork, intricate animation, and effective use of colors, enhance their appeal and create a strong impression on the viewers.

Hypothesis: Five Successful Factors

Based on the literature review, this thesis seeks to set the following factors as possible factors contributing to successful animation works.

- 1. Entertainment:** This work's entertainment is highly appealing. It includes elements of comical jokes, dynamic battles or sports scenes, and heart-pounding romance. It brings joy and a refreshing feeling after watching.

2. **Characters:** This work's characters are highly appealing. The characters are very charming, including their physical charm like cuteness, beauty, or handsomeness, as well as their inner qualities like bravery, intelligence, or honesty. Additionally, the characters' humanization and genuine emotions and behaviors make them highly appealing.
3. **Story:** This work's story is highly appealing. It has a smooth narrative flow, gripping plot twists, and unexpected developments that attract the audience. Furthermore, the world-building in the story is comprehensive, with consistent and logical settings in terms of time, geography, the origin of the fictional world, and the lives of the people in that world. This detailed world setting allows the audience to get deeply immersed.
4. **Message:** This work's messages are highly appealing. The work conveys profound messages, such as respecting gender diversity, coexistence among different races, emotional bonds within families, genuine love, and personal growth through overcoming challenges. It not only provides pure entertainment but also imparts essential messages and themes.
5. **Artistry:** This work's visual aesthetics and other artistic elements are highly appealing. It features beautiful visuals, detailed and smooth animation, outstanding sound effects, impressive music (including the opening and ending theme songs), and/or voice acting. These artistic features highlight the work's uniqueness.

To conclude this chapter, there are some pieces of literature this study can based on, which highlights the importance of elements; however, none of the literature attempts to capture its comprehensive perspective of what consists of successful anime

work. Therefore, based on the corrected elements, we temporarily defined the elements below as the five factors for successful anime work: 1. Entertainment, 2. Characters, 3. Story, 4. Message, and 5. Artistry.

Chapter 3 Research Method

This chapter elaborates on the research design. Starting from the selection of work that respondents answered, it also covers the survey questions we asked respondents and how we conducted the survey.

Selection of Works

In order to test the validity of these five factors, this thesis conducted a survey regarding a series of anime works on which survey respondents scored. The anime in Table 1. were chosen with the three criteria as mentioned below.

The first criterion is “popularity”. All of the works in the list represent popular anime at one of the anime platforms, “AniList.” AniList is a popular online platform for anime and manga enthusiasts, allowing users to rate anime works. As of today, January 2024, AniList has gained more than 2.4 million users across the world and also has more than 19,000 anime works rated by them. On this platform, all users can rate the anime using a score between 0 and 10, with an increment of 0.5 points. In Table 1., the column “Average Rating” shows the average rate of the AniList users, and the column next, “Highest Rated All Time,” shows the highest rank the anime work has had throughout the history of rating. Based on the table, all the works selected have the higher rank among all the 19,000 anime works. Thus, we can conclude that these animes are fair enough to be recognized as examples of successful works.

The second criterion is the “recency” of the initial release. It is obvious that if an anime work was released ten years ago and an incremental reputation has brought more people to see it, the work will be called successful enough. However, it is fair to label

them as “too established” for this survey, leaving no room for survey respondents to state their honest opinions. So, the anime works in the list were selected from those whose initial release was after 2019.

The third criterion is “diversity”. For the purpose of testing the five factor’s universal validity, the selection of anime work tried not to depend on specific genres. Therefore, they were chosen from various genres: adventure, drama, action, mystery, comedy, slice of life, sport, romance, etc.

Table 1. Selection of Works, Average Rating on AniList
(Modified from AniList, 2024)

#	Anime Title	Genre	Initial Release	Average Rating	Highest Rated All Time
1	Demon Slayer (Season 1)	Adventure, Drama	2019	83%	#103
2	BEASTARS	Mystery, Drama	2019	77%	#417
3	Jujutsu Kaisen (Season 1)	Action	2020	86%	#41
4	Ranking of Kings	Fantasy, Adventure	2021	84%	#86
5	Ohi no Ko	Mystery, Drama	2022	86%	#43
6	Bocchi the Rock!	Comedy, Slice of life	2022	87%	#23
7	Chainsaw Man	Action, Horror	2022	85%	#62
8	SPY×FAMILY	Comedy, Action	2022	81%	#59
9	BLUELOCK	Sport	2022	82%	#151
10	Skip and Loafer	Romance, Slice of life	2023	81%	#170

Survey Questions

Regarding this list of anime works, the survey attempts to let respondents rate their five factors. The entire survey questions are listed in the Appendix section.

Survey method

Research was conducted on two groups: a Taiwanese audience and a Japanese audience. For both groups, each survey link with the respective language was distributed via social network services such as Facebook and Instagram, as well as personal messengers. The survey was conducted from 30 October to 10 November 2023. The collected data observations are as follows.

Table 2. Data Observations (Made in this study)

Anime Title	Taiwanese audience	Japanese audience	Total
Demon Slayer	152	40	192
BEASTARS	23	2	25
Jujutsu Kaisen	202	21	223
Ranking of Kings	35	3	38
Oh! no Ko	127	10	137
Bocchi the Rock!	202	6	208
Chainsaw Man	71	9	80
SPY×FAMILY	214	16	230
BLUELOCK	39	2	41
Skip and Loafer	47	2	49
Total Data Observation	1,112	111	1,223

The collected data contained respondents who had not seen any work listed in the survey, so those responses were filtered out from Table 2. In addition, there are some irregular data, such as marking 1 for every factor, which was probably caused by misunderstanding the question, so this type of data was eliminated from the master table too. After cleansing, a total of 1,223 data observations remained for analysis. 1,112 are from Taiwanese audiences, and 111 are from Japanese audiences.

Chapter 4. Analysis

This chapter presents the analytical insights from the survey. First, we describe the basic backgrounds of the data collected through the survey. Second, we elaborate on the findings and insights from the datasets, focusing on the Taiwanese data sample. Lastly, we compare two samples, Taiwanese and Japanese audiences, centered around one anime work and derive managerial insights.

4.1 Data Description

Before going to the detailed analysis, this section describes the basic data background, covering respondents' attributes such as gender, age, experience of watching anime series, and behavior of how frequently they watch anime series.

Taiwanese Audience Data

Respondents' gender, age, and experience of watching anime series varied as shown in Table 3. Females and males each consisted of approximately half of the whole respondents, indicating the sample represents the population well.

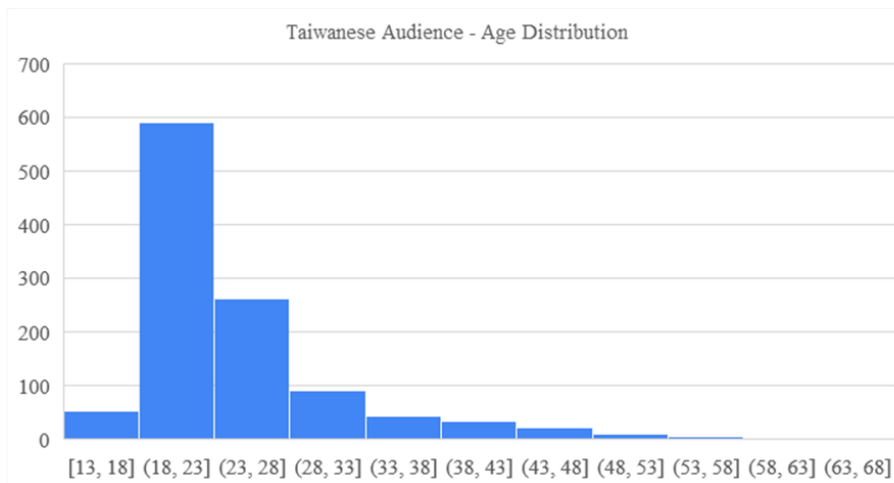
Table 3. Taiwan Audience - Gender Distribution (Made in this study)

Gender	Data Observation	Proportion
Female	537	48.3%
Male	556	50.0%
Do not specify	19	1.7%
Total	1,112	100.0%

Age differed widely from the youngest, 13 years old, to the oldest, 67 years old; however, most respondents were allocated between the ages of 18 and 28, which

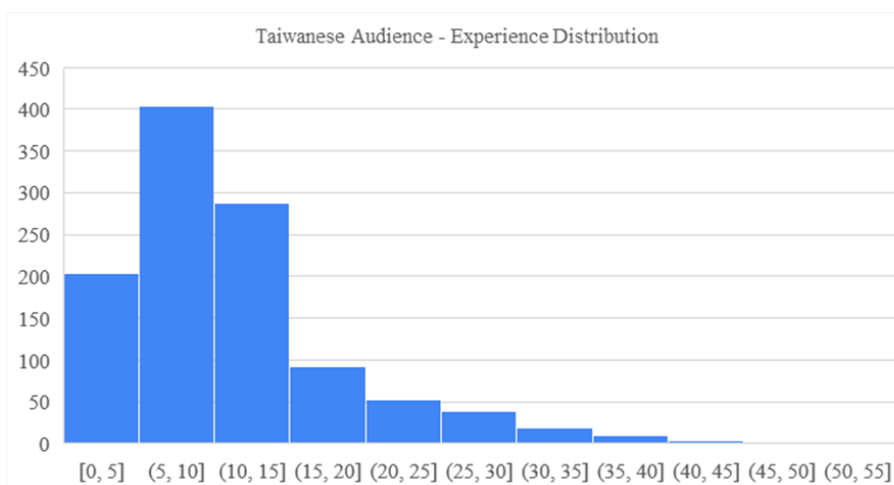
resulted in an average of 24.9 years old. Similarly, the experience of watching anime series varied between 0 to 55 years, and the average is 11.4 years. According to Kadokawa Corporation’s Anime Marketing White Paper 2017 (2016), besides the kids’ generation below nine years old, teenagers and twenties are the majority of the anime audience; thus, these statistics of sample data support the usefulness of the findings and insights to actual target audiences of Japanese animation.

Figure 4. Taiwan Audience - Age Distribution (Made in this study)



Age Distribution	
Average	24.9
Median	23.0
Mode	23.0
Minimum	13.0
Maximum	67.0

Figure 5. Taiwan Audience - Experience Distribution (Made in this study)



Experience Distribution	
Average	11.4
Median	10.0
Mode	10.0
Minimum	0.0
Maximum	55.0

As shown in Table 4, the behavior of how frequently respondents watch anime showed that the largest portion was the most frequent category, with ten or more anime works per year, with as much as 39.9%. The second largest group was 4-6 anime works per year with 26.2%, and the third largest was 1-3 anime works per year with 20.2%.

Table 4. Taiwan Audience - Behavior Distribution (Made in this study)

Frequency to watch	Data Observation	Proportion
0 works per year	7	0.6%
1-3 works per year	225	20.2%
4-6 works per year	291	26.2%
7-9 works per year	149	13.4%
10 or more works per year	440	39.6%
Total	1,112	100.0%

Overall, the collected data from the Taiwanese audience represented the general population well and the most significant anime target audience; therefore, we can consider the findings and insights in the following sections to be reasonably reliable.

Japanese Audience Data

The Japanese respondents' gender, age, and experience watching anime series varied as below. Table 5 shows that females and males each consisted 55.0% and 42.3%, respectively in the Japanese data, where the portions were wry considering that Taiwanese data is about half male and half female.

Table 5. Japan Audience - Gender Distribution (Made in this study)

Gender	Data Observation	Proportion
Female	61	55.0%
Male	47	42.3%
Do not specify	3	2.7%
Total	111	100.0%

The age ranged widely from the youngest, 12 years old, to the oldest, 58 years old, with an average of 36 years old. The majority of the respondents were allocated between 32 and 37 years old. Accordingly, the experience varied from a minimum of 0 to a maximum of 54 years, with an average 26.3 years. As the table and Figure 6 and 7 show, Japanese audience data points are relatively distorted, not allocated in a normal distribution.

Figure 6. Japan Audience - Age Distribution (Made in this study)

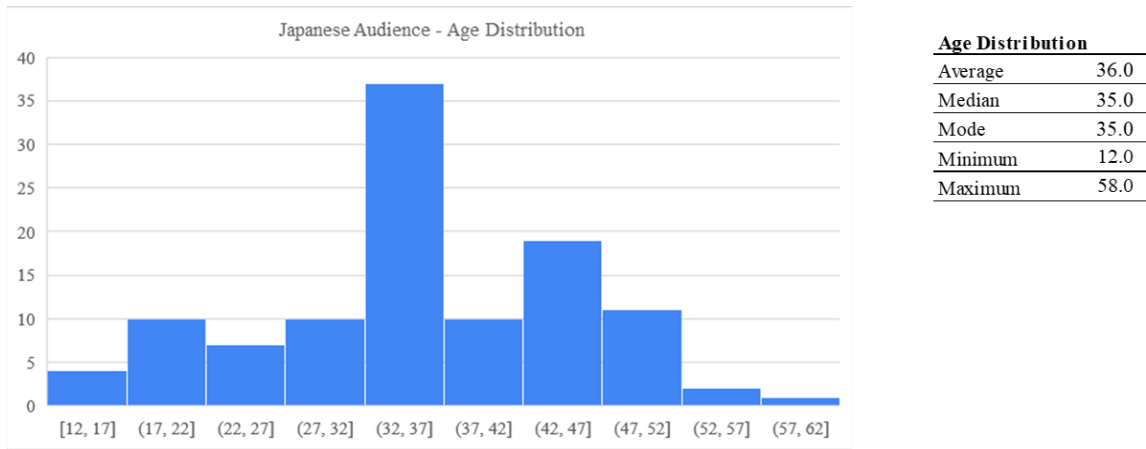
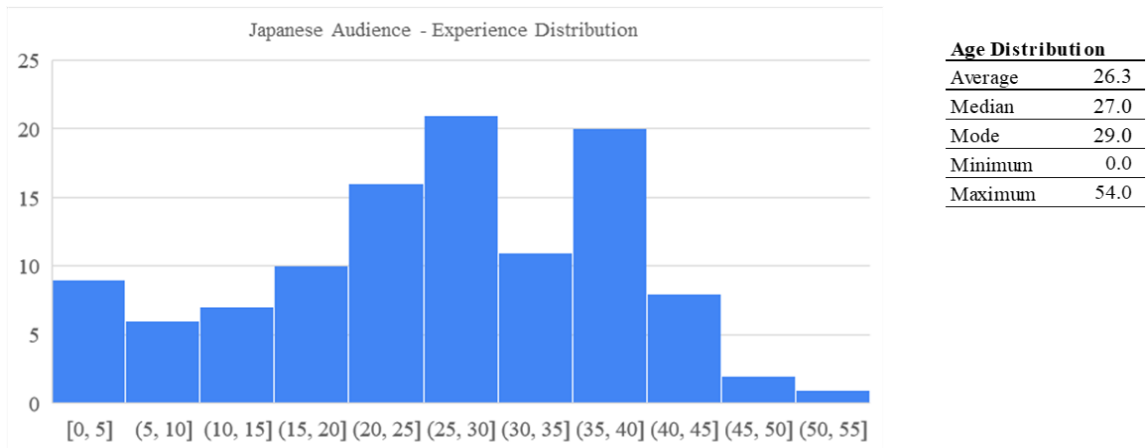


Figure 7. Japan Audience - Experience Distribution (Made in this study)



As shown in Table 6, the behavior of how frequently respondents watch anime showed the largest portion was the least frequent category, 0-3 anime works per year with as much as 44.1%. The second largest group was more than 10 anime works per year with 27.9%, and the third largest was 4-6 anime works per year with 21.6%. The allocation also differed from the respective observation of the Taiwanese audience.

Table 6. Japan Audience - Behavior Distribution (Made in this study)

Frequency to watch	Data Observation	Proportion
1-3 works per year	49	44.1%
4-6 works per year	24	21.6%
7-9 works per year	7	6.3%
10 or more works per year	31	27.9%
Total	111	100.0%

To summarize section 4.1, the sample data size of the Taiwanese audience was large and reliable enough, while the size of the Japanese audience was not large enough. Therefore, through the following analysis, we conduct a deep-dive analysis of work data using Taiwanese audience data. Regarding the comparison of Taiwanese versus Japanese data, we picked up an anime work that got enough responses in the Japanese audience sample too, which is “Demon Slayer.” By focusing on the work with enough data observation from two groups, we try to derive valuable findings and insights that are fairly reliable for enterprises and practitioners in the Animation Creative Industry.

4.2 Analysis of Taiwanese Audience Data

This chapter elaborates on findings and insights from the analysis of Taiwanese Audience Data. Table 7 shows the average scores of each five-factor earned per Anime work. As we can see from this data, the average rate varied between the minimum of 3.49 from BLUELOCK’s message factor and the maximum of 4.96 from BEASTERS’s character.

Table 7. Average Scores on five factors each Anime (Made in this study)

Anime Title	# of Respondents	Entertainment	Character	Story	Message	Artistry
Oshi no Ko	127	4.46 (0.76)	4.58 (0.72)	4.41 (0.71)	4.11 (0.92)	4.45 (0.77)
SPY×FAMILY	214	4.69 (0.49)	4.70 (0.56)	4.19 (0.81)	3.75 (1.00)	4.11 (0.88)
Demon Slayer	152	4.39 (0.76)	4.39 (0.81)	4.01 (0.95)	4.02 (1.03)	4.57 (0.74)

Bocchi the Rock!	202	4.74 (0.56)	4.73 (0.54)	4.27 (0.81)	3.93 (0.94)	4.68 (0.59)
BEASTARS	23	4.22 (0.60)	4.96 (0.21)	4.78 (0.52)	4.83 (0.39)	4.57 (0.66)
Skip and Loafer	47	4.38 (0.82)	4.91 (0.41)	4.70 (0.55)	4.70 (0.51)	4.32 (0.66)
BLUELOCK	39	4.67 (0.53)	4.46 (0.79)	3.90 (0.82)	3.49 (1.14)	3.97 (0.84)
Jujutsu Kaisen	202	4.47 (0.62)	4.54 (0.72)	3.93 (0.96)	3.56 (1.08)	4.46 (0.81)
Ranking of Kings	35	4.03 (0.82)	4.66 (0.59)	4.26 (0.85)	4.63 (0.49)	3.97 (0.79)
Chainsaw Man	71	4.39 (0.89)	4.69 (0.58)	4.49 (0.67)	3.92 (1.11)	4.54 (0.81)
Total	1,112	4.53 (0.68)	4.63 (0.66)	4.20 (0.86)	3.92 (1.02)	4.41 (0.80)

<Legend>

- Numbers in the parentheses: Standard Deviation
- Red highlight (Shaded cell and Bold Letter): Score above 4.5
- Blue highlight (Shaded cell): Score above 4.0

Although the rates varied, all ten animes had at least two factors rated more than 4.0. Moreover, all ten animes had entertainment and characters scored more than 4.0. From this fact, we can say that entertainment and character are fundamental aspects of successful work, which must be good enough to assist other features.

In addition, all ten animes had at least one factor scored more than 4.5. For example, Oshi no Ko got more than 4.5 only in character, Demon Slayer got more than 4.5 only in artistry, and Jujutsu Kaisen got more than 4.5 only in characters. From this fact, it can be said that anime work needs to have at least one strong dimension that can drive the work to become successful.

Furthermore, considering the distribution and diversification of rates across the factors, it can be said that every factor is somewhat essential and individually contributes to some part of success. Therefore, we would like to conclude that these five factors are reasonably valid as a framework to define successful work.

Table 8 shows percentages of three types of actions taken after watching each anime work. The three actions are as follows:

- Told friends and family about the work or recommended it to them
- Purchased merchandise or participated in events related to the work
- Shared the excellence of this work with others through social media, online forums, or other channels

Table 8. Proportion of Actions Taken (Made in this study)

Anime Title	# of Respondents	Action1: Recommend	Action2: Purchase	Action3: Share
Oshi no Ko	127	83.5%	17.3%	26.8%
SPY×FAMILY	214	86.0%	27.6%	20.6%
Demon Slayer	152	73.7%	28.9%	12.5%
Bocchi the Rock!	202	82.2%	40.1%	37.1%
BEASTARS	23	87.0%	17.4%	39.1%
Skip and Loafer	47	91.5%	8.5%	38.3%
BLUELOCK	39	92.3%	33.3%	20.5%
Jujutsu Kaisen	202	84.7%	40.6%	34.2%
Ranking of Kings	35	88.6%	0.0%	17.1%
Chainsaw Man	71	90.1%	47.9%	36.6%
Total	1,112	83.9%	30.8%	27.7%

It is worth mentioning that across all ten anime works, the proportion of recommendations was more than 80%. These percentages explain why when the work itself is well developed, it allows people to recommend it quickly, and it can gain a larger audience organically.

In addition, table 8 shows a few noticeable points. First, the proportion of respondents for Chainsaw Man that took action 2: purchase was remarkably high at 47.9%, compared with other anime works. Chainsaw Main is known as one of the most stylish anime works in recent times. For example, its characters are not drawn in the typical anime style; instead, they are depicted more realistically. In addition, it is said that the main voice actor was directed to hold a voice-over in a way the actor himself

talks in his daily life. As represented in this episode, the entire work was developed in a stylish manner like a Hollywood movie, not like a conventional anime. So, it can be assumed that this artistic feature allowed many audiences to purchase their merchandised goods. Additionally, it is also worth mentioning that the availability of the goods was remarkable. In the year 2023, Uniqlo, one of the biggest clothing stores, sold its collaboration T-shirts, which undoubtedly helped potential buyers notice the existence of the anime merchandise.

On the other hand, the proportion of respondents for Ranking of Kings that took action 2, purchase, was just 0%. We believe this should result from a simple lack of merchandise availability. Looking at the number of merchandises in one of the biggest online platforms, Aniplex plus (2024), the number of items of Ranking of Kings is limited to just 16 items and 6 of them are series of DVD boxes, which cost more than 15,000 Japanese Yen each. In comparison, for example, Bocchi the Rock! has 144 items on the same platform, and Demon Slayer has as many as 916 items at the same time. Considering these anime works got enough respondents in purchasing action, the 0% of Ranking of Kings seems simply because of the lack of merchandise. The variety and availability of merchandise hugely depend on the effort of the enterprises that produce and manage its intellectual property, so we can indicate that if only the team can make a certain amount of effort to release the related goods to markets, there are potential audiences to make purchases.

Lastly, in Table 8, BEASTERS showed the highest proportion of action 3, share, with 39.1%. Reviewing Table 7, the work also showed the highest score of 4.83 in the message factor. Although the correlations between actions and factor scores are to be elaborated in later sections, it can be guessed that having more attractive, profound

messages triggers the audience to share about their experience watching it more widely on social networks.

Next, Table 9 shows the correlation between each action taken and the average score on five factors among ten anime works.

Table 9. Correlation between Percentage of Action Taken and Average Score on Factors (Made in this study)

% of Action	Average Score				
	Entertainment	Character	Story	Message	Artistry
Action1 (Recommend)	-0.10	0.45	0.32	0.14	-0.55
Action2 (Purchase)	0.64	-0.35	-0.40	-0.77	0.44
Action3 (Share)	0.05	0.72	0.63	0.25	0.53

<Legend>

- Red highlight (Shaded cell): High positive correlation, with above 0.6
- Blue highlight (Shaded cell): High negative correlation, with below -0.6

Table 9 shows that there are pairs of a factor and an action that are highly correlated with each other. For example, two blue highlighted cells, action 2: purchase and entertainment and action 3: share and character, showed high positive correlations. While, a red highlighted cell, action 2: purchase and message showed a high negative correlation. Considering there are many other with weak correlations, these correlated pairs should be examined in more detail.

Table 10 is the series of data points, which showed higher positive and negative correlations in Table 9. To graphically represent the information in Table 10, we insert several scatter plots below.

Table 10. Correlation between Percentage of Action Taken and Average Score on Factors - Data Points (Made in this study)

	Avg. Score	% of Action	Avg. Score	% of Action	Avg. Score	% of Action
Anime Title	Entertainment	Purchase	Character	Share	Message	Purchase
Oshi no Ko	4.46	0.17	4.58	0.27	4.11	0.17
SPY×FAMILY	4.69	0.28	4.70	0.21	3.75	0.28
Demon Slayer	4.39	0.29	4.39	0.13	4.02	0.29
Bocchi the Rock!	4.74	0.40	4.73	0.37	3.93	0.40
BEASTARS	4.22	0.17	4.96	0.39	4.83	0.17
Skip and Loafer	4.38	0.09	4.91	0.38	4.70	0.09
BLUELOCK	4.67	0.33	4.46	0.21	3.49	0.33
Jujutsu Kaisen	4.47	0.41	4.54	0.34	3.56	0.41
Ranking of Kings	4.03	0.00	4.66	0.17	4.63	0.00
Chainsaw Man	4.39	0.48	4.69	0.37	3.92	0.48
Total	4.53	0.31	4.63	0.28	3.92	0.31

Figure 8 shows that valuing entertainment was positively associated with purchase actions. This means that when the anime works entertained audiences, they were also willing to make some purchases. Considering that it is standard practice to have countless goods shops in amusement parks or theaters, it is natural for people to make purchases when they have a memorable experience. We can guess that this behavior also applies to watching anime, meaning that the more one anime work realizes memorable experiences, the more significant potential the anime has for its audience to pay for it.

Figure 8. Correlation of Action: Purchase % and Average Score on Factor: Entertainment (Made in this study)

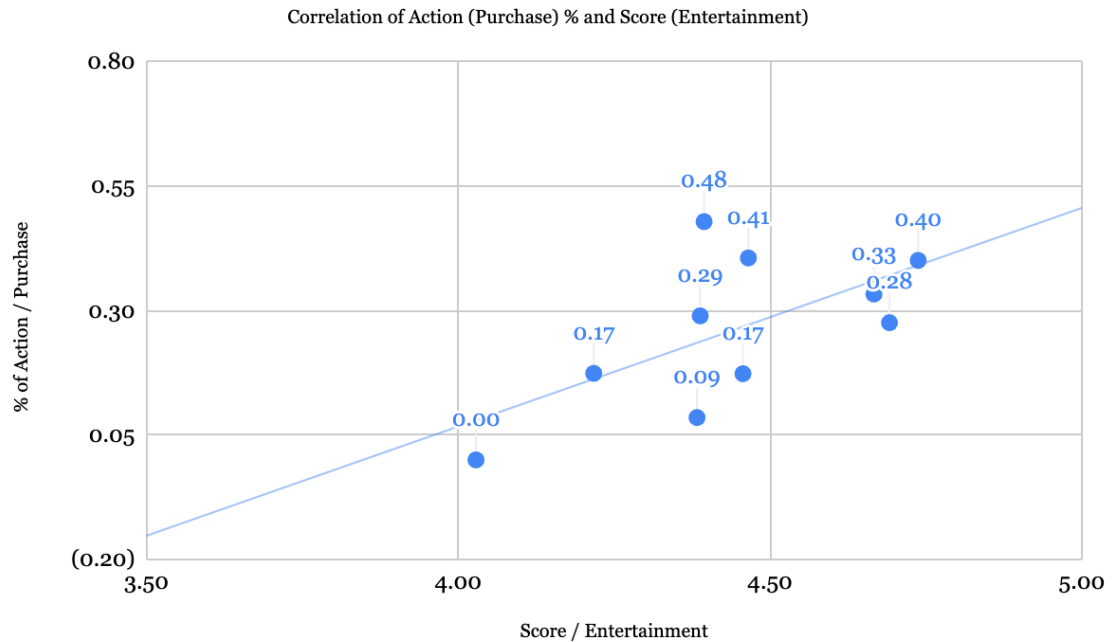
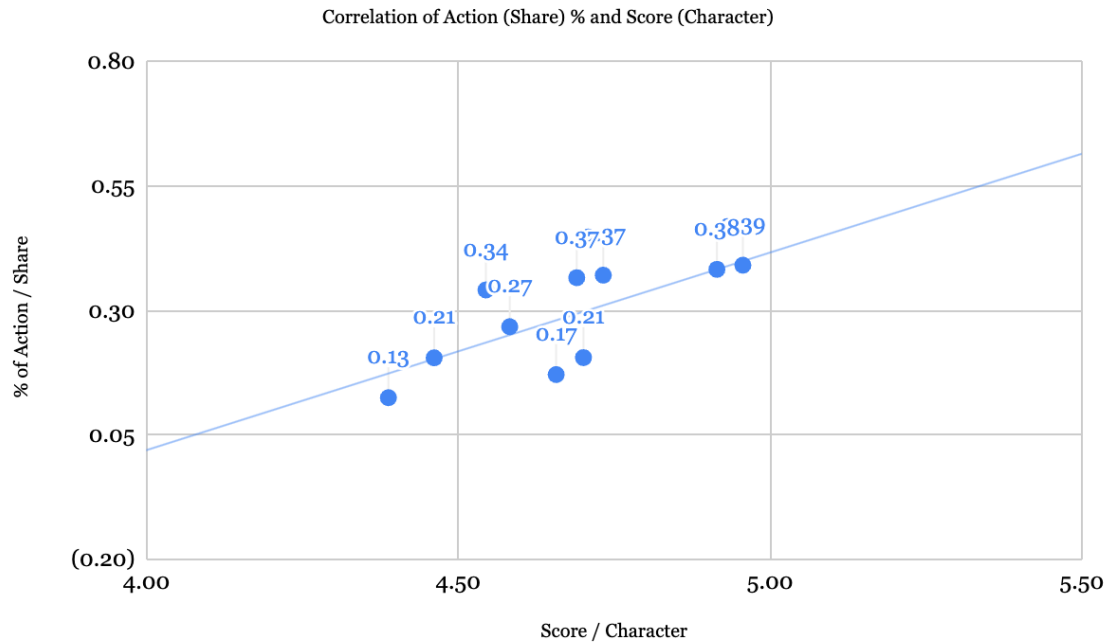


Figure 9 shows that valuing character was positively associated with sharing action. This means that when audiences found characters attractive, they were also open to sharing about them widely on social media.

A character is often the most simple and independent component of anime works. When compared with other factors such as story or message, a character is more independent with a name to call it, which helps the audience share about it. When it is identifiable by name, anyone can refer to an identical presence no matter what context it is being shared, so this distinguishes character factor's convenience for being shared from other factors. These features of characters significantly contribute to the correlations with the action of share.

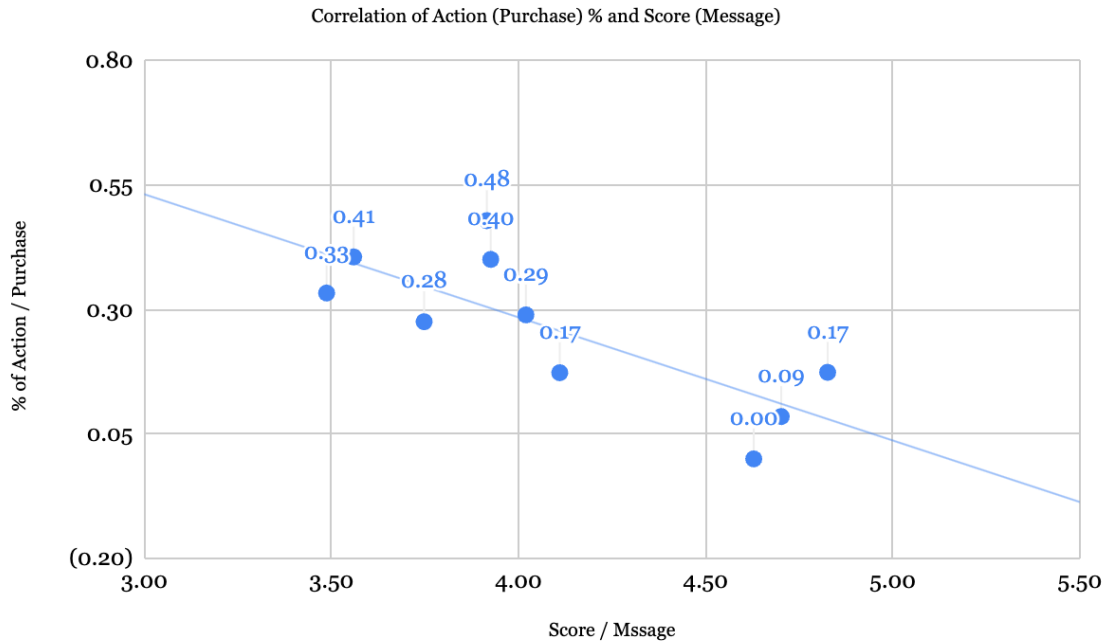
Figure 9. Correlation of Action % of Share and Average Score on Character
(Made in this study)



From Figure 9's insight, we also can say that attractive characters can elevate an anime work's potential for being shared and acquiring wider audiences. This indicates to practitioners the importance of character development in development of anime work.

Figure 10 shows that valuing message was negatively associated with purchase action. If we directly interpret this correlation, we can interpret that when audiences find anime works' messages profound, they tend not to make purchases regarding the work. However, this straightforward interpretation seems counterintuitive, so we provide our explanations in the following paragraph.

Figure 10. Correlation of Action % Purchase and Average Score on Message
(Made in this study)



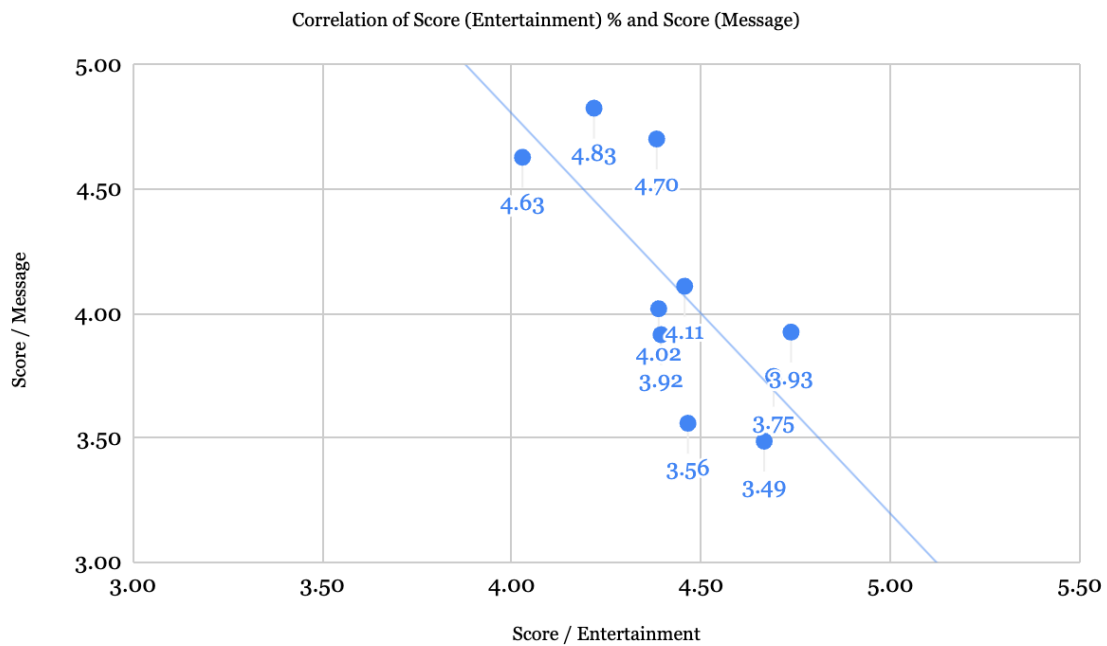
To examine Figure 10's result in more detail, we also checked the correlation between factors. Table 11 and Figure 11 show the correlation between average scores, entertainment, and message. The correlation exponent is -0.74, which shows a significant negative correlation between these two factors.

Table 11. Correlation between Average Scores on Entertainment and Message
(Made in this Study)

Anime Title	Avg. Score	Avg. Score	Correlation	Entertainment
	Entertainment	Message		
Oshi no Ko	4.46	4.11	-0.74	
SPY×FAMILY	4.69	3.75		
Demon Slayer	4.39	4.02		
Bocchi the Rock!	4.74	3.93		
BEASTARS	4.22	4.83		
Skip and Loafer	4.38	4.70		
BLUELOCK	4.67	3.49		
Jujutsu Kaisen	4.47	3.56		

Ranking of Kings	4.03	4.63
Chainsaw Man	4.39	3.92
Total	4.53	3.92

Figure 11. Correlation between Average Scores on Factors: Entertainment and Message
(Made in this Study)



This tendency can be explained by taking the example of an actual anime work. For instance, BEASTERS's scores on a factor message were the highest at 4.83, but on a factor entertainment, they were relatively low at 4.22. The anime work, BEASTARS, actually brings unique messages by asking if carnivorous animals and herbivorous animals can coexist with each other, also illustrating prejudice against each species sometimes. From MyAnimeList's (2024) review of this work, it is clear that audiences who value this work also value this message's essence, generalizing the message to our human lives. However, when a message becomes profound, like in this case, it also

loses some entertainment, just because the brain works to think about messages, and the emotional part of being entertained is typically opposite natures against each other.

In Figure 9, we have already explained that there is a positive correlation between purchase action and entertainment score. Combining this with the correlation between entertainment and message, we would like to remark that anime works in which the message is highly valued tend to miss elevating their entertaining essence, which results in a lower purchase action rate.

From this insight, it can be said that one anime work can have its feature on message; however, it also still needs to have moderate attractiveness in entertainment to induce the audience to make a purchase and lead to financial success. Having a profound message is undoubtedly attractive and builds a solid fan base. It would be a plus if the work could add entertainment essence to push people toward purchasing.

To conclude section 4.2, we summarize some suggestions for managerial insights. First, from the data collected, we can see that each of the five factors is evaluated mutually and independently, so the five factors- entertainment, character, story, message, and artistry- are reasonably valid for evaluating anime works.

Next, among the five factors, there are two fundamental factors: entertainment and character, so we suggest that practitioners consider these factors throughout the production process. Moreover, it is also recommended that the work has one prominent factor; it can be any of the five factors that exceed the average level of other works.

Lastly, about the correlation between scores and actions, there was a high positive correlation between entertainment and purchase action, as well as between characters and share action. Although practitioners create good quality anime work,

more is needed to ensure success in terms of popularity and financial performance. To be recognized, watched, and taken action by broader audiences, an anime work needs to have some outstanding characters that enable sharing and be entertaining to trigger people to make purchases.

Furthermore, when an anime work's message is highly valued, it tends to lose its appeal as entertainment. Therefore, practitioners can recall this when producing message-oriented anime works so they can achieve a good balance of profound messages and superb entertainment.

4.3 Analysis of Specific Work

This section focuses on each anime work and analyzes the differences between audience groups. We characterized the groups by attributes such as experience and behavior of watching anime. The data observations are based on the Taiwanese audience, which obtained a larger number of data points than the Japanese audience. To analyze specific works, we picked up the top three works that gained a more significant number of data observations in Table 2, which were “Jujutsu Kaisen,” “SPY×FAMILY,” and “Bocchi the Rock!”. This analysis compares the five factors scored by different audience groups by behavior or experience. Along with this comparison, we focus on the survey results with differences between groups that are statistically significant (significance level = 5%).

Jujutsu Kaisen

Regarding the first anime work, Jujutsu Kaisen, Table 12 shows average scores on five factors per behavior group, representing how often the audience watches anime

yearly. In each column, the red-colored cell shows the highest score, and the green-colored cell shows the lowest score. According to Table 12, among the four groups, the group with 7-9 works per year evaluated every factor of the work lower than the other groups.

Table 12. Average Scores on Five Factors per Behavior Group
(Made in this study)

# of Works per Year	Entertainment	Character	Story	Message	Artistry	# of Respondents
0 works	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	0
1-3 works	4.51	4.56	4.11	3.98	4.40	45
4-6 works	4.51	4.57	3.97	3.58	4.52	65
7-9 works	4.12	4.45	3.58	3.06	4.24	33
10 or more works	4.58	4.56	3.93	3.49	4.54	59
Total	4.47	4.54	3.93	3.56	4.46	202

We conducted an ANOVA test to see whether the differences were statistically significant. The results showed that for the factors entertainment (p-value: 0.0054) and message (p-value: 0.0025), there were significant differences, while for the others, characters, story, and artistry, there were no significant differences (p-values: greater than 0.05). Therefore, we provide further discussions below for the two factors with significant differences among groups.

The score on message was the lowest in a group with 7-9 works per year at 3.06 and highest in a group with 0-3 works at 3.98. Among behavior groups, groups with less frequent watching behavior valued messages more compared with groups with more frequent watching behavior.

Jujutsu Kaisen is action scene-oriented work, and its production firm, MAPPA, is known for the high quality of animation practices on those dynamic motions.

Compared with other works that focus on the message, there are not many messages delivered. From the research result, we assume that for people who do not frequently watch, it was less obvious that the work does not have many messages, and its message aspect still attracted an audience to some extent. On the other hand, for those who watch several anime works frequently, it was evident that the work did not emphasize the message aspect, and the audience scored fairly.

The message factor of anime works often depends on original scenarios and cannot be edited much when developing its animation. Therefore, we suggest that practitioners who produce anime work focus extra on investigating whether the work has an attractive message. Then, suppose they found little attraction with the message factor in the original scenarios of which they decided to develop anime work. In that case, we suggest polishing one of the other factors so that the work can attract an audience with another prominent aspect, though it focuses less on its message.

While, if practitioners who develop animation have the work's original IP (intellectual property), it would be more effective to polish the message essence as one of the preproduction initiatives.

Lastly, the entertainment scores were lowest in a group that watched 7-9 works per year and highest in a group that watched more than ten works. This observation contains contradictory results among two groups that see anime works most frequently. We do not have a good explanation for this result at this point; therefore, it remains a limitation of this study and a possible future study.

SPY×FAMILY

Regarding another Anime work, SPY×FAMILY, Table 13 shows average scores on five factors per behavior group. Among the five groups, the groups that watch the work more frequently evaluated every factor higher than the other groups.

Table 13. Average Scores on Five Factors per Behavior Group
(Made in this study)

# of Works per Year	Entertainment	Character	Story	Message	Artistry	# of Respondents
0 work	4.67	5.00	4.00	3.33	4.67	3
1-3 works	4.69	4.69	4.27	3.79	3.88	67
4-6 works	4.64	4.67	4.09	3.56	4.05	75
7-9 works	4.73	4.73	3.87	4.00	4.27	15
10 or more works	4.76	4.74	4.31	3.91	4.41	54
Total	4.69	4.70	4.19	3.75	4.11	214

We conducted an ANOVA test to see whether the differences were statistically significant. The results showed that for a factor artistry (p-value: 0.0089), there were substantial differences, while for the others, there were no significant differences (p-values: greater than 0.05). When conducting the ANOVA test, we excluded a group that watched 0 work per year because there were not enough respondents. We provide further discussions below regarding significant differences in the factor artistry.

Artistic features of anime work vary widely. It includes visual development, animated motions, voice acting, background music effects, opening / ending music and animation, etc. We can say that SPY×FAMILY is one of the anime works that successfully addressed these comprehensive artistic factors and elevated its overall artistry. For example, its characters are drawn stylishly, and its European-style cityscape backgrounds are pictured very detailed and realistic. On top of that, the work's overall

color tone is well controlled, and it gives an impression that SPY×FAMILY is the work not only for kids and youth but also for grown-ups.

From the research result, those comprehensive visual charms are valued more by people who frequently watch them than those who do not. This suggests that if the work targets an audience who does not watch frequently, it can be enough for one anime work to have a few better aspects in its artistry. However, more is needed to attract an audience that watches frequently. If the work’s unique factor is artistry, we would suggest that it better have comprehensive advantages across various artistry aspects so that it can be valued regardless of whether the audience is an anime enthusiast.

Additionally, about SPY×FAMILY, Table 14 shows average scores on five factors per experience group, representing how much experience the audience has watching anime. In each column, the red cell shows the highest score, and the green cell shows the lowest score.

Table 14. Average Scores on Five Factors per Experience Group
(Made in this study)

# of Years Watching Anime	Entertainment	Character	Story	Message	Artistry	# of Respondents
1. 0-10	4.73	4.79	4.23	3.85	4.27	103
2. 11-20	4.63	4.61	4.13	3.55	3.90	87
3. 21-55	4.78	4.65	4.22	4.00	4.26	23
No Data	4.00	5.00	4.00	4.00	3.00	1
Total	4.69	4.70	4.19	3.75	4.11	214

We conducted an ANOVA test to see whether the differences were statistically significant. The results showed that for factors message (p-value: 0.0498) and artistry (p-value: 0.0091), there were substantial differences, while for the others, there were no significant differences (p-values: greater than 0.05). When conducting the ANOVA test,

we excluded one data oversedation, which contained an error in data. For these factors with significant differences, we provide further discussions below.

Firstly, regarding the message factors, the group of people with the most extended experience of watching anime valued the message more than the other two groups. SPY×FAMILY has a relatively subtle message throughout the episodes. While the work emphasizes its entertaining plots and pretty characters, it also moderately shows profound messages, such as the possibility of being united and overcoming significant differences as individuals. As one of the examples, watching the way the three main characters form a tentative family and overcoming challenges gives us a peaceful feeling, allowing us to become generous towards being different from each other.

The survey showed us that the people with the most extended experience of watching anime valued the message factor more than people with less experience. As explained earlier, the way to deliver the message of SPY×FAMILY is relatively subtle and is not emphasized as directly as other factors. We assume that when people are less experienced watching, it becomes more challenging to figure out its message, and only experienced people can notice. We would like to mention that it can be one of the practical approaches to differentiate where to attract audience groups with various experiences of watching anime. As we can learn from the case of SPY×FAMILY, it would be an effective strategy for practitioners to have a decisive factor on entertainment or character to attract people who have started watching anime in recent years, and another prominent factor even to attract people with more extended experience of watching anime.

Regarding the artistry factor, similar to the message factor above, people with the most extended experience of watching anime valued artistry more compared to the other two groups. This can be due to the reasons mentioned above in Table 13. The comprehensive approach of enhancing various artistry factors is more attractive to people who have had a more extended experience of watching anime.

From the overall survey result of SPY×FAMILY, we would like to suggest that there are ways of presenting message and artistry that especially appeal to groups of people who watch anime frequently or people with longer experiences. When developing anime works, it would be one of the perspectives to think differently on how to attract audiences with different tendencies concerning their behavior and experience of watching anime.

Bocchi the Rock!

The last anime work in this section is Bocchi the Rock! Table 15 shows average scores on five factors per behavior group. Similar to SPY×FAMILY’s Table 13, among the five groups, the groups that watch more frequently evaluated every factor of the work higher than the other groups.

Table 15. Average Scores on Five Factors per Behavior Group
(Made in this study)

# of Works per Year	Entertainment	Character	Story	Message	Artistry	# of Respondents
1-3 works	4.58	4.50	4.25	3.92	4.50	12
4-6 works	4.63	4.80	4.25	3.98	4.48	40
7-9 works	4.75	4.61	4.00	3.69	4.75	36
10 or more works	4.79	4.77	4.37	3.98	4.75	114
Total	4.74	4.73	4.27	3.93	4.68	202

We conducted an ANOVA test to see whether the differences were statistically significant. The results showed that for a factor artistry (p-value: 0.0480), there were significant differences, while for the others, there were no significant differences (p-values: greater than 0.05). When conducting the ANOVA test, we excluded a group that watched 0 work per year because there were insufficient respondents. For significant differences in this factor, we provide further discussions below.

Bocchi the Rock!'s most prominent feature is its unique music component. The anime's main character is a high school girl who dedicates her life to playing the guitar, and the story unfolds as the girl tries to play in a rock band to overcome her introversion and loneliness. The story includes the band playing their song, so it has various songs throughout the story, and of course, its opening and ending theme songs are very original.

Generally, anime works' theme songs are developed by an artist whom a record label assigns. It is common practice for record companies to participate in anime production projects and invest in financial aid to obtain the assignment right in return for their artists' promotion. However, in the case of Bocchi the Rock!, all the music was tailored, with collaborating with an individual lyric writer, composer, and arranger. The collaboration team created songs that also embody each anime character's real emotion in the story. On top of that, the songs were completed by the characters' voice actors singing the songs, so this anime work's music elements have been elevated to excel in artistry and originality.

The research results show that these prominent music features were valued by more people who frequently watch anime, such as groups that watch 7 to 9 or more than

ten works per year. We assume that to realize this music feature of the anime, the audience needs to compare works. For an audience to accurately find out how this anime specializes in one of the artistry factors, they need to have observational experience based on watching several anime series.

We would like to interpret this result by saying that there are artistry factors that are easily found by the audience and that are difficult to find. For practitioners, it would also be essential to balance out between those features that are obvious and profound. If one anime work only has profound aspects that anime enthusiasts value, it would be a risky approach for practitioners to miss an opportunity to attract an audience who only watch anime occasionally.

In conclusion, section 4.3 summarizes some suggestions for managerial insights. First, the analysis of three specific works shows us that there are distinct trends in how people frequently watch, and people occasionally watch value factors differently. For example, people who frequently watched anime severely evaluated Jujutsu Kaisen's message factor, while people who occasionally watch anime easily appreciated the same factor. Considering the more popularity the anime work gains amongst entertainment content, the more regularly the audience watches anime, it is recommended for practitioners to make possible amendments to the message aspect when the work's production is still in the preproduction stage.

In addition, we found clear tendencies in the artistry factors, such as SPY×FAMILY's comprehensive artistry was highly valued by people who frequently watch, and Bocchi the Rock!'s outstanding music aspect was also highly evaluated by people who frequently watch. This observation can be interpreted that these

sophisticated presentations of artistry can be understood only by consistent anime watchers, so practitioners better have another attraction to be valued by occasional audience watchers, who do not watch anime as their custom.

Next, the analysis also explained that there are different trends in how people who have a more extended history of watching anime and people who do not evaluate factors differently. SPY×FAMILY's profound message was valued highly by experienced anime audiences rather than inexperienced ones. This result also shows us that factors can be easily appreciated by one group but not by another.

Based on the finding that people evaluate the five factors differently depending on their behavior and experience, we suggest practitioners have a holistic strategy on where and how to attract these different audience groups. One possible failure scenario is that all the emphasis across factors is appreciated only by anime enthusiasts rather than anime beginners. In respect to potential target population, anime beginners, who have not watched anime so far or who are not watching that frequently, are larger than anime enthusiasts. Therefore, it would be an effective strategy to balance out the attraction intentionally so that the anime work can deliver its attractiveness enough to anime beginners, not only to anime enthusiasts.

4.4 Analysis of Japanese Audience Data

This section elaborates on findings from the analysis of Japanese Audience Data. Table 16 shows the average scores of each five-factor earned per Anime work. As we can see from this data, the average score varied between the minimum 2.00 of Skip and Loafer's entertainment factor and the maximum 5.00 of BEASTERS's story and message and BLUELOCK's message factors.

However, as shown in the number of respondents in Table 16, the data points obtained were not large enough, limited to 111 across ten anime works. However among the ten anime works, two of them, Demon Slayer and Jujutsu Kaisen, collected a relatively bigger number of data, so we would like to elaborate on these results.

Table 16. Average Scores on Five Factors each Anime (Made in this study)

Anime Title	# of Respondents	Entertainment	Character	Story	Message	Artistry
Oshi no Ko	10	4.70 (0.67)	4.40 (0.97)	4.80 (0.63)	4.00 (1.05)	4.30 (0.67)
SPY×FAMILY	16	4.38 (0.72)	4.63 (0.50)	4.31 (0.48)	3.38 (0.89)	3.81 (0.83)
Demon Slayer	40	4.38 (0.70)	4.60 (0.71)	4.53 (0.68)	3.93 (0.86)	4.40 (0.78)
Bocchi the Rock!	6	4.67 (0.52)	4.17 (1.17)	4.33 (0.82)	3.67 (1.21)	4.50 (0.55)
BEASTARS	2	4.50 (0.71)	4.00 (1.41)	5.00 (0.00)	5.00 (0.00)	3.50 (0.71)
Skip and Loafer	2	2.00 (1.41)	5.00 (0.00)	4.00 (1.41)	4.50 (0.71)	4.50 (0.71)
BLUELOCK	2	4.50 (0.71)	3.50 (2.12)	4.00 (1.41)	5.00 (0.00)	3.50 (2.12)
Jujutsu Kaisen	21	4.48 (0.75)	4.43 (0.98)	4.14 (1.01)	3.67 (1.06)	4.24 (1.14)
Ranking of Kings	3	3.00 (1.00)	4.33 (1.15)	4.33 (0.58)	4.33 (0.58)	3.33 (1.53)
Chainsaw Man	9	4.44 (0.88)	4.44 (0.73)	4.00 (0.87)	3.22 (1.09)	4.11 (0.93)
Total	111	4.37 (0.82)	4.49 (0.83)	4.38 (0.78)	3.79 (0.98)	4.20 (0.91)

<Legend>

- Numbers in the parentheses: Standard Deviation
- Red highlight (Shaded cell and Bold Letter): Score above 4.5
- Blue highlight (Shaded cell): Score above 4.0

As the table shows, Demon Slayer got average scores of more than 4.5 in character (4.60) and story (4.53). Jujutsu Kaisen did not have a factor score of more than 4.5. However, the work scored close to 4.5 in entertainment (4.48).

In Table 7 of section 4.2, Analysis of Taiwanese Audience Data, we mentioned that entertainment and character are fundamental aspects of successful work. This insight can be applied to findings from Table 16, too, as both Demon Slayer and Jujutsu Kaisen scored over 4.0 for their entertainment and character.

Furthermore, concerning Table 7 of section 4.2, we noted that anime work needs to have at least one strong dimension that can drive the work to become successful. This also can be applied to the findings from the observation of Table 16, As Demon Slayer scored more than 4.5 on its story character and story, and Jujutsu Kaisen scored close to 4.5 on its entertainment.

Similarly to Table 8, Table 17 shows percentages of actions taken after watching each anime work: recommendation, purchase, and share. However, as Table 17's number of responses shows, the data points obtained were not large enough, limited to 111 across ten anime works. So, in this section, we would also like to focus on findings from the two anime works that collected a more significant amount of data, Demon Slayer and Jujutsu Kaisen.

Table 17. Proportion of Actions Taken (Made in this study)

Anime Title	# of Respondents	Action1: Recommend	Action2: Purchase	Action3: Share
Oshi no Ko	10	80.0%	0.0%	0.0%
SPY×FAMILY	16	50.0%	25.0%	6.3%
Demon Slayer	40	62.5%	22.5%	5.0%
Bocchi the Rock!	6	33.3%	50.0%	33.3%
BEASTARS	2	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Skip and Loafer	2	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%
BLUELOCK	2	50.0%	50.0%	0.0%
Jujutsu Kaisen	21	57.1%	9.5%	19.0%
Ranking of Kings	3	66.7%	0.0%	0.0%
Chainsaw Man	9	77.8%	11.1%	0.0%
Total	111	62.2%	18.0%	8.1%

Both anime works, Demon Slayer and Jujutsu Kaisen, are known for their prominent popularity. However, the survey results showed different tendencies in their proportion of purchase and share.

Firstly, concerning purchase action, Demon Slayer's proportion of respondents was as high as 22.5%, while Jujutsu Kaisen's was only 9.5%. It is also noticeable that in Table 16, Demon Slayer scored as high on character as 4.6, while Jujutsu Kaisen scored only 4.43. It can be said that in the Japanese market, it is pretty common to find one favorite character to whom each audience relates, and they often seek to buy only the character's products. Therefore, we can assume that there might be a strong correlation between character score and purchase action; however, as mentioned earlier, we do not deepen the analysis due to the limited sample data size.

Next, regarding share action, Jujutsu Kaisen's proportion was as high as 19.0%, and Demon Slayer's was only 5.0%. Looking at Table 16, the only factor Jujutsu Kaisen scored higher than Demon Slayer was entertainment. We would like to mention that there is a possibility of a correlation between entertainment score and share action; however, again, we do not deepen the analysis due to the limited size of the sample data.

In summary of Section 4.4, the findings from Japanese audience data can emphasize the validity of the following finding: strong entertainment and character performance is a basis for one anime work to become successful. Moreover, the study in this section also supported the finding that an anime work better has one prominent factor; it can be any of the five factors that exceed the average level of other works.

4.5 Analysis of Comparison between Taiwanese and Japanese Data

This section analyzes the similarities and differences in trends between the data from Japan and Taiwan. As stated in earlier sections, we gained a relatively large amount of Taiwanese data and a smaller amount of Japanese one. In Japanese audience

data, the anime work with the largest data observation was Demon Slayer, so this section focuses on the anime work and compare its data extracted from both audience groups.

Table 18 shows the average scores for the five factors regarding Demon Slayer. There were 192 respondents, 151 by Taiwanese, one by Chinese, and 40 by Japanese. In analyzing this data, we omitted Chinese data because there was only one observation.

Table 18. Average Scores on Five Factors of Demon Slayer, per Nationality
(Made in this study)

Nationality	# of Respondents	Entertainment	Character	Story	Message	Artistry
Taiwan	151	4.38	4.40	4.02	4.02	4.58
China	1	5.00	2.00	2.00	4.00	4.00
Japan	40	4.38	4.60	4.53	3.93	4.40
Total	192	4.39	4.43	4.11	4.00	4.54

Between Taiwanese and Japanese data, we conducted a T-test to see whether the differences across factors were statistically significant. The test results showed that for a factor story (p-value: 0.0002), there was a significant difference, while for the others, there were no significant differences (p-values: greater than 0.05). For significant differences in this factor, we provide further discussions below.

One of the characteristics of Demon Slayer is that its story often unfolds along with spirits of self-sacrifices. Despite being confronted with tragedy, the protagonist, Tanjiro, still pursues to save his sister. His journey is marked by profound self-sacrifice as he endures rigorous training and engages in fierce battles with demons. Not only Tanjiro but almost all main characters, the most featured with Rengoku in recent episodes, sacrifice themselves to protect their loved ones. Most of these self-sacrificing characters die in the end, which is not a typical ending for other similar animes.

In Table 18 data, the Japanese audience valued the story feature more (4.53), and the Taiwanese audience valued it less (4.02). It would be fair to say that the characteristics stated above divided the evaluation of this story. In the history of Japan, there is a characteristic of perceiving death by self-sacrifice as a beautiful way of ending life. For example, this perception was present in the fights between samurais at the individual or family level, and it was also observed in the manner of losing wars at the national level. Considering that the concept of self-sacrifice as beauty was commonly observed in Japanese history, it is easy to understand why the Japanese audience valued Demon Slayer's story more.

On the other hand, one common response from global audiences is that they would rather question the fact that many main characters have passed away. Although this survey did not take qualitative responses, it still can be assumed that the Taiwanese audience group also did not value the story as aligned with the global audience.

In conclusion, in section 4.5, we highlight how audience value factors of anime are associated with nationality. As we overviewed the industry outlook in Chapter 1, animation markets are expanding, especially abroad. For practitioners who develop anime work, it would be essential to consider differences of nationality and their virtues to avoid the work's features depending too much on the particular nationality's virtue and missing the chance to be accepted in other cultures.

As part of the conclusion, we also would like to add some ideas to mitigate this nationality gap. The mitigation can be handled both at the preproduction and production stages. First, at the preproduction stage, although the original storyline cannot be changed, it often depends on the animation studio what scene they put emphasis on or

not based on the original scenario. When the part that is too dependent on one's nationality's value is observed, the practitioners can adjust it by various ways of presentation, such as the length of seconds the scene requires, what character comments, or any other effects. Second, at the production stage, the translation from the original language to a localized language and voice-over is often done country by country. It is feasible to make appropriate adjustments when creating a localized language version with an understanding of the characteristics of Japanese culture.

Chapter 5. Conclusions and Future Directions

5.1 Conclusions

It is a significant challenge for any creative enterprise to foresee factors that enable anime works to be successful. This thesis tries to build a framework of animation success factors and derive insight into how the framework works across different audience groups. As a methodology, we first built a hypothetical framework to evaluate anime work and identify five factors: entertainment, character, story, message, and artistry. Then, we conducted surveys in Taiwan and Japan and analyzed the data.

Through the survey and analysis, we found some managerial insights. To conclude this study, we would like to summarize the following insights.

The framework of successful anime work: We have identified a framework consisting of five factors: entertainment, character, story, message, and artistry. These five factors were evaluated independently during the survey; therefore, we can conclude that this framework is a good fit for evaluating anime work characteristics.

How key factors help work succeed: There was a positive correlation between some key factors and actions after watching anime work, such as entertainment being associated with purchase and character being associated with share. In addition, messages had a negative correlation with entertainment, probably resulting in adverse purchase action. These positive and negative correlations also support the finding that the five-factor framework is functioning enough. We recommend that industry practitioners revisit the anime work to apply the framework, especially at the

preproduction stage, to assess the strengths and weaknesses of the work and strategically plan to refine the work's features before actually developing the animation.

How key factors contribute per audience group (behavior, experience):

There were different trends of valuing factors depending on audience groups. Over the same anime work, groups of audiences that see anime more frequently critically evaluated the message factor than groups that see anime less frequently. Likewise, on the contrary, the more frequent watcher group recognized and appreciated artistry than the less frequent watcher groups over the same anime work. In addition, there were tendencies per different experience groups, too; the group with more extended experience of watching anime valued the message more than the groups with less experience over the identical anime work. Based on these, we suggest that practitioners consider this varied tendency of audience groups to plot where and how to attract whom strategically. By well embedding attractions for less / more frequent watchers and less / more experienced groups, the anime work can have several scenarios of how the audience enjoys the work, and it can lead to popularity in the longer term.

How key factors contribute per audience groups (nationality): There were also different trends of valuing factors depending on the group of nationalities. In the same anime work, the Japanese audience valued the story more, but the Taiwanese audience valued it less. It is assumed that this evaluation of an anime's story reflects a virtue in that country's culture. Considering that Japanese animation markets have been expanding rapidly, especially abroad, we suggest that industry practitioners consider these distinct trends per nationality. Although it is unrealistic to change the story per market, knowing that there is a biased evaluation by a particular nationality group should help their decision in preproduction. By being aware of this perspective,

practitioners can avoid relying excessively on identical nationality groups, in most cases Japanese audiences, and overlooking being valued by overseas audiences.

As stated above, this thesis has tried to reveal the key success factors of Japanese animation work. It has succeeded in deriving the framework with five factors and verifying how it works for different audience groups. While animation development often faces challenges in foreseeing its success and return on investment, this thesis could show the possibility of bringing the logic behind the curtains and managerial insights. By getting a clear idea of what makes anime work succeed, we hope that this managerial science will eventually contribute to the prominent growth of the anime industry and the prosperity of animation productions and the creator's market.

5.1 Future Directions

This study had some limitations. This section will elaborate on these limitations and suggest possible directions for future researchers who are interested in a similar study area.

First, regarding the overall approach, this study did not take qualitative information, such as obtaining textual information on why respondents answered with the score. Future studies can incorporate this qualitative aspect to interpret the numerical information better. Another area for improvement of the overall approach was that the data points of Japanese data were minor. This small number of data points limited us to comparing the data between nationality groups, and the insight was limited to only the story aspect of one anime work. Future studies can design the data collection method to address this part and analyze the data more comprehensively.

There are limitations with respect to survey design, too. The first limitation is that regarding experience, the survey only asked respondents' age and the age at which they first watched anime as a series, and it did not ask at what age they saw the anime, which they answered about. Therefore, in the section that analyzes the years of experience and scores on the five factors of specific anime work, there is room for the experience part to be more specified. The second limitation is that the survey only asked respondents to select the anime work they liked and also watched more than one season and did not ask how many among the ten works they had watched. Therefore, across the overall scoring, the score can be biased to be favored.

In summary, no qualitative information, limited number of Japanese sample size, and preciseness on experience of anime watching and scoring on five factors remain as limitation as this thesis. We would like to remark that by addressing these points, the study can be enhanced further.

Appendix

Survey Questions

Section A. Choose a work and provide your opinion on it.

This survey asks you to first select a favorite anime work from the following list and then answer related questions about that work. Please only choose a work that you have watched at least one season (approximately 10 episodes) of. If you have not watched any of the listed anime works or have only watched less than one season, the survey will end here.

- Question 1. Please select an anime series you have seen.
 - Demon Slayer (鬼滅の刃 / 鬼滅之刃)
 - BEASTARS (ビースターズ / 動物狂想曲)
 - Jujutsu Kaisen (呪術廻戦 / 咒術迴戰)
 - Ranking of Kings (王様ランキング / 國王排名)
 - Ohi no Ko (推しの子 / 我推的孩子)
 - Bocchi the Rock! (ぼっち・ざ・ろっく / 孤單搖滾)
 - Chainsaw Man (チェンソーマン / 鏈鋸人)
 - SPY×FAMILY (スパイファミリー / 間諜家家酒)
 - BLUELOCK (ブルーロック / 藍色監獄)
 - Skip and Loafer (スキップとローファー / 躍動青春)
 - I haven't seen any of these
 - I have seen some of them but haven't completed one season

Section B. Answer on the anime work you chose.

- Question 2. To what extent have you watched this anime work?
 - I have watched approximately one season.
 - I have watched more than two seasons or rewatched one season multiple times.

- Question 3. Regarding this anime work, have you taken any of the following actions?
 - Told friends and family about the work or recommended it to them.
 - Purchased merchandise or participated in events related to the work.
 - Shared the excellence of this work with others through social media, online forums, or other channels.
 - I have not taken any of the above actions.

Section C. Rating the 5 elements of the anime work

This survey uses the following 5 elements as dimensions for evaluating an anime work. Please evaluate your chosen anime work based on these 5 elements.

<Evaluation on Entertainment>

Entertainment: This work's entertainment is highly appealing. It includes elements of comical jokes, dynamic battles or sports scenes, and heart-pounding romance. It brings joy and a refreshing feeling after watching.

- Question 4. I highly value the entertainment of this anime work.
 - Completely disagree :1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5: Completely agree.

<Evaluation on Characters>

Characters: This work's characters are highly appealing. The characters are very charming, including their physical charm like cuteness, beauty, or handsomeness, as well as their inner qualities like bravery, intelligence, or honesty. Additionally, the characters' humanization and genuine emotions and behaviors make them highly appealing.

- Question 5. I highly value the characters of this anime work.
 - Completely disagree :1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5: Completely agree.

<Evaluation on Story>

Story: This work's story is highly appealing. It has a smooth narrative flow, gripping plot twists, and unexpected developments that attract the audience. Furthermore, the world-building in the story is comprehensive, with consistent and logical settings in

terms of time, geography, the origin of the fictional world, and the lives of the people in that world. This detailed world setting allows the audience to get deeply immersed.

- Question 6: I highly value the story of this anime work.
 - Completely disagree :1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5: Completely agree.

<Evaluation on Message>

Message: This work's messages are highly appealing. The work conveys profound messages, such as respecting gender diversity, coexistence among different races, emotional bonds within families, genuine love, and personal growth through overcoming challenges. It not only provides pure entertainment but also imparts essential messages and themes.

- Question 7: I highly value the message of this anime work.
 - Completely disagree :1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5: Completely agree.

<Evaluation on Artistry>

Artistry: This work's visual aesthetics and other artistic elements are highly appealing. It features beautiful visuals, detailed and smooth animation, outstanding sound effects, impressive music (including the opening and ending theme songs), and/or voice acting. These artistic features highlight the work's uniqueness.

- Question 8: I highly value the artistry of this anime work.
 - Completely disagree :1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5: Completely agree.

Section D. About the Respondent

- Question 9. Your nationality
- Question 10. The country you currently reside
- Question 11. Your gender
 - Male / Female / Not to specify
- Question 12. Your age
- Question 13. How many anime works do you watch in a year? This question is not limited to Japanese anime works or anime series.
 - 0 works per year

- 1-3 works per year
 - 4-6 works per year
 - 7-9 works per year
 - 10 or more works per year
- Question 14. At what age did you first finish watching an anime work as a season?

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