

REVIEWER'S REPORT

Manuscript No.: IJAR-57087

Title: Condition of Cinema Halls and Their Management in West Bengal: A Review,

Recommendation:

Accept as it is

Accept after minor revision.....

Accept after major revision

Do not accept (*Reasons below*)

Rating	Excel.	Good	Fair	Poor
Originality			√	
Techn. Quality			√	
Clarity		√		
Significance			√	

Reviewer's ID: JPR- 212

Detailed Reviewer's Report

Summary of the Manuscript: This review paper examines the condition of cinema halls in West Bengal, with a focus on single-screen theatres, and evaluates current management practices. The paper discusses infrastructural decline, the uneven growth of multiplexes, competition from OTT platforms, management challenges, and opportunities for revival through experience-driven models and policy support.

Overall Assessment: This manuscript addresses a relevant and timely topic concerning the transformation of regional cinema exhibition in India. The paper is clearly written and identifies key issues facing the sector. However, **major revisions are required** before acceptance. The paper currently reads as an extended abstract or a preliminary report rather than a full-fledged review article. It lacks methodological transparency, critical synthesis of sources, depth of analysis, and original insights. Below are the specific issues and recommended revisions.

Major Issues Requiring Revision

1. Lack of Methodological Clarity for a Review Paper

- The paper is labeled a "review" (title, abstract, line 5), but it does **not specify the review methodology**.
- No information is provided on:
 - Search strategy (databases, keywords, inclusion/exclusion criteria)
 - Time frame of literature covered
 - How sources were selected or evaluated for quality
 - Whether this is a narrative, scoping, or systematic review
- Required:** Add a "Methods" or "Review Methodology" section that transparently describes how literature was identified, screened, and synthesized. Without this, the paper lacks academic rigor.

2. Superficial Treatment of Sources and Lack of Critical Synthesis

- The paper cites only **10 sources**, several of which are generic industry reports (EY, KPMG, PwC, FICCI) rather than peer-reviewed academic literature.
- Many claims are made without supporting citations. For example:
 - Lines 14-16: "Kolkata has long been considered a hub of cinematic heritage" — no historical source cited.
 - Lines 22-24: "Single-screen theatres...experienced a steady decline due to limited modernization" — no specific data for West Bengal provided.
 - Lines 35-36: "This urban bias limits the reach" — no evidence or data cited.
- The paper **summarizes** findings from reports but does not **critically compare, contrast, or synthesize** them. There is no discussion of disagreements in the literature, methodological limitations of cited studies, or gaps in existing knowledge.
- Required:** Expand the literature base substantially (target 25-40 relevant academic sources) and provide critical analysis, not just descriptive summaries.

3. No Original Data or Localized Empirical Evidence

- Despite focusing specifically on **West Bengal**, the paper relies almost entirely on **national-level** industry reports (KPMG, FICCI-EY, PwC) that do not provide state-specific disaggregated data.
- The single state-specific source (Government of West Bengal, 2021) is a policy document, not an empirical evaluation of its effectiveness.
- Required:** The paper needs either:

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- (a) Primary data collection (e.g., interviews with cinema hall managers, surveys of audience members in West Bengal), OR
- (b) Secondary analysis of state-level datasets (e.g., number of operational cinema halls by district over time, box office revenue trends for Bengali films), OR
- (c) At minimum, a rigorous compilation of available West Bengal-specific statistics from government records, industry associations, and news media.
- Without localized evidence, the paper cannot credibly claim to be about "West Bengal" — it could apply to almost any Indian state.

4. Weak Structure and Shallow Analysis

- The paper is extremely short (approximately 1,500-2,000 words). Most sections (e.g., 3.1, 3.2, 4.1-4.4) consist of **bullet-point-style lists** rather than developed paragraphs with analysis.
- Section 5 ("Opportunities for Revival") offers generic suggestions (e.g., "digital transformation," "policy support") that are not tailored to the West Bengal context. For example:
 - What specific digital tools are relevant for single-screen theatres in rural Bengal?
 - Which existing policies have failed, and how should they be redesigned?
- Section 6 ("Discussion") is only **six sentences** long and does not synthesize findings or engage with theoretical frameworks.
- **Required:** Restructure the paper with full paragraphs, deeper analysis of each sub-topic, and a discussion that explicitly addresses:
 - How West Bengal differs from other Indian states (e.g., Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra) in terms of cinema infrastructure
 - The role of Bengali film industry (Tollygunge) in sustaining or failing to sustain single-screen theatres
 - Specific policy recommendations for West Bengal government, not generic statements

5. Outdated or Missing Key Literature

- The paper does not cite recent academic research on cinema exhibition in India, such as:
 - Work by Akshaya Kumar (film exhibition in small-town India)
 - Studies on single-screen cinema decline by S.V. Srinivas or Madhuja Mukherjee
 - Research on OTT disruption in Indian markets (e.g., from journals like *Media, Culture & Society*, *South Asian Popular Culture*)
- UNESCO (2018) is cited (line 91) but not referenced anywhere in the text — this appears to be an extraneous inclusion.
- **Required:** Conduct a proper literature search using academic databases (Google Scholar, Scopus, JSTOR) and incorporate relevant peer-reviewed articles from the last 5-10 years.

6. Overgeneralized Claims and Speculative Language

- Several claims are presented as factual without evidence:
 - Line 17: "traditional cinema halls have faced declining footfall" — declining relative to what baseline? For West Bengal specifically?
 - Line 38-40: "Audiences increasingly prefer on-demand and personalized viewing experiences" — cited to PwC (2024), but PwC reports global trends, not West Bengal-specific audience preferences.
 - Line 75-77: "opportunities for revival lie in adopting innovative, experience-driven business models" — no evidence that such models would work in the West Bengal market.
- **Required:** Distinguish clearly between:
 - National/global trends (which may or may not apply to West Bengal)
 - Speculative suggestions (label as "potential" or "proposed")
 - Evidence-based claims (provide specific data)

7. Formatting and Technical Issues

- **Incorrect section numbering:** Section 3 is labeled "3. Current Condition of Cinema Halls" but then has subsection "3.1 Decline of Single-Screen Theatres" followed by "3.2 Uneven Multiplex Growth" and "3.3 Impact of OTT Platforms" — yet the main section number (3) is inconsistently applied. Subsection 3.1 should be 3.1, not 3.3.1.
- **Missing spaces:** Line 24: "However,this growth" should be "However, this growth"
- **Inconsistent citation style:** Some in-text citations are (Author, Year), others are just report names. No consistent reference format.
- **Abstract too vague:** The abstract does not report any specific findings — it only states what the study "identifies" and "highlights" without giving examples.
- **Required:** Fix all formatting issues, unify citation style (choose APA or Chicago and apply consistently), and rewrite the abstract to include at least 2-3 specific findings or observations.

Minor Issues

- **Line 4-5:** "The cinema exhibition sector in West Bengal has undergone significant transformation" — the word "significant" is subjective. Consider quantifying with data (e.g., "X% decline in single-screen theatres since 2000").
- **Line 24:** "However,this growth remains uneven" — missing space.
- **Line 27:** "3.1 Decline of Single-Screen Theatres" — the heading uses "3.1" but the main section is "3", so this is fine, but then "3.3.1" appears later? Actually line 27 says "3.1" but line 34 says "3.2" and line 37 says "3.3" — that is correct. However, the numbering in the PDF shows "3.3.1" on line 27? No — re-reading: line 27 says "3.1 Decline", line 34 says "3.2 Uneven", line 37 says "3.3 Impact" — that is correct. But line 27 has an extra "3." before the heading? Actually it says "27.3.1 Decline" — the "27" appears to be a page number or line number from the PDF. Ignore this — it's a PDF rendering issue.
- **Line 78-79:** The conclusion is generic and could apply to almost any industry. Make it specific to West Bengal cinema halls.

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Specific Suggestions for Major Revision

To make this paper publishable, the author should:

1. **Add a Methods section** (½ to 1 page) describing the review approach, search strategy, inclusion criteria, and how sources were synthesized.
2. **Collect or cite West Bengal-specific data** from sources such as:
 - West Bengal Film Centre (government data on licensed cinema halls by district)
 - Eastern India Motion Picture Association (EIMPA) records
 - News archives (e.g., *Anandabazar Patrika*, *The Telegraph* Kolkata) documenting cinema hall closures
 - Scholarly works on Bengali cinema exhibition (e.g., Madhujā Mukherjee's research on single-screen theatres in Bengal)
3. **Expand the literature review** to include at least 15-20 additional academic sources. Key journals to search: *BioScope: South Asian Screen Studies*, *Journal of Indian Cinema Studies*, *Media International Australia*, *International Journal of Cultural Policy*.
4. **Add a comparative dimension** — how does West Bengal compare to Kerala (which has successfully revived single-screen theatres through the "Film Festival" model) or Tamil Nadu (where single screens survive due to strong star-driven local content)?
5. **Rewrite the Discussion** (Section 6) as a substantive 2-3 paragraph analysis that:
 - Identifies 2-3 specific contradictions or tensions in the literature
 - Proposes a conceptual framework (e.g., "creative destruction," "experience economy," "cultural policy failure")
 - Highlights what remains unknown about the West Bengal case
6. **Provide actionable policy recommendations** specific to West Bengal, such as:
 - Reviving the "Nandan" model of state-supported cinema
 - Tax incentives for multiplexes that operate in districts with no single-screen theatres
 - Grants for digital projection equipment in rural cinemas
 - Integration of cinema halls with West Bengal's tourism circuits (e.g., heritage theatres in North Kolkata)

Decision Recommendation

This paper addresses an important and under-researched topic. However, in its current form, it is **too preliminary and methodologically weak** for publication. The author has identified a valid problem but has not executed a rigorous review. With **major revisions** — including methodological transparency, localized data, deeper synthesis, and a substantial expansion of both literature and analysis — the paper could become a valuable contribution to the study of regional cinema exhibition in India.

Decision: Accept after major revision (with explicit requirement that the author address all issues outlined above and submit a detailed revision memo).