

Exploring Cultural Imagination for Indian Most Popular Movies

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Abstract

In India, South India film industries outperform Bollywood in recent years. For Indian audiences, they experience historically different choices for film appreciation and entertaining styles. This study uses textual analysis to interpret public and social meanings for two kinds of most popular Indian movies: Top 10 movies in India movie markets, and Top 10 most popular India movies in global markets. The latter is influenced by non-Indians and other non-controllable factors. In total, 10 Indian movies are analyzed. From perspectives of cultural studies, texts are analyzed through concepts such as collective subjectivities, imagined communities, feeling structure of social groups and being local, social consciousness of issues. This study finds that Indian most popular movies are often loyal to India audiences and offer them ways to explore a possibly better self, not only individually but maybe more collectively.

Keywords: Most Popular Movies, India Movies, Cultural Imagination, Imagined Ommunities

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Introduction

With a sharp economic increase, India is listed as the fifth-largest economy in the world in 2023, and the Indian government is now pushing for India to become the third-largest economy by 2030. India is experiencing changes not only in the political, economic, and social dimensions but also in its cultural imagination. This nation is witnessing significant shifts as it navigates through global and geopolitical environments. One evident indicator of this cultural wave is the paradigm shift in the Indian movie market. In recent years, South Indian film industries have outperformed Bollywood.

In 2019, seven out of the top ten movies at the Indian box office were Bollywood movies. However, in 2022, this number decreased to four out of ten, with the winners being what we commonly refer to as South Indian movies. This paradigm shift in the Indian movie market, as defined by the box office, holds great importance, as consumers are also individuals with a public spirit and consumption sovereignty.

The spirit of competition in the Indian movie market brings forth new expectations not only for Indian audiences but also for global movie fans. The evolving landscape of India reflects shifting social identities and the imagined communities of its people, which in turn signify potential changes in the emotional structures that underpin their cultural imagination. This paradigm shift from Bollywood movies to South Indian movies not only indicates a divergence in film appreciation and entertainment styles, but also suggests diverse needs and motivations for the production of symbols and signs from different perspectives.

The objective of this study is to explore potential new cultural identities in terms of nationality, religious beliefs, issue-based publics, and linguistic diversity, through the lens of this paradigm shift in the movie markets. However, it is important to acknowledge that this cultural transformation may also elicit fears associated with such shifts and their possible consequences. Therefore, this study will also discuss the new rankings at the box office and examine the implications and potential outcomes from perspectives listed above.

Scholars often highlight several challenges that India's democracy faces, including immense poverty, communal and border conflicts, unequal social opportunities, prevailing corruption, and challenges to the quality of democratic governance (Wei, 2013). Further problems arise from the complex religious and ethnic conflicts, intertwined with historical complexities and ideologies. Hindu nationalism has faced criticism for portraying Muslims as threats to India's unity (Anand, 2011). Prime Minister Modi's Hindu-nationalist ideology has been heavily criticized and may have backfired after a huge loss in the vote share in the Karnataka election in 2023.

However, despite these criticisms, over 20 years ago, Kohli (2001) cited the New York Times to describe India's democracy as capable of "transforming diversity into a source of strength." The political victory led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in the 2014 Indian general election brought about increased economic and social development. The Economic Times (2014) described this election as a significant indication of India moving towards one-party rule after 25 years. In addition, in 2019, the BJP garnered more voter support, further solidifying its political influence.

One of the notable aspects of "Modinomics" is the "Make in India" project, which aims to promote technology and manufacturing within the country. The flourishing South Indian movie industries driven by local and global fans are gradually becoming more prominent.

India, as a brand for movie choices, is strongly supported. This study employs textual analysis to interpret the social and cultural meanings of two types of popular Indian movies: the top 10 movies in the Indian movie market and the top 10 most popular Indian movies in global markets. The latter category is influenced by non-Indians and other uncontrollable factors. The study argues that the Indian movie box office serves as a significant text for social change and cultural imagination when the flows of identities change, and it further explores possible cultural implications.

Textual Analysis for Popular Culture

A textual analysis was conducted on a total of 10 Indian movies, including eight movies from the Top 10 list in the Indian movie markets of all time. The movies in order are: Baahubali 2: The Conclusion (2017), KGF Chapter 2 (2022), RRR (2022), Pathan (2023), 2.0 (2018), Dangal (2016), Baahubali (2015), and PK (2014). Two movies produced by the United States, Avatar: The Way of Water (2022) and Avengers End Game (2019), are not included in this study. Two additional Indian movies, Bajrangi Bhaijaan (2015) and Secret Superstar (2017), were included for analysis. In total, five Bollywood movies and five South Indian movies were analyzed in this study.

Overall, the Indian movie markets are experiencing a strong recovery. In 2023, four out of the top 10 movies of all time in the Indian movie markets were produced between 2022 and 2023. Eight out of the top 10 movies were produced in India. This indicates the dominance of Indian movies in the market and showcases significant cultural autonomy. South Indian movies such as KGF: Chapter 2 and RRR contributed to the success of India's box office in 2022, making it the second-largest revenue year. However, overall admissions were still lower than in 2019 when Bollywood movies held dominance (with 7 out of the top 10 movies in the Indian box office being from Bollywood).

Overseas box office performance is highly influenced by foreign markets. For example, the top five Indian movies in the Chinese market are Dangal, Secret Superstar, PK, AndhaDhun, and Bajrangi Bhaijaan, with box office earnings in China ranging from around USD 197 million to 45.5 million. Without the Chinese movie market, Secret Superstar's performance, despite its low budget, would not have been as remarkable. The Chinese market accounted for 96 percent of its total box office earnings, around USD 122 million, making it one of the most profitable Indian movies. However, after the border conflicts between China and India, the Indian movie in Chinese markets experienced a decline.

From the perspective of cultural studies, the analyzed texts are examined through the concepts and constructs of imagined community, competing collective subjectivities, flow and imagined communities, changing feeling structures of social groups, and the local vs. global consciousness in dynamic globalization.

Anderson (1983) used imagined community to explain members of a nation through shared, symbols and ideology to imagine how they are connected to a society with emotion caring and belonging feeling and therefore enhance national consciousness for future collective

action. Markets, languages, capitalism and the background of media print era influenced how people share their symbols and narratives rather than face-to-face communication then.

Movies as a special media attract people's attention for about two hours. That the success of movies usually defined by their box office drives fans to mobilize to support their idols turns a social ritual as a signal of social or public awareness.

Greenfeld (1992) explained nationalism as a movement and a state of mind brings together national identity, consciousness, and collectivities. She described once applied the concept of nationalism, people turn from "Rabble" to "Nation" which means people. She explains that synonym of the "people" loosing its derogatory connotation and now "denoting an eminently positive entity acquires the meaning of the bearer of sovereignty, the basis of political solidarity, and the supreme object of loyalty" (p.7).

India, with a rising trend of releasing new powerful global influence is likely showing a new form of consciousness and collectivities. With complicated social issues such as caste, class, religion/ideological/history conflicts, gender/social issues, India has a background of diverse culture but now has a strong momentum to search for collective identity which may cause minorities' concern about violence, hate or revenge.

However, nationalism is not only necessarily linked to ethnic nationalism. In fact, this concept "nation" can be defined as a sovereign people; if we observe other countries and other peoples, it can be defined as a unique people (Greenfeld, 1992, p.8).

Indeed, when defining a "nation" as a sovereign people, it becomes crucial to determine who comprises this people and what values they hold, as these factors contribute to the formation of a nation. Additionally, it is important to thoroughly examine the symbols present in media content before hastily rejecting further collective symbols associated with a nation.

By taking this approach, the process of public choice can emphasize the significance of public sphere and institutions such as electoral systems or structures of checks and balances. These institutional frameworks and public choices can influence the decision-making process, enabling a balance between individuals' pursuit of self-interest and collective decision-making.

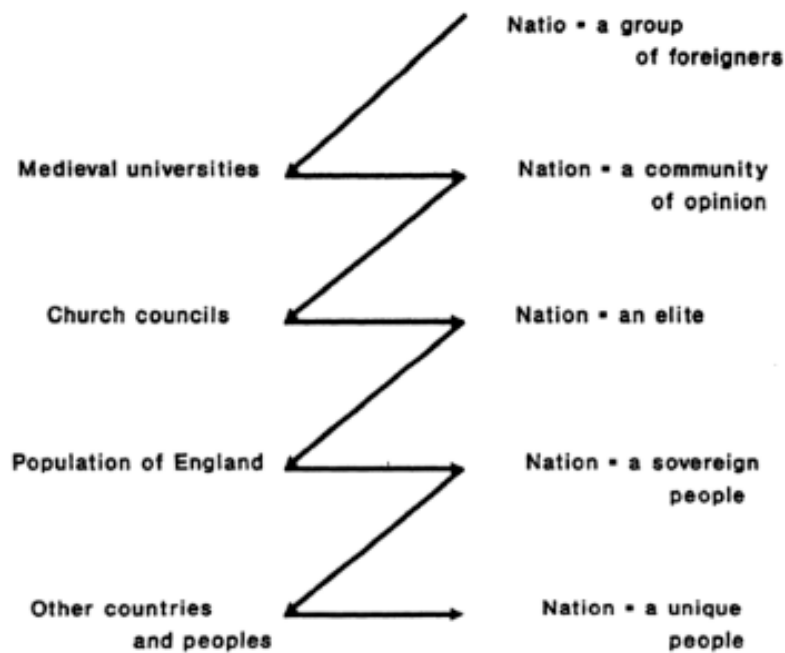
Table 1: Two Kinds of Most Popular News Analyzed in this study

Top 10 Indian Movies (India Gross Collection)						
SN	Movie (Release Year)	Worldwide	India Net	India Gross	Overseas	Budget
1.	Baahubali 2 The Conclusion (2017)	1788.06	1030.42	1416.9	371.16	250
2.	KGF Chapter 2 (2022)	1208	859.7	1000.85	207.15	100
3.	RRR (2022)	1230	782.2	915.85	314.15	550
4.	<u>Pathaan (2023)</u>	1050.05	543.09	657.5	392.55	250
5.	2.0 (2018)	744.78	407.05	551.5	193.28	543
6.	<u>Dangal (2016)</u>	2070.3	387.38	535	1535.3	70
7.	Baahubali (2015)	650	421	516	134	180
8.	<u>PK (2014)</u>	792	340.8	489	303	85
9.	Avatar: The Way of Water (2022) ★	17380	391.4	477.5	16902.5	3200
10.	Avengers End Game (2019) ★	18970	373.05	445	13335	2500

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5.	Pathaan (2023)	1050.05	543.09	657.5	392.55	250
6.	<u>Bajrangi Bhaijaan (2015)</u>	922.03	320.34	432.46	489.57	90
7.	<u>Secret Superstar (2017)</u>	912.75	63.4	81.28	831.47	15
8.	PK (2014)	792	340.8	489	303	85
9.	2.0 (2018)	744.78	407.05	551.5	193.28	543
10.	Baahubali (2015)	650	421	516	134	180

Notes for Table 1: The movie titles with blue stripes underline indicate that they are Bollywood movies, while the two movie titles marked with stars above are produced by the USA and are not included in the analysis conducted in this study. All collections are in Indian Rupee (INR) and in Crores. Table was remade by the author and collected from: [https://www.sacnilk.com/entertainmenttopbar/Top_10_Indian_Movies_\(India_Net_Collection\)](https://www.sacnilk.com/entertainmenttopbar/Top_10_Indian_Movies_(India_Net_Collection))

Figure 1: The transformation of the idea of the nation from Greenfeld, L. (1992).



Nationalism: Five roads to modernity. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. p.9

The concept of subjectivity is employed to explore how we define a sovereign and unique people. Wu (2007) utilizes identity, independence, autonomy, and being subjective to explain how subjectivity can be exercised in determining our collective identity. Wu explains that identity refers to the inherent unity of an individual's inner self or soul, or the collective sense of identity within a group, distinguishing them from others and other groups.

Independence denotes self-sustainability and the absence of influence or interference from external sources, implying self-sufficiency and non-dependence. Autonomy refers to the ability of individuals or groups to legislate for themselves, free from external regulation (Wu, 2007). Being subjective entails adopting a specific perspective to understand, grasp, or interpret objects, introspecting one's own self, starting from one's own consciousness. It stands in contrast to objectivity (Wu, 2007, p. 2).

Media is utilized to refer to different levels of self and collective self. Katz (1973) explains seven referents: self, family, friends, state, society, tradition, culture, and the world, as well as negative reference groups. Please refer to Table 2 for more information on these referents.

Table 2: Classification of Media-related Needs

A. Mode	B. Connection	C. Referent
1.To strengthen	1.Information,knowledge ,understanding	1.Self
2.To weaken	2.Gratification,emotional experience	2.Family
3.To acquire	3.Credibility,confidence, stability,status	3.Friends
	4.Contact	4.State,society
		5.Tradition,culture
	*2&3 with respect to	6.World
		7.Other,negative reference groups

Table remade by the author from On the Use of the Mass Media for Important Things. p.6 by Katz, E., Gurevitch, M., & Haas, H. (1973).

When a nation delves into exploring its collective identity, it is likely to encounter a potential disruption of the original balance, leading to conflicts. However, democracy is a system that aims to establish a community based on freedom and happiness by fostering cooperation amidst conflicts. Conflict arises from the competition between opposing forces, reflecting diverse opinions, preferences, needs, or interests. On the other hand, cooperation entails working together to achieve common goals through collective action.

Competitive elections involve a process where candidates compete against each other for political office. India, with its diverse culture encompassing different languages, ethnicities, religions, and historical backgrounds, experiences various conflicts. In the midst of conflict and cooperation, it is crucial to nurture a sense of community and promote ongoing collaboration to establish a shared bond based on the spirit of the constitution. Democratic systems often emphasize the establishment of checks and balances through processes of conflict resolution to achieve both collective goals and happiness.

The feeling structure of social groups and issues can help explain potential changes in the pursuit of collective goals. Chiu (2012) conducted a study on the diversity of national identity in Taiwan from a historical perspective. She explored how four newspaper journalists: Wu Cho-liu, Li Wan-ju, Lei Zhen, and Zeng Xu-bai, developed their individual "structures of feeling" as the basis for understanding their distinct identities. By analyzing different levels of national identity, ethnic identity, and cultural identity, she identified four types of "structures of feeling": the Zhen type emphasizing continuity, the Wu type emphasizing Taiwan subjectivity, the Lee type representing grassroots and mainland China connections, and the Lei type searching for democracy and freedom of speech.

Raymond Williams employed a historical process to examine affective elements of consciousness and relationships, emphasizing the need to understand emotions, moods, and atmospheres as historical and social phenomena. Scholars have discussed perspectives on the production of affect: affective pasts, affective thinking, and circulating affect, all of which connect to the concept of structure of feeling (Sharma & Tygstrup, 2015).

Chiu (2012) utilized a social-cultural practice position to analyze structures of feeling by identifying group components of meanings and values (pp. 132-137): Dominant, Residual,

Emergent, and Pre-emergent. She explains as follows. The Dominant component represents the core systems of meaning and values prevailing in a specific period. The Residual component refers to elements that were once dominant but now persist with diminished vitality. The Emergent component typically arises from emerging classes and is associated with new social movements and forms of expression. Pre-emergent aspect represents the structure of feeling before taking concrete forms.

This study applies Chiu's approach to identify three types of structures of feeling: Dominant, Emergent, and Residuals. These structures of feeling are then examined in the context of various factors such as social groups, geographical considerations, religion, languages, and the dynamic between the local and global concepts. The primary objective of this study is to explore how the social consciousness of issues can connect with movie fans, analyzing both individual and grand narratives to uncover deeper meanings of autonomy. By doing so, the study seeks to gain a better understanding of how we can define and regulate ourselves within the framework of local or global perspectives.

Findings

Indian popular movies often resonate with Indian audiences by showcasing the strength and resilience of the characters in overcoming life's challenges while upholding humanity and honor for individual, family, and community goals. Through engaging plots and dramas, these movies offer protagonists' journeys of self-discovery and collective empowerment. In Bollywood movies like *Secret Superstar* and *Dangal*, the focus is more on individual salvation and personal achievements, which inspire viewers in positive ways without directly addressing solid solutions for societal issues.

On the other hand, South Indian movies like *Baahubali*, *Baahubali 2: The Conclusion*, *KGF Chapter 2*, and *RRR* depict protagonists who rally their communities and nations to overcome public problems such as tyranny, corruption, colonialism, and social injustice. These movies connect with viewers on a collective level, instilling a sense of shared identity and public spirit. They showcase the power of collective action and unity in addressing larger social issues.

In movies like *PK* and *Bajrangi Bhaijaan*, the plots invite broader public participation in addressing issues related to religion, border conflicts or superstition. However, the influence of the movie's themes on the characters within the movie is more incidental rather than leading to solid change. Additionally, these movies tend to focus more on perspectives from North India, and as India's cultural landscape shifts towards South India, Bollywood may need to consider integrating and attracting more Indians by embracing broader Indian values.

Movies like *Baahubali*, *Baahubali 2: The Conclusion*, *RRR*, and *KGF Chapter 2* highlight the struggles and achievements of nations in shaping historical events and narratives. They emphasize the role of collective national struggles for independence, power, and survival. These movies foster a sense of collective identity, pride, and solidarity through charismatic leadership and social groups. They promote positive aspects such as collective identity, unity, social cohesion, and the pursuit of social justice, human rights, and progress. In contrast, Bollywood movies reflect more perspectives from art and cultural performance.

Overall, Indian popular movies play a significant role in promoting cultural imagination, collective identities, and social change. They inspire audiences to embrace values of unity, resilience, and collective action in addressing societal challenges.

It is important to avoid the negative aspects of nationalism that can lead to discrimination, xenophobia, suppression of individual rights, and the cultivation of militarism. Fortunately, in the analyzed popular movies, we did not observe these themes. However, violence for survival is a recurring element in movies when addressing issues such as poverty, justice, and wars, reflecting the harsh realities of the world.

Regarding the movies 2.0 and Pathan, both films showcase impressive special effects, entertaining styles, and concepts of movie series. 2.0, in particular, presents a positive image of successful IT engineers from India on a global scale through its leading hi-tech AI robot concept. On the other hand, Pathan faced criticism and boycott calls due to sensitive ideological observations, but it also garnered strong support from fans who rallied against the boycott. It is a challenge for Bollywood movies to maintain their popularity amidst boycott movements. The South Indian movies in this study, on the other hand, emphasize special effects and macro perspectives to explore the possibilities of humanity. They offer a different interpretation of India's modernization process compared to Bollywood movies. If we consider the most popular movies as a representation of a nation's history of struggle, South Indian movies provide more imaginative portrayals of public struggle and successful modernization than Bollywood movies.

It is crucial for the film industries to strike a balance between entertainment, special effects, and meaningful storytelling that aligns with positive values and promotes social progress. By avoiding negative aspects of nationalism and promoting inclusivity, respect for individual rights, and diverse perspectives, movies can play a role in fostering a more harmonious and just society.

Based on the analysis of the 10 movies and considering various factors such as geographical politics, religion, competing languages, powerful elites, capitalism, markets, and local versus global perspectives, this study categorizes three types of structures of feelings: emergent, dominant, and residual culture.

The new dominant culture, as observed in five South Indian movies, is characterized by historical/epic heroes portrayed in a humanistic style, dark heroes with justifications, strong female characters, public heroes, pro-Hinduism or local gods, and representation from Tollywood, Kollywood, Sandalwood, and Mollywood industries. The languages predominantly used are Telugu, Tamil, and Kannada, and there is relatively less content related to Pakistan issues.

The residual culture is identified by general images of powerlessness among Indians, attitudes of victimhood, a sense of hopelessness, individual-level problem-solving approaches for specific cases, dominant Muslim actors portraying in box office hits, reliance on budgets from Bollywood or Hollywood, a dominant usage of the Hindi language, and a pro-Pakistan frontier complex.

The emergent culture represents potential future trends in the Indian movie market, characterized by powerful and tough global images of Indians, problem-solving approaches with a pragmatic perspective, strong references to daily life, active and united participation in

public issues, leading national images with a religious background, leading budgets for movies with local perspectives, an increase in official languages, and Indian-dominant content related to Pakistan issues.

It is worth noting that poverty, social inequality, corruption, and government inefficiency are significant factors contributing to the varied assessments of India's democratic practice. In this context, movies like KGF Chapter 2 may provide audiences with an outlet to imagine relief from their misfortunes by presenting a dark hero figure. The analysis of these structures of feelings in movies provides insights into the evolving cultural landscape of India and the aspirations, values, and concerns of its people. By examining these cultural representations, researchers can gain a deeper understanding of societal dynamics and potential shifts in collective consciousness.

Based on the five South Indian movies analyzed here, they are appreciated by world movie viewers. More emergent themes may appear in movie box office all the time for India movie markets. For example, popular movies in India in 2022: Kantara is a big commercial success as the second highest-grossing Kannada film of all time after K.G.F: Chapter 2. It describes helpless mountain residents who got help from local deity to fight for their survival to fight governments and greedy land owners. This kind of content is rarely to be most popular movies. With the success of South Indian industries, more fans may come out and support their views of historical truth and public issues. This implies more similar themes to appear as emergent culture.

Table 3: Types of heroes & strategic levels by Emergent, Dominant, Residual Culture

Emergent culture	Dominant Culture	Residual Culture (Gradually)
Powerful, Tough, global, competing images for Indians	Historical/epic heroes with humanistic style	Powerless images of Indians
Problem-solving, pragmatistic perspectives	Dark heroes for justice	Attitudes of victimhood
Strong images for references for daily life	Strong woman images	Hopeless images of Indians
Strong civil, united participation in public issues	Public heroes	Individual cases and issues
Leading national images with religion background	Pro Hinduism or local gods	Images of dominant actors as Muslims in box office
Leading budgets for movies with local perspectives	Tollywood, Kollywood, Sandalwood, Mollywood	Leading budgets from Bollywood, Hollywood
More official languages	Telugu, Tamil, Malayalam, Kannada	Dominant usage of Hindi language
Indian-dominant content about Pakistan issues	Fewer content with Pakistan issues	Pro-Pakistan frontier complex

The language analysis results presented in Table 4 provide interesting insights into the language preferences in the Indian movie market. In 2019, a majority of the top 10 movies

were in Hindi, accounting for 70% of the films. However, in 2022, there was a noticeable shift, with only 30% of the top 10 movies being in Hindi. This indicates a decrease in the dominance of Hindi films in recent years. The Hindi market share in India movies declined from 44% in 2019 to 33% in 2022; on the other hand, there was an increase in the popularity of dubbed versions of South Indian films in Hindi, which accounted for around 32% of the Hindi market share in 2022 (Shackleton, 2023). This suggests that audiences are showing interest in South Indian movies and are open to experiencing them through dubbed versions in Hindi. Telugu films emerged as the second largest category in terms of market share, growing from 13% in 2019 to 20% in 2022; Tamil films also experienced an increase in market share, driven by successful releases like Ponniyin Selvan: Part 1, Vikram, and Beast, growing from 13% to 16% (Shackleton, 2023).

Table 4: First language by number of speakers in India (2011 Census) and by movie industries

Language	First language speakers	First language speakers as percentage of total population	Movie industries referred to	Number of movies analyzed in this study
Hindi	528,347,193	43.63%	Bollywood	5 (Pathaan, Dangal, PK, Bajrangi Bhaijaan, Secret Superstar)
Telugu*	81,127,740	6.70%	Tollywood*	3 (Baahubali, Baahubali 2 The Conclusion, RRR)
Tamil	69,026,881	5.70%	Kollywood	1 (2.0)
Kannada	43,706,512	3.61%	Sandalwood	1 (KGF Chapter 2)
Malayalam	34,838,819	2.88%	Mollywood	0

1. Data collected by Wikipedia and by the author.
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cinema_of_South_India
2. Gray cells are collectively referred to as the Cinema of South India, which indicates the presence of the four major film industries in South India: Tollywood, Kollywood, Sandalwood, and Mollywood.

3. In 2021, the combined domestic box office revenue of the four South Indian film industries surpassed that of the Hindi film market. Additionally, the Telugu film industry emerged as the largest film industry in India, as defined by box office revenue.
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cinema_of_South_India

These findings challenge the long-standing dominance of Hindi movies, which had historically catered to a significant portion of the Indian population, as Hindi is spoken as a first language by approximately 43.63% of Indians. The shifting language preferences observed in recent years reflect the diversification of the Indian movie market, with audiences increasingly seeking out films in languages other than Hindi.

Fans have explained why they choose more South Indian movies, as these films often address a variety of issues that are relevant to their daily lives and experiences. As the bright side of India's democratic development with a growing economy and an increasing educated middle-class population is praised; however, the majority of Indians experience the dark side of daily life, where the state is perceived as corrupt, inefficient, and often absent when people are in need (Wei, 2013, p. 170).

Kohli's ideas, as cited by Wei, suggest that the low quality of governance in India is not due to a lack of capable central bureaucrats, but rather incompetence and corruption at the local government and political leader level (Kohli, 2009, p. 10). South Indian movies often feature public heroes who embody emergent trends, such as problem-solving and pragmatic perspectives, and they resonate with the daily lives of the audience. Popular culture carries social meanings and reflects public spirits.

Scholars argue that fans are not mere consumers but also producers who rework and reinterpret media content as cultural resources to resist, distinguish, and leverage power for social classes and groups (John Fisk, 2003, 2010). People engage with media for various motivations and needs, including seeking information and social connections. Entertainment is not the sole reason for media consumption, and consumers are not passive victims of endless material consumption.

Wei points out that India's actual situation reveals that good governance does not necessarily accompany democratic politics, and the low quality of governance has become a major obstacle to the future development of Indian democracy (Wei, 2013, p. 168). However, democratic systems with checks and balances allow for public discourse and the raising of public issues in media content. This is a benefit of democracy, as it enables citizens to engage in conflict and cooperation within the public sphere. Thus, the most popular movies can become a cultural imagination of who Indians are and help citizens overcome challenges within the framework of democracy.

Meanings of India movies as national brand

Throsby (2001) explained how cultural economics can contain strong individual characteristics with the cultural impulse as a desire for group experience of collective production or consumption. When public order is established in both the social and cultural domains and receives support from the people, the concept of order becomes a catalyst for promoting solidarity and emphasizing people's authentic daily life experiences (See Figure 2).

Analyzing the structures of feeling in Indian movies can generate higher expectations for emergent culture, as it reflects the collective aspirations and sentiments of the society from the support of people.

Figure 2: Order and its main component principles

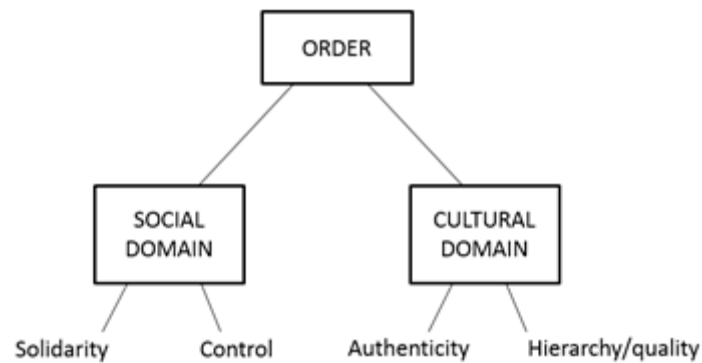
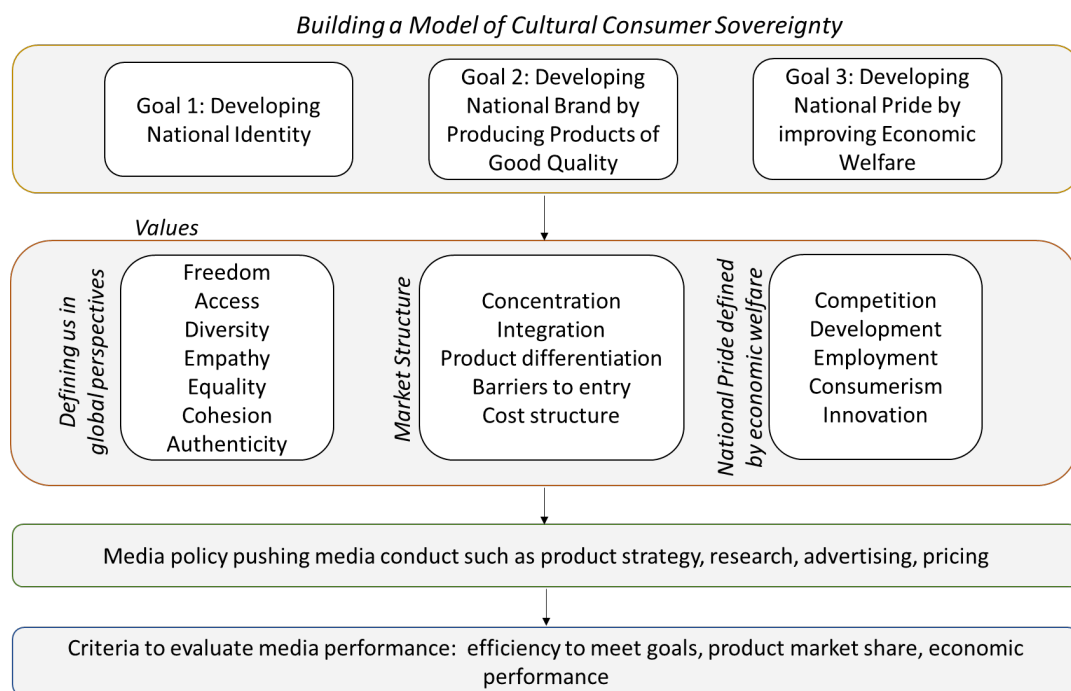


Figure 2 is from *Media Performance: Mass Communication and the Public Interest* by Denis McQuail, 1992 and remade by the author.

Figure 3: Building a Model of Cultural Consumer Sovereignty, from Chen, Y.Y.(2013)



Applying an Evaluation Model for Media Performance on Taiwanese Cinema

In Figure 3, Chen (2013) outlines three goals for constructing the model of cultural consumer sovereignty, which involves differentiating a country from others. These goals include three goals: 1. Developing national identity: This entails emphasizing values and the capacity for autonomy, such as freedom, access, diversity, empathy, equality, cohesion, and authenticity, in order to establish a distinct national identity. 2. Defining market structure: This involves developing media organizations and systems that can produce high-quality products to create a national brand. 3. Defining national pride: This goal is achieved by measuring economic welfare and ensuring that it aligns with the overall development and well-being of the nation. According to this model, with perspectives of a unique people and a sovereign people, the

aim of pursuit of collective symbols and signs for Indian movies as national brand can help India to pursue the collective-self-images in diverse social background.

Conclusions

South Indian film industries outperformed Bollywood in 2022, providing Indian audiences with historically different choices for film appreciation and entertaining styles. Textual analysis is used to interpret the public and social meanings of 10 most popular Indian movies, incorporating concepts such as collective subjectivities, imagined communities, the structure of social groups, and the significance of being local. It examines trends of cultural imagination within these movies. The results demonstrate that Indian most popular movies offer Indians a pathway to explore a potentially better version of themselves, not only individually but also collectively.

Based on this analysis, the study suggests that Indian movies have the potential to elevate themselves as a national brand, embodying diverse, democratic, and competitive elements. To enhance the implications of the study, conducting in-depth interviews with fans to explore their cultural imagination would be beneficial.

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