



# **Streaming the Margins: A Comparative Case Study of Odia Cinema and Other Indian Regional Industries on OTT Platforms**

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**Abstract-** The emergence of Over-the-Top(OTT) platforms has altered the production and narrative of regional film in India. This study examines the significant changes that Ollywood, the Odia film business, underwent between 2022 and 2026. During this period, the practice of making began to give way to fresh, realistic fictions. The following study uses a case study methodology to contrast Odia cinema's tactics with those of the more well-known Bengali, Malayalam, and Marathi film industries. According to the research, smaller regional platforms like AAONXT and Kancha Lenka have contributed to the revival of Odia culture and the establishment of connections with individuals outside of India, despite the fact that major worldwide streaming services prioritise making local stories universal. According to the report, the secret to this shift is fusing ancient narratives with contemporary digital methods. Access to these films is still difficult for residents of remote areas, nevertheless, due to significant policy and infrastructure issues. According to the report, Ollywood and other such companies require a combination of robust government support and culturally authentic digital content in order to thrive over the long run.

**Keywords-** Odia cinema (Ollywood); OTT Platforms; Digital Transformation; Cultural Narratives.

## **I. Introduction**

The fast development of Over-the-Top (OTT) streaming services has altered the media and entertainment world across the world to a major extent. OTT services are the delivery of audio-visual content over the internet-based platform, which are not required to pass the traditional distributors (cinema halls and television broadcasting). This has been a digital transformation in terms of production, distribution, and consumption of film and television, as it has allowed media industries to work in more globalized and platform-driven ecosystems (Lotz, 2017; Lobato, 2019). With the growing popularity of streaming services in global markets, they have turned into powerful mediating factors, shaping the cultural production and viewership experience by the recommendation systems based on algorithms and digital structures of distribution (Nieborg and Poell, 2018).

The increase in the OTT services in India has been very fast due to the popularity of smartphones, the price of mobile data, and the growing internet connection. The technological advancements have also led to the creation of an active streaming ecosystem which encompasses the global streaming platforms like Netflix and



Amazon Prime Video besides the local streaming platforms that focus on languages. According to scholars, this shift has provided new prospects to the regional cinema industries because they can reach wider audiences due to the restriction of their geographical markets in the theatres (Athique, 2019). Regional language films/web series are more visible in the media landscape of India as digital streaming platforms invest more and more in the production of localized content.

The film industry in India is diverse with an amazing linguistic and cultural diversity in that it has several regional cinema traditions that coexist with the mainstream, Bollywood, Hindi-language dominated film industry. The Malayalam, Bengali, Marathi, and Odia cinema are regional film industries that have traditionally had significant roles in terms of reflecting local cultural identities and narrative traditions (Athique & Hill, 2010; Ganti, 2012). Nevertheless, a number of small regional industries have had structural issues relating to their small production budgets, small distribution networks, and being overwhelmed by the large film industries. These limitations have in many cases restricted the potential of the regional cinema to access larger national or international markets.

With the advent of OTT platforms, these dynamics have already started to change with alternative distribution channels that help regional films to reach more audiences. The filmmakers can distribute their work online over streaming services by bypassing traditional exhibition systems and releasing the film straight to the audiences. This trend is in line with the larger changes in the media industries characterized as the platformisation of cultural production where digital platforms restructure the production, distribution, and sale of cultural products (Poell, Nieborg, and van Dijck, 2019). In such a platform-based setting, the local cinema industries may indeed increase their audience and enhance their culture presence.

This digital transformation is a specific opportunity that the Odia film industry, commonly called Ollywood, can get. Traditionally, Odia cinema has been under a lot of structural constraints such as a comparatively low domestic market, little investment and historical dependence on remake culture. Even in the face of these, over the last few years, there has been an increasing interest in culturally based story-telling and regional identity in Odia film. This change has also been enhanced by increasing the availability of regional OTTs like AAO NXT that offer specific channels to Odia content in the digital streaming system.

This paper thus explores the role of OTT platforms in transforming the cinema industries in the region of India by making a comparative analysis of the Odia cinema and other regional cinema industries like Malayalam, Bengali and Marathi cinemas. The research aims to learn whether streaming platforms are real facilitators of regional cultural expression or produce novel versions of platform-based market constraints through analyzing industry trends, narrative trends, and digital distribution strategies. The paper is part of more general conversations about the place of digital platforms in revolutionizing the regional media industries and cultural production in age of the global streaming.



## II. Theoretical Framework

The paper is based on three major theoretical viewpoints that assist in the explanation of the change of regional cinema industries in the times of digital streaming: Cultural Proximity Theory, Platformization of Cultural Production, and Media Economics of the Long Tail.

### **Cultural Proximity Theory**

The Cultural Proximity Theory is built on the idea that people like to watch media materials that mirror their linguistic, cultural, and social contexts (Straubhaar, 1991). This theory can be used in multilingual nations like India where regional cinema is very popular as the movies tend to portray familiar stories to a particular culture, local dialects and social realities of a particular area. The emergence of support of OTT services has granted local cinemas with the insight into the prospects to share culturally particular stories with both local and diasporic viewers. Digital streaming makes culturally similar content available to other audiences, allowing media material to flow outside of regional markets through the provision of multilingual subtitles and international accessibility (Athique, 2019).

### **In platforming of Cultural Production**

The advent of digital media has strongly altered the process of media production and distribution. According to scholars, this shift is referred to as the platformization of cultural production in which digital platforms restructure the creation, distribution, and monetization of cultural products (Nieborg and Poell 2018, Poell, Nieborg, and van Dijck 2019). Streaming platforms like Netflix and Amazon prime Video are not solely distributed, and they are also potent intermediaries, controlling which content materialises in digital systems. Using algorithmic recommendation systems and data-driven content strategies, platforms control the activity of listeners and what kind of narratives become popular.

This platform-based environment opens opportunities and presents challenges to the film industries in the region. Digital platforms are providing new opportunities to distribute content across the world, but also create competitive pressures and algorithmic gatekeeping with effects on regional narrative production and circulation.

### **The Long Tail and Niche Media Markets**

The Economics of Digital Media Distribution can also be viewed in the light of the Long Tail theory, which postulates that with the advent of the digital medium, niche cultural products can be distributed to the widely dispersed audiences in the global markets (Anderson, 2006). Digital platforms have the ability to generate profits serving many smaller groups of audiences, where the traditional media industries depend on reaching large groups of audiences at a time.

Regarding the case of regional cinema, the Long Tail model would describe how streaming services can effectively distribute the films that would satisfy the particular linguistic groups. By being grouped together by global digital distribution networks, even relatively small regional audiences can be commercially viable. Consequently,



OTT providers have turned out to be significant sources of regional filmmakers targeting niche audiences of diasporic communities.

### **The Birth of Regional Cinema on OTT**

Traditionally, the film industries of the region in India had structural limitations with regard to the distribution infrastructure, financing of production and market presence. The dominance of Bollywood in the national media has tended to shadow small regional sectors hence limiting their access to larger audiences (Rajadhyaksha, 2003). Though these are obstacles, the regional cinema has become significant in the expression of linguistic diversity and local cultural identity nationwide.

The growth of the digital streaming platform has started to alter these dynamics by offering alternative distribution platforms to the regional films. OTT services enable the distribution of content by the filmmakers instead of working through theatrical networks and instead deliver films to the audiences using internet-based services (Lobato, 2019). This change has helped the local film industries to increase their beneficiaries by extending to diaspora groups in other parts of the world.

Over the past few years, a number of regional over the top (OTT) services have launched in India as a specific service to linguistic audiences. Others are Hoichoi with Bengali content, Aha with Telugu language entertainment and AAO NXT with Odia movies and web series. These platforms aim at culturally specific content that appeals to regional audiences but also to viewers in the diaspora who want to see content in their native languages.

Industry	Core Strategy	OTT Driver	Key Takeaway for Odia Industry
Malayalam	Neorealism	Global Platforms	Quality and technical craft transcend language.
Marathi	State Support	Niche Platforms	Government policy + Niche OTT = Sustainability.
Bengali	Literary IP	Diaspora Focus	Leverage classic literature for "franchise" value.
Odia (Target)	Cultural Reclamation	Hybrid/Regional	Move from "Remake" to "Rooted" original scripts.

The introduction of specific streaming platforms is a significant prospect of small film industries like Odia cinema to lift barriers to distribution that existed in the past. Online platforms enable local filmmakers to explore new types of narratives and create culturally-specific stories that do not always fit into the mainstream commercial film industry.



### **III. Literature Review**

#### **The Platformisation and the Metamorphosis of Media Industries**

The high growth of online platforms has completely transformed the media industries across the world by restructuring the way media is produced, distributed and now consumed. According to scholars, this shift is known as the platformisation of cultural production, as digital platforms are becoming the main structure on which creative content is created, distributed, and monetized (Nieborg & Poell, 2018; Poell, Nieborg, and van Dijck, 2019). The most effective intermediaries in this platform-based ecosystem are streaming services like Netflix, Amazon Prime Video, and local OTT platforms, which not only act as distributors, but also have a strong impact on the visibility, discoverability, and economical sustainability of media content.

Digital platforms are highly dependent on the algorithm infrastructures that determine the engagement and flow of the audience and content. These systems that are algorithm-driven shape the nature of content that becomes eminent in digital ecosystems, thus impacting the process of cultural production in all media industries worldwide (Poell et al., 2019). Consequently, the film industries are actively changing their narrative and production approaches to be in line with the platform-based distribution systems and viewer analytics.

Streaming platforms have changed the traditional film distribution models dramatically in the context of cinema. In the past, circulation of films was heavily reliant on theatrical release and then on TV and the home tape sales. Nevertheless, with the emergence of OTT platforms, there have emerged direct-to-consumer-like digital distribution of content which allows filmmakers to distribute content directly to audiences around the world using internet-based platforms (Lobato, 2019). This has increased the opportunities to the small and regional film industries that were previously unable to secure theatrical distribution.

#### **OTT Services and the New Wave of Movie Distribution**

The over-the-top platforms have taken over central roles in the entertainment economy of the world and have transformed the industrial structure of the film and television industries. Lotz (2017) has reported that the consumption patterns of media have reconfigured as television and streaming service mechanisms distributed via the internet allow audiences to access them through various digital devices on demand. This change has helped in the degradation of the conventional broadcasting schedules and the emergence of binge-viewing habits.

Independent and regional filmmakers have new economic opportunities as well through streaming platforms. OTT networks enable the filmmakers to address the niche audiences in various geographic regions, decreasing their dependence on theatrical exhibition networks (Lobato, 2019). This has been of significance especially to regional film industries that have structural constraints like screen space and small marketing budgets.



The COVID-19 also stimulated the usage of the digital streaming services even more globally. The pandemic has shut down the cinema halls in most countries, forcing film producers to rent out films on streaming platforms. Lotz (2021) states that this time made the role of the OTT services in the entertainment business of the world much more powerful and spurred the transition to hybrid distribution approaches with theatrical release and digital streaming.

OTT platforms within Indian media ecosystem have experienced a booming growth in terms of higher usage of smart phones, low mobile data rates and rising digital infrastructure. These have led to the rise of an ecological system of streaming media that encompasses both multinational and local streaming systems that focus on certain language groups.

### **Cinema in India and Linguistic Diversity in India**

India boasts of one of the most diverse film industries in the world, with several different regional cinema traditions, which work in a variety of linguistic and cultural settings. Although Bollywood cinema in the Hindi language has traditionally been the most recognized in terms of its national and international influence on the formation of the Indian film culture, regional cinema in Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, Bengali, Marathi and Odia languages have traditionally been influential in the creation of the local cultural identities (Athique & Hill, 2010; Ganti, 2012).

Researchers have highlighted that Indian cinema can not be perceived as one single and unified industry but a network of interrelated regional film industries that mirror other language and cultural traditions (Athique, 2019). Every local movie industry has its production style and style of narration as well as the viewer base. Indicatively, Malayalam cinema has acquired the international acclaim of focusing on realism and solid narratives, whereas Bengali cinema is full of the traditions of literary performance and artistic cinematography.

In the past, the smaller regional industries have had to endure myriad structural pressures such as low production budgets, poor distribution systems, and competition by the mainstream film industries. Such issues have in most cases curtailed the exposure of regional cinema to the outside world other than its direct language markets (Rajadhyaksa, 2003). With the introduction of the OTT platforms, though, these dynamics have been starting to change due to the availability of alternative distribution channels where the regional films can access larger audiences.

### **Similarity of Culture and Local Audience Favouritism**

The achievement of regional cinema on the digital platform can be attributed to the idea of cultural proximity where people are more likely to support a media content that contains the language and cultures they belong to (Straubhaar, 1991). Cultural proximity theory suggests that the viewer will connect more with media texts that reflect on his or her daily experience, social life and even cultural backgrounds.

Cultural proximity is also important in determining media consumption in multilingual societies like India. Local movies tend to get close to viewers as they depict real social conditions, language, and traditions to which they are accustomed.



Consequently, regional storytelling has become a particularly valuable part of the digital streaming age, in which the audiences are looking to find culturally specific narratives.

OTTs have taken advantage of this demand by investing in regional language content and providing multilingual subtitles and dubbing to such content. Through this approach, culturally specific stories can be shared with people outside of their linguistic groups as well as the cultural authenticity of those stories is preserved (Athique, 2019). Therefore, the streaming platforms have enabled the distribution of localized cinemas in domestic and international markets.

### **Online Streaming and the International Distribution of Local Cinema**

The introduction of OTTs has allowed regional cinema to be more actively involved in the circulation of media in the world. Digital streaming services provide an opportunity of reaching out to international audience by subtitling, recommendation-based algorithm, and transnational distribution systems with films that are produced in regional languages. According to Cunningham and Craig (2019), digital platforms act as intermediaries between the local creative industry and global audiences.

This revolution has widened chances of regional film makers to present culturally unique stories in the global digital markets. Cinemas that were formerly spread on local theatre chains will be distributed nationwide and to the diaspora audience via streaming services. Consequently, local cinema industries become more and more significant in global flows of cultures and still remain closer to the storytelling traditions.

Concurrently, researchers observe that the platformization of the media industries is also accompanied by novel modes of algorithmic domination of cultural visibility. Digital platforms are based on the recommendation systems which are data driven and determine the exposure of an audience to a particular kind of content (Nieborg and Poell, 2018). Therefore, the filmmakers of the region have to operate on the balance between cultural authenticity and adoption of platform-based content strategies.

### **The Development of local OTT in India**

Besides international streaming services, India has seen the development of various local OTT services that target linguistic customers. Examples of successful efforts to establish regional content production and distribution are Triggering platforms like Hoichoi(Bengali), Aha(Telugu), Planet Marathi, and AAO NXT (Odia).

Such platforms are significant in empowering the media industries within the region through financial assistance in local storytelling and increased opportunities to the upcoming filmmakers. Diaspora viewers are also targeted by regional OTT services that offer them culturally oriented content that is familiar to them and is related to their language and cultural background. With the growth of digital infrastructure in India, regional streaming platforms will probably gain more significance in the future of regional film industry.





The rise of regional OTT platforms is also a major prospect to bigger film industries like Odia cinema to access bigger audiences and surpass the historical challenges of distribution. The integration of culturally based storytelling with digital distribution technologies, these platforms are involved in reviving regional film cultures in the current media spaces.

#### **IV. Methodology**

##### **Research Design**

This research will utilize a qualitative comparative case study design in order to explore the extent to which OTTs are transforming the regional film industries in India. The comparative case study designs allow scholars to examine the interactions between larger-scale structural change (e.g., the digital platformization) and the local contexts (Bartlett and Vavrus, 2017). The paper is based on the Odia film industry and its comparison with other regional film industries, i.e. Malayalam film industry, Bengali film industry, and Marathi film industry in terms of their digital transition. Qualitative research design best suits the study because the research aims to investigate the industrial practices, narrative strategies, and distribution models and not quantify the outcomes.

##### **Case Selection**

The paper uses purposive sampling as the choice of regional cinema industries is used to represent various degrees of digital promotion and market maturity.

The selected cases include:

- Industry Rationale
- Odia cinema (Ollywood) New emerging OTT.
- Malayalam film industry High international OTT presence.
- Bengali films Successful local OTT (Hoichoi).
- Marathi film industry State-sponsored movie industry.

These sectors offer an effective comparative model of how film industries in the regions adjust to digital streaming.

##### **Data Collection**

The research will rely on three main qualitative data sources.

##### **1. OTT Content Analysis and Film Analysis.**

The sample of the regional films and web series that were published between 2022 and 2026 on OTT platforms was analyzed. The sample comprises the films which were critically appreciated, attended by the audience, or industry-relevant. Examples include:

- DAMaN (Odia)
- Pratikshya (Odia)
- the Malayalam OTT films and web series that were chosen.

Bengali OTT productions sold on Hoichoi.

It was analyzed in terms of narrative themes, production, and cultural representation and digital distribution strategies.





## **2. Semi-Structured Expert Interviews.**

In the research ten interviews with the most important stakeholders in regional cinemas were carried out in the form of semi-structured interviews. Participants included:

- Independent filmmakers
- Curators of OTT platform content.
- Movie critics and industry players.

Semi-structured interviews enable the researcher to inquire about the views of the participants as well as flexibility in questioning (Yin, 2018).

The duration of every interview was about 40-60 minutes and was dedicated to the following topics:

- The effects of OTT sites on local cinema.
- Strategies of audience engagement.

The regional cinema is faced with distribution issues.

## **3. Secondary Industry Data**

The study studied industry reports and policy documents regarding the OTT ecosystem in India to put the qualitative results into context. These included:

- Streaming platforms industry analyses.
- Government film policy publications.

These include trade journals on regional cinema.

Secondary sources were helpful to get an overview of the larger industry trends and economic formations shaping the production of film in the region.

## **Data Analysis**

The data collected was analyzed with the aid of thematic analysis and based on the six steps laid out by Braun and Clarke (2006). The analysis involved:

1. Getting acquainted with the information.
2. Primary coding of interview transcripts and film narratives.
3. Determination of recurrent themes.
4. Comparison of themes in regional cinema industries.
5. Theoretical frameworks Interpretation of findings in relation to theoretical frameworks.
6. Comparison of findings into results.

Thematic analysis enabled the paper to determine trends concerning digital distribution strategies, narrative innovation and the linkage to regional identity.

## **Ethical Considerations**

All the participants of the interview gave informed consent to take part in the study. The research findings were anonymized to preserve the confidentiality of both the participants and their identity. The paper has also complied with ethical principles of conducting media research, as all film materials, as well as publicly available resources, were cited in a proper way.

## **V. Findings**

The deconstruction of the film contents, industry press releases, and interviews with experts demonstrate that multiple themes are relevant to the metamorphosis of



regional cinema industries in India due to the advent of the OTT platform. The findings provide an insight into the way in which digital streaming has transformed production policies, viewer consumption and distribution culture in regional film sectors.

### **Movement Remake Culture to Original Storytelling**

A gradual transformation that has been witnessed in Odia film industry is the move towards original narration other than the remakes which were used in production. In past, numerous Odia movies used to base on the remake of popular Telugu or Tamil movies, which is usually credited to a lack of sufficient production funds and conservative industry norms. According to scholars, smaller regional industries often use remake strategies to decrease financial unpredictability and take advantage of successful narrative formulas (Athique & Hill, 2010).

Nevertheless, the advent of OTT platforms has provided new motivation to the creation of original and culturally-grounded stories. The streaming services have been encouraging original content that has a potential to reach niche audiences instead of clichéd TV versions. Consequently, the Odia films of recent years, including DAMaN (2022) and Pratikshya (2023), show a closer to socially-based stories and regionalism. The change is indicative of the larger trends in regional cinema industries and especially in Malayalam cinema which has become known by its fixation on realistic film narratives and the development of novel narrative models (Ganti, 2012). Access to digital platforms of distribution enables film makers in the region to explore new forms of narrative and reach other audiences outside their own language markets.

### **Niche Markets of Audience and Regional OTT Platforms**

The other significant discovery is the growing significance of regional OTTs, which target viewers specifically. Hoichoi (Bengali), Aha (Telugu) and AAO NXT (Odia) are platforms that are a part of an emerging Indian streaming ecosystem and specialize in the production and distribution of regional content.

Digital streaming services exist in what Anderson (2006) defines as the Long Tail economy whereby small cultural objects have the ability to be distributed to the diffuse audiences via digital channels of distribution. The OTT platform can serve smaller language communities profitably as opposed to traditional theatrical distribution networks which focus on large audiences.

Regional OTT platforms thus contribute significantly to the increase in presence of regional cinema due to the availability of special space where culturally particular stories are told. They usually aim at audiences within their countries as well as the diaspora who want to get content in their own languages. Research into the digital media market of India indicates that diaspora viewers make up a significant customer segment to regional streaming providers, especially those languages that have a strong overseas following (Athique, 2019).

In the case of Odia film industry, the chances of local film-makers to distribute movies, web-series, and short films directly to viewers without necessarily using theatrical presentation have been created by platforms like AAO NXT.



### **Inspiration of the Malayalam Cinema Paradigm**

The comparative study in the context of regional film industries shows that Malayalam cinema can be an effective example in digital-era regional cinematography. The Malayalam films have been very successful in OTT platforms because of their focus on good screenwriting, realistic storylines and relatively low production cost.

Researchers have noted that narrative innovation and social realism has historically been the focus of Malayalam cinema and has enabled it to appeal to both local and global audiences (Athique & Hill, 2010). This narration technique fits well in the digital streaming environment, where OTT frequently places a premium on narrative richness and character-driven narratives.

The results indicate that a number of Odia filmmakers regard Malayalam cinema as a strategic benchmark in coming up with competitive regional content. The interviews with filmmakers pointed to the growing focus on the quality of production, development of screenplays and location-based narrating.

The indicated change is a symptom of some bigger changes in the regional cinema industries as local filmmakers adjust their production methods to fit the demands of the digital streaming platforms.

### **Online Distribution and Diaspora Reaction**

OTTs have greatly increased the distribution of local cinema worldwide, as they allow distributing it outside the national borders digitally. Streaming services also provide films made in local languages to audiences in the diaspora across the globe through subtitles and multilingual interfaces.

Lobato (2019) argues that digital streaming services are transnational distribution infrastructures, which support the flow of media content across the world. This change has significant consequences to regional cinema sectors who used to depend on the theatrical markets that were limited geographically.

Regional films are valuable cultural resources to the diaspora communities that ensure that there are links in lingo and cultural affiliation to the countries of origin. Cultural proximity theory proposes that the audience tends to seek media works that resonate with the known cultural and linguistic backgrounds (Straubhaar, 1991). OTT services then serve as a viable platform to deliver regional content to audiences across the globe whose consumption wants culturally proximate content.

The diaspora participation, in the case of Odia cinema, is especially valuable in terms of increasing distribution in the audience, when the domestic theatrical market is quite narrow.

### **Platformisation and Algorithmic Visibility**

As OTT platforms provide new opportunities to regional cinema, the results also suggest the problem of platformisation and algorithmic visibility. Digital streaming



services are based on algorithmic recommendation systems that decide what should be visible to users (Nieborg & Poell, 2018).

Such systems generated by algorithms tend to prioritize content that produces high metrics of engagement, and this may prioritize larger production sectors with substantial marketing capabilities. Consequently, smaller regional industry will not be very visible in a highly competitive digital platform.

This dynamic indicates overall changes in the industry of cultural industries in which digital platforms are becoming dominant influencers of content discovery and attention (Poell, Nieborg, and van Dijck, 2019). In the case of regional filmmakers, to be successful in the OTT ecosystem it is necessary not only to be a great storyteller but to be a good digital marketer and collaborate with platforms.

## **VII. Discussion**

The expansion of the OTT is both an opportunity and a threat to the cinemas industry in the regions. On the one hand, streaming platforms provide creators with more creative freedom and opportunity to distribute. Digital platforms make it possible to create narratives that may not fit in the commercial requirements of theatrical cinema, which offers filmmakers the opportunity to experiment with socially relevant content and culturally specific narratives.

Conversely, the media industries being turned into platforms come up with new competition and algorithmic power. The digital platforms depend on the recommendation systems which are strongly supported by data to formulate the content that will be shown to the audiences. Consequently, directors might experience a push to change their narration techniques so that they can fit the platform algorithm and viewer analytics (Nieborg and Poell, 2018).

In the case of the regional movies like Ollywood, the major issue is the balancing of cultural authenticity and the digital market competitiveness. Although the opportunities offered by OTT platforms are the possibility of global presence, the future industry development will have to be financially supported by investment in production infrastructure, policy support, and audience development.

## **VII. Conclusion**

With the advent of Over-the-Top (OTT) streaming platforms, the Indian film production, distribution, and consumption model has received a tremendous remodelling on the regional film industry. This paper analyzed the changing digital situation of regional cinematic situation with reference to Odia film industry and how it is transforming as compared to other regional cinematic industries like Malayalam, Bengali and Marathi cinema. These results indicate that OTT services have provided new avenues to regional filmmakers to access broader audiences than the traditional theatrical markets.

Among the changes that have been found in this paper is the transition of remake oriented production to more original and culturally based narration. Digital streaming



services promote unique stories which represent local identities and social realities, and regional cinema would be more apt to interact with niche and diaspora audiences. Such a change follows the concept of cultural proximity that indicates that audiences like media products that appeal to their linguistic and cultural backgrounds (Straubhaar, 1991).

Meanwhile, OTTs are potent digital mediators that influence the emergence and propagation of culture by means of platform-based distributions (Nieborg and Poell, 2018). As much as such platforms increase the prospects of local filmmakers, they also present new problems concerning algorithms and visibility in the digital markets and competition. On the whole, this paper has shown that OTT services are turning the local films into passive products of the culture to an active component of the international digital media environment.

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