MSW MANAGEMENT -Multidisciplinary, Scientific Work and Management Journal
ISSN: 1053-7899
Vol. 36 Issue 1s, 2026, Pages: 1362-1366

Industry Attractiveness of Bhramyoman Theatre in Assam: An Analysis of Porter's Five Forces

Panchamrita Sarma*,
Research Scholar, ADTU
panchi_ghy@rediffmail.com
Orchid id: 0009-0006-8954-2288
Dr. Samannoy Baruah,
Associate Professor, Assam down town University (ADTU)
Corresponding Author*

Abstract

Assam, the gateway to the north east is intrinsic to the grandeur of nature. The state is embellished with lush greeneries, rivers, monuments and temples along with unparallel assortment of traditions and traditional performing arts. The indigenous art forms in the state proves a platform for employment to a lot many people associated with it. A gem in the crown of the performing arts industry of Assam is the Bhramyoman theatre industry, providing employment for around one lakh people in the state (Ross, 2007). The word "Bhramyoman" translates to 'being mobile'. The industry comprises of theatre groups which travels across the state and perform plays in detailed makeshift stages. The theatre groups carry all essential elements viz. human resources, sound light arrangements, materials for stage construction etc. for the play alongwith.

The Assamese mobile theater sector is a vital part of the state's entertainment sector and the nation's most unique commercial performing art form. Live plays are enacted in temporary venuescreated specifically for the purpose of mobile theater, also known as Bhramyomaan theater. This paper is an effort to comprehend the **degree to which the industry is likely to be profitable and sustainable in the long run** i.e. the industry attractiveness. For the purpose, the industry is tested on the scale of the five forces developed by Michael Porter. The **combined strength of the five competitive forces** are analysed. The study is based on both primary and secondary data. Focus group discussion have been used as a tool for primary data collection. Inferences form both qualitative and quantitative data are drawn. It was deducted that the Bhramyoman theatre industry in Assam is moderately attractive.

Keywords: Bhramyoman theatre, industry attractiveness, Porter's five forces

Introduction

The term 'Bhramyoman' in Assamese means 'to move', thus Bhramyoman theatre refers to a theatre group which travels that can be very simply termed as mobile theatre. Bhramyoman theatre is a distinctive form of theatre where theatre groups travel across the state for staging plays. They carry every essential requirement for a staging of a play. Apart from artists and other support personals, these groups possess and carry materials for setting up stages, set designs, lights, sound systems, seats for audiences. The theatre groups consist of 100-150 persons travelling across the state for a period of eight months starting from mid-September. On arrival at the location of the play, offered for performance by the organizing committee, the set up begins. The skilled artisans transform the barren plot of land or field to a mystical proscenium within a very short span of time, complete with light, sound and sitting arrangements for audiences. Temporary ticket counters are also set up. The plays are being acted out over 3-4 nights in a location with real time interactions with the audiences. After the last show for a particular location, the entire sent gets winded up, neatly packed and the team proceeds to create magic elsewhere. The only matter left behind is a vacuous space, with no trace of the grandeur it witnessed the days before. Mobile theatre is an industry indigenous to the state of Assam. Ross, Ina. (2017). The theatre groups, in their course of staging the plays creates an immense employment opportunity. Not only for the pool of people directly related to the plays, viz actors, dancers, costume designers, technicians etc., a lot of outsiders also gets income opportunities, especially the peddlers who sell their goodies to the audiences during the show. Also small shops comes up in the area where the theatre sets the stage creating scope of direct and indirect employment avenues for almost one lakh people of the state.

Mobile theatre is not a small business. Budget requirement of a group varies between Rs. 20 lakhs to Rs. 1 crore. Different departments of mobile theatre groups are- direction of drama, decoration of stage, auditorium, sound and music, light, set and property, decoration and make up, green room, food, transportation and publicity. (Das, 2018) had been analysed that near about ten thousand shows are staged within the time span of August to April earning a revenue of more than hundred crore. In 2008 itself, each theatre group recorded a yearly income of fifty to sixty lakh rupees. The annual turnover of the industry is estimated over Rs 10 crore. (Paul, 2013).

Porter's Five Forces Model, developed by Michael E. Porter (1980), is a vital analytical tool used to assess the competitive forces shaping every industry and to determine its profitability and attractiveness. The five forces—**competitive rivalry, threat of new entrants, threat of substitutes, bargaining power of buyers, and bargaining power of suppliers**—collectively influence the intensity of competition and hence the strategic decisions of firms. The model's primary importance lies in its ability to help businesses **identify their position within the industry** and develop strategies to gain competitive advantage (Porter, 2008). It helps in **industry analysis**, guiding investment decisions by evaluating long-term profitability (Dobbs, 2014). Companies use it to **benchmark their strengths and weaknesses**, respond to external threats, and anticipate changes in competitive dynamics. Moreover, it aids policymakers and researchers in understanding the structure-conduct-performance paradigm of industries. The Bhramyoman theatre industry of Assam through a large scale commercial endeavour is operating on traditional business models. Analysing the industry in terms of Porter's five forces as model of competitive strategy would explain the industry's position in a complex strategic environment (Yunna, 2014). The analysis would enable potential investors to ponder over investment opportunities in the industry. Alongside, viewing the industry through strategic lenses would contribute to the core intention for the very existence of the industry- transforming the performing art of theatre into highly commercially viable product.

Objectives

To map the bhramyoman theatre industry in terms of Porter's five forces

To determine industry attractiveness of Bhramyoman Theatre industry

Research Methodology

The research done for the purpose is descriptive research. Inferences are drawn for both qualitative and quantitative data. A total of 44 respondents pertaining to the field of Bhramyoman theatre are contacted for the purpose. The opus of respondents includes Producers, Secretaries, actors, dancers, directors, scriptwriters, journalists, customers and researchers relating to the industry. Currently nineteen theatre groups are operating in the industry. Each one being covered for concluding the objectives. The data is collected through focus group interview. The respondents were asked to rank statements relating to the five forces which determine industry attractiveness. Qualitative data was availed by transcription of the discussions made during the focus group interview. Data is shown using graphs and frequency distribution tables. These methods are straightforward, simple to calculate, comprehend and interpret the results, (Saunders, 2007). The tables also offer visually appealing formats that aid in better understanding and communication, (Kumar, 2005). Descriptive statistics, including percentages, averages, and measures of spread, were utilized to characterize, arrange, and exhibit quantitative data

MSW MANAGEMENT -Multidisciplinary, Scientific Work and Management Journal
ISSN: 1053-7899
Vol. 36 Issue 1s, 2026, Pages: 1362-1366

for simpler presentation. Furthermore, visual representations frequently facilitate noticing the key aspects of a data set, (Minium, 2008). Additionally, various inferential statistical metrics were employed.

Conceptual Framework Porter's Five Forces

Michael Porter created a model of competition in 1980 a strategy to articulate a sector's role in a complicated strategic context environment. The five forces that are identified as the barriers to entry, the supplier power, and the buyer power the level of competition and the possibility of replacement. This framework (see Figure 1) attempted to connect the participants in a sector's average profitability to competitive pressures. Porter's five forces model has had a significant impact on the industry completion landscape. (Karagiannopoulos, 2005) summarized the factors as under

Force 1: Threat of New Entrants

There may be intense market competition as a result of new rivals.

Intense market rivalry may put certain businesses' survival in jeopardy or lower their profit margin. Two factors—entry obstacles and industry businesses' responses to prospective entrants—reflect the threat of potential entrants.

The size and investment needed to become an effective competitor in a market are often the most prevalent kind of entrance barriers, with the exception of lega l restrictions or governmental regulations. The dimensions considered in determine the threat of the industry from new entrants are Capital investment requirements, Brand loyalty of customers, Access to distribution channels, Government regulations and licenses etc.

Force 2: Power of the supplier

The ability to negotiate and control resources is referred to as suppliers' power. The extent of the power of the supplier to negotiate and rise prices is rated by observing various dimensions such as **Number and concentration of suppliers, Uniqueness of supplier's product or service, Switching costs of suppliers, Availability of substitute inputs, Supplier's threat of forward integration etc.** The difficulties other businesses have obtaining these resources is a reflection of the resources' dominating power. Suppliers are strong if they: maintain a steady market position; offer distinctive goods or services that make it difficult for customers to switch suppliers or incur significant costs to do so; and are simpler to work with to establish strategic partnerships.

Force 3: Power of Buyers

By negotiating lower rates or demanding higher quality, buyers might pose a danger to the sector.Buyer power is primarily determined by the size and concentration of the customer base.Customers are strong if they are small in number but require a large quantity of goods; they requ ire standard products that are available from various vendors; and they are simpler to work with to establish strategic partnerships. Some factors for analysing the power of buyers are **Availability of alternatives, Price sensitivity, Access to information** and **Customer loyalty.**

Force 4: Threat of Substitutes

The relative price-to-performance ratios of the many product or service categories that consumers can use to meet the same fundamental need determine the threat that replacement items offer to an industry's profitability. The more competitive the alternatives are, the lower the price or the higher the quality.

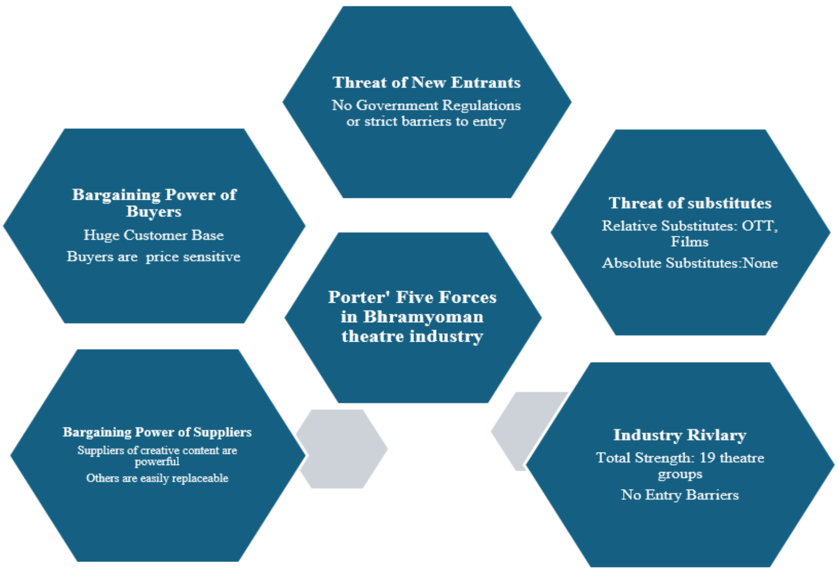
Force 5: Degree of rivalry

The fierce competition between well-established businesses poses a serious risk to profitability. A number of elements, including industry competitive structure, industry demand and capacity to meet it, company differentiation, and the height of exit obstacles, all affect how fiercely a rivalry exists. Factors considered for the purpose are Number of competitors, Rate of industry growth, Service differentiation, Customer switching cost , Promotional and pricing wars etc.

Inorder to determine the extent to which Porter's five forces are affecting the industry, statistical inferences are drawn. Weighted mean for all the factors is calculated. The inferences are categorized under as under-

Range	Interpretation of factors	Industry Attractiveness
Below 1.50	Very Low	Very High
1.50-2.50	Low	Attractive
2.50-3.50	Moderate	Moderately Attractive
3.50-4.50	High	Unattractive
4.50 and above	Very High	Very Unattractive

Porter's Five forces in terms of Bhramyoman Theatre industry in Assam



MSW MANAGEMENT -Multidisciplinary, Scientific Work and Management Journal
ISSN: 1053-7899
Vol. 36 Issue 1s, 2026, Pages: 1362-1366

Threat of New entrants

Attribute	Rating							
	1	2	3	4	5	Total	Weighted mean	Standard Deviation
It is easy for new theatre groups to enter the industry.	4	12	8	8	12	44	3.27	3.58
The barriers to entry is existing (e.g., capital requirements, government regulation, brand loyalty)?	0	4	16	12	12	44	3.73	5.88
New companies access distribution channels easily	0	4	4	16	20	44	4.18	7.76
Customer loyalty doesnot change with new theatres	0	8	8	12	16	44	3.82	5.31
Average Scores	1	7	9	11	15	44	3.75	5.63

Dimension	Inferences	
	Threat is High if	**In Case of Bhramyoman Theatre Industry**
Ease of entry for new theatre groups in the industry.	Easy	Easy
Barriers to entry (e.g., capital requirements, government regulation, brand loyalty)?	Non existent	Non existent
Ease of access distribution channels by new companies	Easy	Easy
Shifting Customer loyalty	High	High
Government regulations and licensing	Non-Existent	Non-Existent
Customer switching costs	Low	Low
Proprietary technology or patents	High	Low
Expected retaliation from existing players	High	Low

The Bhramyoman theatre industry faces high threat of new entrants. With a weighted mean value of 3.75, the threat of new entrant is high. The primary reason being absence of entry and exit barriers in the industry. The industry is not shielded by requirement of any regulation or licensing from the government making it easy for new theatre groups to enter the industry (3.27). Also new companies have easy access to distribution (4.18). The inviting committees of theatre are easy approachable and at most times are open to acceptance of new theatre groups. The customer though loyalty to a few big brands, but they are willing to try out new brands when shows are being performed at a favourable location. The threat of new entry poses significant problems in the industry. When producers with no experience in theatre arts come up in the industry, the output quality detonates. The audiences which avail services at such inferior quality, becomes disinterested in theatre and doesnot purchase tickets for other theatre groups for the season. This creates problems of the entire industry. The inexperienced management of theatre groups also resonates negativity in the industry by creating a sense of mistrust in supply chain. A mismanaged theatre often unable to manage finances effectively, driving away investors and potential human resources from the industry. Eventually the theatre groups exit the industry adding up the figures of closures in the industry, sketching a negative portrait of the Bhramyoman theatre industry.

Bargaining power of suppliers

Attribute	Rating							
	1	2	3	4	5	Total	Weighted mean	Standard Deviation
Suppliers are easily available.	4	16	8	16	0	44	2.82	6.4
It is easy to switch suppliers.	4	8	12	12	8	44	3.27	3.07
Suppliers significantly influence the pricing or quality of final products.	0	12	4	12	16	44	3.73	5.88
The industry is highly dependent on a specific supplier or group of suppliers	4	8	4	12	16	44	3.64	4.66
Average Scores	3	10	6.25	13	10	44	3.36	5

Dimension	Inferences	
	Power is High if	**In Case of Bhramyoman Theatre Industry**
Availability of suppliers	Easy	Easy
Easy of switching suppliers.	Easy	Easy
Suppliers influence on pricing or quality of final products.	Highly	High
The industry is dependent on a specific supplier or group of suppliers	Highly	Moderate
Number of suppliers (fewer suppliers = higher power)	High	Moderate
Uniqueness of supplier's products/services	High	Low
Threat of forward integration by suppliers	High	High
Availability of substitute inputs	Not Easy	Easily Available

The bargaining power of suppliers in the Bhramyoman theatre industry is moderate (3.36). The suppliers of Bhramyoman theatre are scriptwriters and playwrights, costume and makeup experts, set Designers and Artisans, Lighting and Sound Equipment Suppliers, Actors, dancers, Musicians and Instrument Provider etc. The Bhramyoman theatre groups mostly own and carry every element required for the shows. Thus the challenge of non-availability of supplies in required hour is non-existent. The challenge however is to acquire glamour stars and renowned playwrights. The suppliers have the ability to impact the output of the service. However due to its model of operation, the theare groups have ample scope to formulate strategies to cope with any challenges that may arise because of the suppliers. The industry, however, requires to plan for preparing creative suppliers for the long run. Artists, musicians and scriptwriters should be identified and trained inorder to avoid the void which may arise in future.

Bargaining Power of Buyers

Attribute	**Rating**							
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**Total**	**Weighted mean**	**Standard Deviation**
There is a huge customer base for theatre industry.	0	8	12	8	16	44	3.73	5.44
Customers are powerful	0	8	12	8	16	44	3.73	5.66
Customers are price sensitive	4	0	8	16	16	44	3.91	6.4
Customers have access to market information and alternatives.	4	4	20	12	4	44	3.18	6.4
Average Scores	2	4	13	11	13	44	3.64	**5.97**

Dimension	**Inferences**	
	Power is High if	**In Case of Bhramyoman Theatre Industry**
Customer base for theatre industry.	High	High
Customer’s power	High	High
Customer’s access to market information and alternatives.	High	High
Product differentiation	High	Low
Price sensitivity of customers	High	High
Availability of substitutes	High	Moderate

The **bargaining power of buyers** in the Bhramyoman theatre industry is considered **high**, with a mean value of **3.64**. Audiences have multiple entertainment options such as cinema, television, and digital platforms, making them more selective and price-sensitive. Their preferences significantly influence the content, pricing, and quality of performances. Additionally, since performances are localized and depend heavily on community turnout, audience satisfaction becomes crucial for sustainability. A decline in engagement or dissatisfaction can lead to revenue loss. Thus, the industry must continuously adapt to audience tastes and expectations, giving buyers substantial leverage in shaping the industry's direction.

Threat of Substitutes

Attribute	**Rating**							
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**Total**	**Weighted mean**	**Standard Deviation**
There alternative products or services that meet the same need.	8	8	12	8	8	44	3.00	1.60
Substitutes are highly different terms of price, quality, or convenience.	8	4	8	20	4	44	3.18	5.88
Customers are willing to switch to substitutes.	0	4	16	8	16	44	3.82	6.40
Switching cost for customers high	0	16	12	8	8	44	3.18	5.31
Average Scores	4	8	12	11	9	44	3.30	4.80

Dimension	**Inferences**	
	Threat is High if	**In Case of Bhramyoman Theatre Industry**
Number of alternative products or services that meet the same need.	High	Moderate
Difference in substitutes in terms of price, quality, or convenience.	High	Moderate
Willingness of customers to switch to substitutes.	High	High
Switching cost for customers	Low	Low
Availability of substitute products or services	High	Moderate
Customer propensity to switch	High	Moderate
Innovation and technological change	High	Moderate

The **threat of substitutes** in the Bhramyoman theatre industry is **moderate**, with a weighted mean of **3.30**. While traditional theatre remains culturally significant, it faces competition from substitutes like cinema, television, OTT platforms, and social media, which offer entertainment in more convenient and technologically advanced formats. However, the live, mobile, and community-based nature of Bhramyoman performances—deeply rooted in local culture—offers a unique emotional and social experience that modern substitutes often lack. This cultural and experiential value reduces the full impact of substitutes, making the threat moderate rather than high, especially in rural and semi-urban regions.

Competitive Rivalry

Attribute	**Rating**							
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**Total**	**Weighted mean**	**Standard Deviation**
The market share is even among competitors.	8	8	24	0	4	44	2.18	8.16
Product offered by the theatre groups are significantly different.	4	12	0	16	12	44	2.09	5.88
The level of price competition is high.	0	4	8	12	20	44	1.82	6.88
Theatre groups innovate or change strategy frequently.	4	12	12	4	12	44	1.82	3.92
Average Scores	4	9	11	8	12	44	1.98	6.21

MSW MANAGEMENT -Multidisciplinary, Scientific Work and Management Journal
ISSN: 1053-7899
Vol. 36 Issue 1s, 2026, Pages: 1362-1366

Dimension	Inferences	
	Rivalry is High if	**In Case of Bhramyoman Theatre Industry**
Share of market between competitors	Uneven	Fair
Difference in Product offered by the theatre groups	High Difference	Low Difference
The level of price competition	High	Low
Frequency of innovation or change in strategy.	High	Low
Number and size of competitors	high	high
Product/ Service Differentiation	high	moderate
Switching Cost for consumers	low	low
Exit Barriers	low	Very low

The most unique factor unveiled by the Porter's five force analysis on Bhramyoman theatre is the element of competitive rivalry. The five force analysis states that when the other four factors viz- threat of new entry, bargaining powers of buyers, bargaining power of suppliers and threat of substitute products are high, competitive rivalry in the industry also trends to be high. However, this in not truce in the case of Bhramyoman theater industry. In this industry, though other factors are high, competitive rivalry amongst the firms are less (1.98). Certain prominent factors could be identified which contributes to the less rivalry. Firstly although there are threat from new entrants, the market for the industry is large. Though the market share is uneven, the firms are able to get a fair share in the market. Thus, direct competition yet to develop. Secondly, the pricing setting for the tickets is done by the inviting committees and not the theatre groups, making price competition non-existent. Thirdly, the pace innovation and technical upgradation is slow, making product differentiation minimal. With firms offering similar products, with minimum differentiation, the potentiality of luring away customers or potential customers. Though the firms currently are upgrading their promotional measures, high level of competitive rivalry is absent.

Conclusion

The Bhramyoman theatre industry can be considered **moderately attractive**, based on the analysis of Porter's Five Forces. Despite facing high levels of **threat of substitutes, bargaining power of buyers, bargaining power of suppliers**, and **barriers to entry**, the industry's most **unique and favourable characteristic** is its **low competitive rivalry**. This implies that although several external pressures exist, the internal competition within the industry is limited, allowing existing players to operate without aggressive threats from direct competitors. This low rivalry provides stability and space for innovation and growth. With proper strategic responses to external challenges and by leveraging its cultural uniqueness, the industry holds significant potential for sustainable development and regional cultural impact.

Data availability: The data that support the fndings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon request.

Declarations Conflict of interest: The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest in the conduct and reporting of the study and that ethical standards were adhered to throughout the study.

Acknowledgement: The authors thank the Almighty for His divine guidance and strength throughout this research journey. Heartfelt gratitude goes to all the respondents whose valuable time and insights made this study possible. Their honest participation enriched the quality and depth of this work.

References

Christopher Balme (2008). Surrogate Stages: Theatre, Performance and the Challenge of New Media, Performance Research, 13:2, 80-91, DOI: 10.1080/13528160802639342

Das, K. (2018). Socio economic aspects of mobile theatre in assam a critical study. *Doctoral Dissertation*.

Devi, M. (2016). Managerial and economic aspects of mobile theatre establishments of assam. *Doctoral Thesis*.

Dobbs, M. E. (2014). Guidelines for applying Porter's five forces framework: a set of industry analysis templates. *Competitiveness Review*.

Grundy, T. (2006). Rethinking and reinventing Michael Porter's five forces model. *Strategic Change*.

Karagiannopoulos, G. D., Georgopoulos, N., & Nikolopoulos, K. (2005). Fathoming Porter's five forces model in the internet era. *info*, *7*(6), 66-76.

Mahat, M. (2019). The competitive forces that shape Australian medical education: An industry analysis using Porter's five forces framework. *International Journal of Educational Management*, *33*(5), 1082-1093.

Maxim, L. G. (2021). STRATEGIC ANALYSIS MODEL. PORTER'S 5 FORCES MODEL: CASE STUDY. Turkuaz Uluslararası Sosyo-Ekonomik Stratejik Araştırmalar Dergisi, 3(2), 1-7.

Christopher Balme (2008). Surrogate Stages: Theatre, Performance and the Challenge of New Media, Performance Research, 13:2, 80-91, DOI: 10.1080/13528160802639342

Paul, A. A. (2013). Popular Mobile Theatres of Assam: An Agency of Globalisation and Transculturation. *Research Journal of English Language and Literature*, *1*(3), 22-26.

Porter, M.E. (1985), Competitive Advantage: Creating and Sustaining Superior Performance, The Free Press, New York, NY.

Porter, M.E. (2008), "The five competitive forces that shape strategy", Harvard Business Review, Vol. 86 No. 1, pp. 78-93.

Ross, Ina. (2017). The Mobile Theatre Movement in India: a Success Story in Assam. New Theatre Quarterly. 33. 65-77. 10.1017/S0266464X16000646.

Sarma, R. (2016). Modern assamese mobile theatre as a medium of entertainment a study. (Doctoral dissertation).

Yunna, W., & Yisheng, Y. (2014). The competition situation analysis of shale gas industry in China: Applying Porter's five forces and scenario model. *Renewable and Sustainable Energy Reviews*, *40*, 798-805.