



ORANGE ECONOMY: CREATIVITY, CULTURE AND INNOVATION AS DRIVERS OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

The Orange Economy is a new economic dimension that involves turning imagination, creativity, culture, artistic expression, innovation and intellectual property into economic assets. It covers traditional crafts, handicrafts, handlooms, performing arts, cultural heritage and tourism, and modern industries like cinema, music, digital media, animation, visual effects, games, design and live entertainment. The current study focuses on the concept, key elements, economic importance and prospects of development of the Orange Economy with a particular focus on India. This study is descriptive and analytical in nature and it is secondary data that are obtained from the various institutional reports and published sources. It emphasises the importance of creative industries in terms of employment creation, income generation, export diversification, entrepreneurship, tourism development and cultural heritage. India has a high potential in this segment with its rich cultural heritage, wide array of traditional craftsmanship, growing entertainment industry, youthful population and rapidly growing digital market. Handicrafts and handlooms can be used to promote and sustain rural livelihoods and women participation, and cinema, music, animation, gaming and digital content can provide skilled jobs and market opportunities in the world. Challenges also identified in the study include informal employment, lack of adequate finance, limited statistical data, low IP awareness and lack of institutional support, and lack of digital inequality. It concludes that a national policy framework that is comprehensive, backed by reliable statistical measurement and effective skill development for creativity, will strengthen the Orange Economy of India and make creativity an important lever for inclusive economic growth and sustainability.

Keywords: Orange Economy, Creative Economy, Cultural Industries, Intellectual Property, Handicrafts and Handlooms, Digital Media, Creative Employment, Innovation, Economic Development, India.

Introduction

Thus, the modern era has seen the definition of economic growth extend beyond land, labour, capital, industries and physical resources to the role of creativity, cultural knowledge, artistic talent, innovation and intellectual property. The Orange Economy is defined as all activities in the economy that turn ideas, imagination, cultural identity and creative skills into a valuable good or service. It encompasses a variety of industries including handicrafts, handlooms, music, dance, theatre, literature, cinema, fashion, architecture, advertising, cultural tourism, animation, visual effects, gaming, digital media and creation of online content. These can create jobs, revenue, and



sustain cultural alternatives and local identities. The Orange Economy is different from traditional industries which are primarily concerned with raw materials and machines, it relies primarily on human talent, originality, knowledge and creative expression. With the advancement of digital technology, online platforms, markets, streaming platforms, social media and global communications, the Orange Economy has come to a prominent place. The new opportunities of creative persons and businesses to address a national and international audience via online platforms, digital payments and e-commerce networks. A Local Artisan can sell handmade products across the regions, a Musician can perform in regions and reach the viewers through digital platforms and a Filmmaker can reach the viewers through streaming services and a Designer or Content creator can earn their livelihood with their creativity. Thus, creativity has emerged as a significant economic asset which can help in the development of entrepreneurship and service sectors, innovation and export opportunities. The Orange Economy has a special significance for developing countries as it helps them achieve inclusive and employment-based growth. It can generate youth employment, women jobs, artisans jobs, performer, freelancer and small entrepreneurs' employment, not only involving high level of industrial investment. Folk arts, regional crafts, local festivals and heritage tourism can be linked to the modern market to help in rural development and community income. Concurrently, the new-age creative industries like animation and gaming, digital design, advertising and audiovisual media can create skilled employment opportunities and enhance engagement with the global knowledge economy.

Major Components of the Orange Economy

The Orange Economy involves a broad spectrum of economic activities that are rooted in creativity, cultural expression, artistic skills, design, innovation and intellectual property. It contains traditional cultural activities and modern cultural activities that rely on technology. Tourism and cultural heritage are a part of this economy since the monuments, museums, historical places, festivals, fairs and cultural traditions attract tourists and provide employment for the local community.

Table 1: Major Sectors of the Orange Economy and Their Economic Role

S. No.	Sector	Major Activities	Economic Contribution
1	Cultural Heritage and Tourism	Monuments, museums, heritage walks, festivals, cultural sites	Tourism income, local employment and heritage conservation
2	Handicrafts and Handlooms	Pottery, embroidery, textiles, jewellery, painting, woodcraft	Rural livelihoods, women's employment and exports
3	Performing Arts	Music, dance, theatre, concerts and folk performances	Ticket revenue, event employment and cultural tourism



4	Film and Audiovisual Media	Cinema, television, OTT content, documentaries and photography	Production jobs, subscriptions, advertising and exports
5	Publishing and Literature	Books, journals, newspapers, digital publishing and literary content	Copyright income, education support and publishing employment
6	Design and Fashion	Graphic design, fashion, interior design and product design	Brand value, entrepreneurship and market differentiation
7	Advertising and Architecture	Branding, advertising campaigns, architecture and creative consultancy	Business services, innovation and professional employment

Figure 1: Major Components of the Orange Economy and Creative Industries



Another key aspect of the Orange Economy is performing arts. Not only do people who perform get paid for their performance through music, dance, theatre, folk performance, concerts and cultural events, other people earning a living through these events, such as event organisers,



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costume designers, musicians, technicians, stage workers and tourism related businesses also get paid. Publishing and literature also play a key role, for example in the form of books, magazines, newspapers, digital publications, storytelling and educational literature. Economically valuable creation of original intellectual output, copyright and knowledge circulation are the main possibilities that writers, editors, illustrators and publishers have.

They are cultural sectors that enhance awareness and the maintenance of cultural, linguistic and literary traditions and provide jobs and income for the people. Film, TV and AV are often a striking, and highly marketable, aspect of the Orange Economy. The production of cinema, TV shows, documentaries, music videos, web series and online streaming involves a team of script writers, actors, directors, editors, photographers, costume designers, musicians, set designers and technicians. The activities earn money from tickets, advertising, subscriptions, broadcasting rights and digital distribution. The expansion of the online entertainment market has opened up the market for regional and multilingual creative content, allowing producers and artists to target more people at both local and international levels in recent years. Design, fashion, architecture and advertising are also important sectors of the Orange Economy since they are related to creativity and commercial use. Artists, designers (fashion, graphic, interior, architecture and advertising) use creativity and ingenuity to enhance products, services, brands and consumer experiences.

Economic Importance of the Orange Economy

The Orange Economy is an important component of modern economic development, as the economic activities gained from the conversion of creativity, cultural heritage, artistic talent, design and innovation into an economic activity. The Orange Economy is dependent on human knowledge, imagination and intellectual property, unlike sectors that are mainly dependent on natural resources or heavy machinery. Handicrafts, films, music, fashion, advertising, cultural tourism, animation, gaming, publishing and digital content generation contribute to the generation of economic value based on originality and creative expression. These activities include income for companies and artists, and connect with other services like marketing, tourism, transportation, hospitality, communication and digital platforms. The most important economic impact of the Orange Economy is on its contribution to income generation and national output. There are cultural and creative industries that generate marketable goods and services that are bought, used and sold in the domestic and international markets.

The revenue comes from selling handicrafts and designer products, books, movies, digital offerings, concert tickets, ads, tourism attractions, subscriptions, licences and royalties. Creativity and culture are no longer 'side activities' – they are key parts of economic production, contributing around 3.1 per cent of the global GDP, according to UNESCO. The cultural and creative sectors have the potential to provide a significant number of jobs, with UNESCO showing that they make up around 6.2 per cent of the global workforce. The Orange Economy also plays a key role in the diversification of exports and international trade. The creative products and services can be made



accessible to global markets more easily than ever by using the Internet, streaming, digital distribution and e-commerce in the era of digital technologies. Cultural products, including handicrafts, fashion products, books, and artistic items, but also creative services like software design, animation, architecture, advertising, and audiovisual production and digital content can be exported to and from countries. In 2022, global exports of creative services amounted to US\$1.4 trillion and creative goods exports totalled US\$713 billion, according to UNCTAD. Creative services also represented 19 per cent of total global services exports in 2022, showing the rapidly increasing importance of creativity-based economic activities in world trade. The Orange Economy is about entrepreneurship and innovation – allowing individuals and small enterprises to turn ideas into commercial opportunities.

Orange Economy in India

India has already a firm base for the development of the Orange Economy due to its diversity of culture and rich arts heritage, the development of digital infrastructure and the huge pool of creative youngsters. Traditional craft activities like handicrafts, handlooms, folk arts, music, dance and heritage tourism, as well as modern industries like the film industry, digital entertainment, animation, visual effects, games, and advertising and production of online content, all contribute to the Indian creative economy. These activities convert the culture, thoughts and intellectual prowess of India into jobs, income, entrepreneurship, export and tourism. The Government of India has started to acknowledge the Orange Economy as an economic sector that generates value in creative, cultural, technological and intellectual property areas, and not as cultural pursuits.

Table 2: Selected Global and Indian Indicators of the Orange Economy

S. No.	Indicator	Reported Position	Interpretation	Source
1	Contribution of creative economy to GDP in countries with available data	0.5% to 7.3% of GDP	Creative industries form a measurable part of national income	UNCTAD, 2024
2	Employment share in countries with available data	0.5% to 12.5% of workforce	Creative sectors possess strong employment potential	UNCTAD, 2024



3	Global contribution of cultural and creative industries to GDP	Approximately 3.1%	Culture and creativity are economically significant worldwide	UNESCO, 2022
4	Global employment in cultural and creative sectors	Approximately 6.2%	Creative industries provide substantial livelihood opportunities	UNESCO, 2022
5	Global exports of creative services in 2022	US\$1.4 trillion	Digital and knowledge-based creative services are expanding rapidly	UNCTAD, 2024
6	Global exports of creative goods in 2022	US\$713 billion	Cultural products, crafts and designs remain important in global trade	UNCTAD, 2024
7	Share of creative services in total global service exports in 2022	19%	Creative services are increasingly central to international trade	UNCTAD, 2024
8	India's live-entertainment segment in 2024	More than ₹100 billion	Creative activities can support services, tourism and urban growth	Government of India, 2026



Figure 2: Role of Skills and Entrepreneurship in the Development of Orange Economy Jobs



• Handicrafts, Handlooms and Traditional Skills

One of the most important pillars of India's Orange Economy is made of Handicrafts, handlooms and traditional skills. Weaving, embroidery, pottery, wood carving, metal craft and jewellery making, carpet production, painting, leather work and regional textile design are just some of the varied craft traditions found in India. The activities are grounded in inheritance knowledge, local resources, cultural icons and craftsmanship. Handicrafts and handlooms are not only consumer goods but also cultural goods of the artistic value and the regional identity of each handicraft and each region is represented by each handmade product. This is particularly significant from an economic point of view, as it generates employment in rural and semi-urban areas, where the ability to employ large numbers of people in industries is restricted. Traditional production is an important means of livelihood for artisans, weavers and craft workers. The sector also encourages women's economic empowerment as this allows for women to establish their own business or a cluster of women to form a group and engage in some of them: embroidery, weaving, stitching, decorative work and home-based craft production. Handicraft and handlooms can generate non-farm income and help to lessen the overreliance on agriculture and promote diversified rural economies. Traditional skills also have a strong market potential, if linked to the contemporary design, branding, digital selling and cultural tourism. Regional branding can draw in both domestic and international buyers, as long as the authenticity and cultural value of the products are evident. New opportunities for artisans to market their work directly to consumers are presented through online marketplaces, social media marketing and digital payment options. In the same way, artisans can find opportunities to exhibit and sell their products in fairs, exhibitions, heritage circuits and tourism destinations. But the economic potential of this sector is limited by unpredictable demand, buyers' bargaining power, imitations, poor understanding of modern marketing and credit facilities, and lack of awareness about IP rights.



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- **Cinema, Music and Entertainment**

Cinema, music and entertainment are significant aspects of India's Orange Economy that are very visible and commercially viable. India has a rich audiovisual culture, ranging from Hindi movies, regional language films, television programmes, documentaries, independent films, music industry, streaming platforms, web series, live shows, to digital entertainment. These activities focus on story telling, arts and creativity, technology, design and IP. Not only do they add to the cultural expression, but also ticket sales, advertising, broadcasting rights, digital subscriptions, music distribution, sponsorship, licensing, and international audiences. Cinema's contribution to the economy goes beyond the roles of actors and directors. Each movie or audiovisual creation creates jobs for the scriptwriters, lyricists, composers, singers, musicians, cinematographers, editors, costume designers, make-up artists, set designers, technicians, dancers, lighting workers, sound engineers, publicity people and digital marketers. Likewise, the music industry fosters opportunities by recording, streaming, concert performances, live event performances, background scores, music in ads and music online distribution. Hence, the cinema and the music are seen as industries which generate jobs and are complemented by a large array of creative and technical jobs. With digital platforms expanding to a large extent, the entertainment industry in India has grown. Original content, such as movies, shows, short films and documentaries, music, comedy, storytelling from regions, streaming services, online platforms etc. have placed greater demand on original content. This shift has offered regional languages and local stories greater visibility and enabled creatives from across India to access bigger markets. Digital distribution also opens the door for Indian entertainment content to reach people abroad, further bolstering cultural exports and India's global reach in the creative industry. Other factors such as cinema, music and entertainment also play a role in social identity and cultural influence. Indian language, clothing, festivals, landscapes, food tradition and social experiences are often portrayed to wider audiences through films and songs. This can indirectly promote cultural tourism, promote destinations and consolidate India's soft power.

- **Animation, Visual Effects and Gaming**

Some of the most dynamic and technology driven sectors of the Orange Economy in India are Animation, Visual Effects and Gaming. It is a blend of artistic creativity, digital technology and software skills, and storytelling, graphic design, programming, and interactive experience development. Films, ads, educational, children's, digital media, and online communication use animation. Visual effects enrich the cinema, TV shows, ads and virtual experiences. Gaming involves storytelling, visual design, coding, construction of characters, and interactions with consumers in a marketable digital product. These are significant sectors as they create skilled jobs for a young and technologically oriented labour. Animators, illustrators, visual-effects artists, game designers, programmers, motion-graphics specialists, storyboard artists, sound designers, writers, testers, editors and digital producers are all given opportunities. In contrast to many other



traditional fields, animation, visual effects and gaming can be sold both nationally and internationally by digital delivery. An Indian studio or start-up could potentially create innovative audio-visual projects for clients in any part of the world, as well as develop original game content, or offer creative digital services to clients around the globe.

- **Cultural Tourism and Live Entertainment**

Tourism and live entertainment are integral parts of India's Orange Economy as it turns cultural heritage, arts and shared experiences into direct and indirect economy. This category of tourism involves traveling for the purpose of visiting monuments, museums, historical sites, religious buildings, festivals, local traditions, craft villages, regional cuisines, music, dance and historical experiences. Live entertainment is defined as performances such as concerts, theatre shows, cultural festivals, music shows, exhibitions, fairs, comedy shows, dance performances and other creative experiences that engage an audience. These activities combine to allow visitors to learn about India and to provide an income to artists, organisers, local communities and service providers. Indian has a tremendous potential to become a cultural tourism destination as every region is unique with respect to its monuments, festivals, crafts, food, performing arts and local stories. The money spent by the tourists at a heritage site, cultural festival and buying traditional products benefits the guides, vehicle operators, tour operators, hotels, restaurants, artisans, performers, photographers, vendors and local businesses. As a result, cultural tourism has a multiplier effect: a cultural attraction can lead to an economic benefit that is spread across various service providers. This relationship is evident in the Ministry of Tourism's Utsav portal, which showcases festivals and events themed around culture, art, dance, music, food, and literature, alongside the tourism scene of the country. In India, the live entertainment industry is gaining importance as consumers are increasingly looking for experience-based services. Concerts, festivals, performances and cultural events and activities that offer social, artistic and recreational experiences are open to audiences who will pay. These events generate direct ticket receipts, sponsorship and merchandise income, as well as stimulating travel, hospitality spending, food services, urban retail and urban economic activity. The live-entertainments market has emerged as a vital segment of the creative economy in India with an estimated value of ₹20,861 crore in 2024 and an annual growth rate of 15 per cent, as per an official release, MoI/B Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.

Suggestions and Policy Measures

India's creative industry landscape is diverse, covering traditional arts, cultural heritage, media, entertainment, design, tourism and digital technology, which necessitates the need for coordinated and long-term policy approach to develop the Orange Economy in India. In India there is a vast scope of creativity and culture, but there remain numerous issues for creators, artisans, performers and small creative enterprises, including but not limited to informal work, lack of financial assistance, limited access to markets, lack of training, lack of awareness of IP rights, and lack of



statistical recognition. Hence, policy interventions must not be only directed towards culture promotion but must also strive to make creative talent more job- and business-creating, export-enabling and inclusive economic development. To build the Orange Economy in India, it is necessary to develop a robust policy framework, have good statistical data and regularly help in building creative skills.

- **National Policy Framework for the Orange Economy**

The government of India should formulate a national strategy for the Orange Economy to systematically identify, support and incorporate creative and cultural activities as part of the overall development process. Currently, the creative industry is fragmented in various segments including handicrafts, handlooms, cinema, music, tourism, publishing, design, advertising, animation, visual effects, gaming, digital content and live entertainment. The development of these sectors can be fragmented in the absence of a coordinated policy approach, due to their relationship with various ministries, institutions and markets. A national policy framework would set a common definition for the Orange Economy and define the main sectors and set clear goals on employment, exports, innovation, entrepreneurship, cultural preservation and digital growth. Such a policy should promote and take into account creativity and culture as economic resources, and not just as heritage or entertainment. It should provide institutional support to traditional artisans, performers, writers, designers, filmmakers, digital creators, gaming professionals and creative startups. Rural craft workers, folk artists, women creators, young entrepreneurs and informal workers should be targeted, since they may have creative skills, but they have limited market access and formal support. A national policy would then facilitate the spread of the benefits of the Orange Economy through financial mechanisms, training, technology and marketing. There should be a National policy framework that encourages coordination of the various government departments which are involved in culture, commerce, textiles, tourism, information and broadcasting, skill development, education, digital technology, IP and labour welfare.

- **Collection of Reliable Statistical Data**

The process of collection of reliable statistical information is crucial to the understanding of the real size, structure and contribution of the Orange Economy. Any policy measures must be effective if there is reliable data on the size of the creative workforce, their importance to earnings, their impact on employment, their export performance, gender coverage, informal employment, digital enterprises and some of the key issues that creative industries are experiencing. There are many cultural and creative activities in India which are run in informal and small scale. Folk artists, artisanal entrepreneurs, home-based producers, digital creators, and local event organizers and freelance artists might not be accounted for in traditional economic statistics. This means that the contribution of the Orange Economy can be underestimated. A system of statistics should therefore be established to categorise the various sectors within the Orange Economy. It should include traditional crafts, handlooms and folk arts and heritage services, as well as more recent sectors like



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film, music, advertising, design and architecture, animation and visual effects, games, digital content, streaming services and live events. A clear classification would enable creative industries to be separated from other economic sectors, and allow for the gathering of regular and comparable data. It would also assist policy makers and researchers in identifying areas of growth, economically at-risk groups, and where policy intervention is most needed. Periodic surveys of creative industry at national, state and district level should be conducted by government.

Creative Skill Development

Skill development is one of the most crucial enablers to scale up the Orange Economy in India. Human talents, originality, technical knowledge, cultural knowledge and the ability to respond to the changes of market demand are all crucial elements in the success of creative industries. Skills are important to both traditional and modern artists and digital professionals, but in different ways. A specialist in design improvement, packaging, branding, and online selling might be required for an artisan, while a specialist in animation might need to be well-versed in software, narration, visual design, and digital production. So, it is essential to develop creative skills in both the traditional profession and technology-based industries. There is a need to increase the development of creative talent in the education system. Courses to be introduced in schools, colleges, universities, vocational institutions and skill centres that address performing arts, handicrafts, design, fashion, filmmaking, photography, music production, cultural management, digital marketing, animation, visual effects, gaming, content creation, event management and creative entrepreneurship. Such courses should not be just theoretical, but should also involve practical training, studio work, development of projects, internships and interaction with industry professionals. Pupils should be encouraged to see creative activity not just as an outside activity but also as a serious career and business opportunity. In particular, there is a need for training programmes to be conducted for traditional artisans and performers. Many craft workers have valuable skills that are passed on but may not be aware of modern-day consumers' preferences, the quality of products, modern design, digital marketing, electronic payment systems, packaging, export procedures and protection of intellectual property.

Conclusion

It is a new aspect of the modern economic development—The Orange Economy in which creativity, culture, artistic expression, innovation, and IP are turning into productive economic means. The current study shows that the creative activities are not only entertainment or preservation of culture. They also create jobs and income, entrepreneurship, exports, and tourist opportunities and social values. The scope of the economy of creative industries is very broad and can be seen in many different activities, including handicraft, handloom, folk arts and heritage tourism, and the modern creative industries, which are cinema, music, animation, visual effects, games, digital content and live entertainment. The Orange Economy is a space with great development potential in India: its cultural traditions, artistic skills, population of young people,



and growing digital marketplace. Handicrafts and handlooms can help build rural livelihoods, help keep the local identity and boost women's economic involvement. Cinema, music, entertainment can generate a lot of jobs in the creative and technical field. Animation, visual effects and games can be good enablers for skilled youth employment, technological innovation, and digital exports. Cultural tourism and live events are catalytic for stimulating local businesses, hospitality, transport services and regional development. Hence, India can now integrate its culture with the modern technology and the world. The study also shows that there are a number of problems with the growth of the Orange Economy. Many artists, artisans and creative workers continue to work in the informal economy and can have no regular income, limited market access, and little social protection. Poor financing, pirating, lack of awareness on IP rights, digital inequality, lack of organised infrastructure and limited statistical data are limiting the development of creative sectors. These challenges demonstrate that cultural talents are not enough unless backed by appropriate institutional frameworks, policies, training and market opportunities. Thus, there is a need for a holistic national policy for the Orange Economy which will value art and culture as important economic resources for India. Accurate quantitative information should be gathered to track the employment, income, and exports of the creative industries as well as regional involvement. Education, vocational training, digital literacy, and entrepreneurship support and specialisation training for artisans and performers and technology-based creators should all be encouraged to develop creative skills. Support for creative workers, such as financial support, copyright protection, e-commerce access, integration in the tourism sector and welfare measures should also be enhanced.

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