



The Kumawood Film Market at the Digital Crossroads: Albumification as Strategic Innovation for Industrial Revitalization

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Abstract

*The Kumawood film industry, Ghana's Twi-language cinema sector, faces sustained disruption from digital technology, piracy, declining production quality, and infrastructural constraints. Drawing on a qualitative case study that combines documentary analysis of secondary sources with semi-structured interviews conducted with five industry stakeholders, this paper examines digital technology as simultaneously a disruptor and an enabler within the sector. The analysis traces how digital distribution hastened the decline of Kumawood's VCD-based model while creating the conditions for strategic renewal. Informed by media economics, industrial organization theory, and cultural production frameworks, the study identifies three interlocking barriers to digital transition: an entrenched analog mindset, deficits in digital and entrepreneurial competency, and a form of cultural insularity that constrains cross-border appeal. The paper then examines Kwadwo Nkansah (Lil Win)'s *The Hero Movie Album*, a coordinated release of twenty feature films, as an illustrative case of what this study terms albumification: an adaptation of bundling and vertical integration practices from the recorded music industry to film production. Rather than asserting that albumification guarantees industrial revival, the paper argues that the strategy represents one plausible pathway among several, whose eventual outcome depends on execution, infrastructural investment, and forms of collective action that extend beyond any single producer. The paper closes by specifying the boundaries of this claim, the conditions under which it may not hold, and its implications for scholarship on creative industries in resource-constrained settings.*

Keywords: Kumawood, albumification, media economics, vertical integration, creative entrepreneurship

Paper Type: Research paper

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INTRODUCTION

The Kumawood phenomenon, named after Ghana's Ashanti regional capital, Kumasi, gave rise to a distinctive Twi-language cinema sector that stood apart from the English-language productions concentrated in Accra. Built on low-budget, high-volume production and direct-to-consumer sale of VCDs and DVDs, the industry once released hundreds of titles a year and sustained a large informal economy of actors, crew, and distributors (Garritano 2013; Jedlowski 2020). From the early 2010s, however, this model came under sustained strain. Declining VCD sales, rampant piracy, and intensifying competition from Nigeria's Nollywood sector combined to produce what many industry participants now describe, with some resignation, as the death of Kumawood (Itanyi 2025; Nwadigwe 2018).

This paper does not treat that description as settled fact. Instead, it asks what happens when a cinema industry built entirely around a physical medium is forced to reconstitute itself within a digital media economy it did not design and does not control. Existing scholarship on African screen industries has documented the disruptive effects of digital distribution in considerable detail (Jedlowski 2020; Lobato 2019), yet it has said comparatively little about the specific organizational strategies through which individual producers attempt to convert disruption into opportunity. This is the gap the paper addresses. Rather than asking whether digital technology has helped or harmed Kumawood, a question that presupposes a single, uniform effect, the paper asks how one prominent industry actor has attempted to restructure production and distribution in response to digital conditions, and what that attempt reveals about the possibilities and limits of strategic adaptation in a resource-constrained creative economy.

The empirical focus of the study is Kwadwo Nkansah, known professionally as Lil Win, and his project *The Hero Movie Album*, a coordinated production of twenty feature films released as a linked collection rather than as isolated titles. This paper conceptualizes the underlying strategy as albumification: the adaptation of bundling and vertical integration practices, long established in the recorded music industry, to the organization of film production and release (Adams and Yellen 1976; Bakker 2011; Guiltinan 1987). The term is introduced with caution. Bundling and vertical integration are not new ideas; economists have analyzed commodity bundling since Adams and Yellen's (1976) foundational account of its welfare effects, and Williamson's (1979) transaction cost framework has long explained why firms choose to

internalise stages of production under conditions of uncertainty. What albumification adds is not a new economic mechanism but a specific, cross-sectoral application: it names the deliberate transposition of an organizational logic developed for recorded music, where curated collections of songs create brand coherence and reduce per-unit marketing cost (Stremersch and Tellis 2002), onto a cinema sector whose products, feature films, differ from songs in cost structure, production timeline, and audience consumption pattern. The paper treats this transposition as an empirical claim to be examined through a single, information-rich

Research Problem and Questions

The problem motivating this study is therefore twofold. First, Kumawood's crisis is multidimensional, involving technological, financial, and cultural dimensions that are frequently discussed separately in industry commentary but rarely examined together in a single analytical frame. Second, while individual filmmakers have begun experimenting with new production and distribution models, these experiments have received little sustained scholarly attention, in part because they are recent and still unfolding. This study addresses the following questions.

- 1) How has digital technology simultaneously disrupted and enabled production, distribution, and commercial practice within the Kumawood film industry?
- 2) What systemic, cultural, and institutional barriers hinder Kumawood filmmakers' engagement with digital platforms?
- 3) In what ways, and within what limits, can albumification be theorized and evaluated as a strategic response to Kumawood's structural challenges?

Origins and the Golden Era

Kumawood emerged in the early 2000s as a distinctive branch of Ghanaian cinema, differentiated from the Accra-based, English-language Ghallywood sector by its exclusive use of Asante Twi and its focus on locally rooted narratives. Rapid, low-budget production methods prioritised cultural accessibility over technical sophistication (Darko 2022), enabling creators without significant capital or formal training to participate in cultural production. At its peak in the mid-2000s to early 2010s, the industry produced up to twelve films weekly, with budgets

between €6,200 and €10,300 per title, sustaining hundreds of actors, crew members, and distributors through VCD and DVD sales across Ghana, West Africa, and diaspora communities (Pearson 2020; Tsika 2025).

This commercial success rested substantially on cultural resonance. Kumawood films depicted, in the words of filmmaker Jackson K. Bentum, “everything that goes on around us, their day-to-day activities” (as cited in Darko 2022). Scholars have also documented how these films functioned as repositories of Akan proverbs, festival practices, and moral philosophy, thereby producing a distinctly Ghanaian cinematic idiom (Croffie 2016; Safo-Ankama and Donkor 2023). However, as this paper argues below, this same cultural specificity later became a constraint on the industry’s ability to reach audiences beyond the Akan-speaking world.

Digital Disruption: Theoretical Perspectives

Media industry scholars have theorized digital technology’s disruptive effects in ways that illuminate Kumawood’s trajectory without being specific to it. Christensen’s (1997) account of disruptive innovation describes how new technologies restructure markets by creating value networks that render incumbent business models obsolete, a pattern visible in the collapse of Kumawood’s VCD economy. Lobato (2019) extended this line of argument to film distribution specifically, showing that digital platforms generate informal, or “shadow”, distribution economies that coexist with, and often undercut, formal industry structures; Kumawood’s persistent difficulty in controlling unauthorized broadcast and online circulation of its own films fits this pattern closely. Cunningham and Silver (2013) further argued that success under platform conditions requires not merely content production but platform literacy: fluency in algorithmic promotion, audience analytics, and monetization design. Each of these frameworks, however, was developed primarily with reference to well-resourced media markets, a limitation this review returns to below.

Barriers to Digital Transition

Three interlocking barriers help explain why most Kumawood filmmakers have struggled to convert digital opportunity into digital revenue. The first is what this paper terms the analog mindset: a set of operational habits, oriented towards volume over value and towards one-off

transactions rather than sustained audience relationships, that were well suited to VCD retail but are poorly suited to platforms that reward repeat engagement and community building (Jedlowski 2020). The second is a digital skills deficit spanning production quality, platform literacy, and basic entrepreneurial competency: many productions continue to suffer from inconsistent sound and lighting, and many filmmakers lack functional understanding of search engine optimization, monetization design, or intellectual property management in cross-border digital markets (Cunningham and Silver 2013). The third is a form of cultural insularity, whereby heavy reliance on untranslated, hyper-local content and formulaic narrative themes- witchcraft, family conflict, slapstick comedy, limits accessibility for diaspora and international audiences, even as those audiences represent the sector's most commercially promising growth market (Garritano 2013).

These barriers are mutually reinforcing rather than independent. Continued attachment to the analog mindset discourages investment in the skills and quality upgrades needed for digital competitiveness; the resulting low-quality, culturally narrow content then fails to generate meaningful platform revenue, which in turn appears to confirm the wisdom of the low-risk, high-volume model that produced the problem in the first place. Breaking this cycle, the paper argues, requires more than incremental adjustment.

Emerging Digital Opportunities

Digital platforms have simultaneously opened new pathways that were unavailable under the VCD model. Streaming services and YouTube channels dissolve the geographical barriers that once confined Kumawood's reach, offering structured access to a diaspora audience estimated in the millions across Europe and North America (Lobato 2019). Revenue models have diversified beyond one-off sales towards advertising share, subscription access, and direct fan support (Cunningham and Silver 2013). Some Akan-language creators, notably the YouTube-based "Akan Drama" ecosystem associated with Sir Black and Wesley Kesse, have already demonstrated that professionally produced, serialised Twi-language content can attract large audiences and sustained advertising revenue, suggesting that cultural specificity and digital competitiveness are not inherently incompatible.

Critical Perspectives on Platform Capitalism and Digital Cultural Production

The literature reviewed so far treats digital platforms largely as a neutral infrastructure that either enables or constrains individual strategy. A separate body of scholarship complicates this picture by treating platforms themselves as structurally implicated in how value is distributed between global platform owners and the creative labor of the Global South. Srnicek (2017) argues that platform firms function as extractive intermediaries whose business models depend on capturing data and attention at scale, a position that places independent producers such as Kumawood filmmakers as price-takers rather than equal negotiating partners. Van Dijck, Poell, and de Waal (2018) extend this argument, showing how platforms accumulate what they term infrastructural power over cultural production even as they present themselves as open, meritocratic spaces for creator success.

Duffy (2017), writing on aspirational digital labor, offers a related caution: platforms routinely encourage creators to invest disproportionate unpaid effort in brand-building on the promise of eventual monetization that only a small proportion ever achieve. Read together, these accounts suggest that the entrepreneurial adaptation documented in the Kumawood case cannot be assessed purely on its own terms. It must also be read against a broader structural asymmetry in which African cultural producers negotiate with platforms whose algorithms, pricing terms, and licensing power originate elsewhere (Prey 2020; Tsika 2025). This tension between entrepreneurial agency and structural constraint runs through the remainder of the paper and is addressed directly in the discussion.

Theoretical Framework: Conceptualising Albumification

Cross-Sectoral Adaptation: From Music to Film

Albumification, as used in this study, denotes the strategic adaptation of music industry bundling logic to film production and distribution. In recorded music, the album format has long created value through curation and perceived completeness rather than through the sum of its individual tracks (Bakker 2011; Eriksson et al. 2019). Guiltinan (1987) and later Stremersch and Tellis (2002) formalised the economic logic of such bundling, showing that combining complementary products under a single offer can reduce consumer search costs, raise perceived

value, and, under the right conditions, increase total revenue relative to selling components separately; Adams and Yellen (1976) had earlier shown that bundling can also serve as a mechanism for extracting value across consumers with different willingness to pay. Applying this logic to cinema means treating a slate of films not as a sequence of unrelated projects but as a coordinated portfolio, unified by brand identity and released according to a deliberate schedule rather than in an ad hoc fashion.

Theoretical Foundations and Points of Departure

Albumification draws on three established theoretical traditions, and it is important to state precisely where it borrows and where it departs from each. From industrial organization theory, specifically Williamson's (1979, 1985) transaction cost economics, it borrows the logic of vertical integration: controlling production, casting, and distribution under a single organizational umbrella reduces transaction costs and the risks of opportunism that arise in fragmented, informally governed industries such as Kumawood. From brand management theory (Keller 2013), it borrows the proposition that consistent, quality-controlled output under a single recognizable brand reduces consumer search costs and builds durable brand equity. From innovation diffusion theory (Rogers 2003), it borrows the expectation that adoption of a novel practice depends on early, visible demonstrations of relative advantage over the status quo.

Albumification is not, however, a straightforward restatement of any one of these frameworks. Bundling theory and vertical integration theory were developed to explain firm behavior in relatively mature, capital-abundant markets; they say comparatively little about how bundling and integration might function as a deliberate revitalization strategy inside an informally governed, capital-scarce creative sector recovering from the collapse of its core distribution technology. Nor do they specify how such a strategy interacts with the platform-level asymmetries discussed above, in which the ultimate gatekeepers of value, streaming platforms, are external to the industry attempting the adaptation. Albumification, in other words, names an empirical strategy under active construction by a single producer; it borrows conceptual resources from established theory without yet constituting an independent theoretical framework in its own right. The remainder of the paper treats it accordingly, as an analytic lens for interpreting a single case rather than as a settled model to be tested against it.

METHODS

Research Approach and Design

This study employs a qualitative, single-case study design (Yin 2018) to examine Kumawood's digital transition and Lil Win's *The Hero Movie Album* as an instance of albumification. A case study design was chosen because the research questions are oriented towards understanding how a strategy takes shape within a specific organizational and cultural context, rather than towards testing a predefined hypothesis across a sample of cases (Creswell and Poth 2018). The case is bounded by the project itself, from its public announcement through to data collection in 2025, and by the broader industry conditions that gave rise to it.

Data Sources and Collection

The study draws on two complementary data sources, combined to enable methodological triangulation (Bowen 2009). The first source is documentary evidence, comprising: peer-reviewed academic publications on African cinema and digital media transformation; reporting from established national and international news outlets meeting ordinary editorial standards, including the *Irish Times*, the *Daily Graphic*, and *MyJoy Online*; official government statements and policy documents concerning film industry support; and publicly available, verifiably sourced social media content published directly by industry practitioners, including Lil Win's own promotional materials for *The Hero Movie Album*. Sources were included where their claims could be cross-checked against at least one independent outlet or an official record; anonymous, unverifiable, or single-source claims about budgets and outcomes are flagged as such in the analysis rather than presented as settled fact.

The second source is primary interview data. Between March and September 2025, the lead researcher conducted five semi-structured interviews with Kumawood industry stakeholders: veteran actress Mercy Asiedu; director Jackson K. Bentum; actor Clement Bonney (known professionally as Mr. Beautiful); filmmaker Samuel Darko (known professionally as SamDakus); and Kwadwo Nkansah (Lil Win) himself. Interviewees were purposively selected as key informants with direct professional experience in Kumawood's production, distribution, or the specific project under study. Interviews were conducted in person or by telephone, in English and Twi as appropriate, and lasted between twenty and forty-five minutes. Verbal informed consent

was obtained from all participants prior to interview, including consent to be identified by name and professional title in connection with views expressed in their professional capacity; no vulnerable populations were involved, and all participants were adults speaking about their own public professional work. Interview data are cited in text as personal communications, following APA convention, and are not included in the reference list.

This combination of documentary and interview evidence addresses a limitation of purely secondary-source designs: it allows first-hand testimony from industry participants to be checked against and to qualify the claims found in published commentary, while the secondary sources, in turn, provide context and verification for claims made in the interview.

Case Selection

The Hero Movie Album was selected as the case for three reasons. It is among the most ambitious and organisationally coherent responses yet attempted to Kumawood's crisis, which makes it theoretically informative even though, as a single case, it cannot establish how representative such a response might be. Lil Win's public profile also means the project is unusually well documented for a Kumawood production at this early stage. Finally, the project explicitly instantiates the bundling and vertical integration logic this paper investigates, making it a purposive rather than a convenience selection (Yin 2018).

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using reflexive thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke 2006, 2019), proceeding through familiarisation with the full data set, generation of initial codes, development and review of candidate themes, and interpretation of themes in relation to the theoretical frameworks introduced above. Analysis was guided by, but not confined to, the research questions, allowing unanticipated patterns, such as the recurring tension between entrepreneurial ambition and financial exposure discussed below, to inform the final thematic structure (Charmaz 2014).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Structural Challenges and Governance Deficits

Kumawood's difficulties are not solely technological. As filmmaker Samuel Darko put it directly, "there's no movie industry in Ghana; what we have here are just mere associations, nothing is structured, nothing is regulated" (personal communication 2025). This governance deficit matters analytically because it shapes how any individual innovation, including albumification, can hope to affect the industry as a whole. Where trade bodies such as the Film Producers Association of Ghana and the Actors Guild function as fragmented rather than coordinating institutions, a single producer's strategic success cannot straightforwardly diffuse into sector-wide transformation; it remains, absent institutional change, an example rather than a template. Ghana's 2025 announcement of GH¢20 million in seed capital for a film fund (Daily Graphic 2025) signals policy recognition of this problem, though stakeholders interviewed for this study were consistent in noting that funding alone cannot substitute for infrastructural and regulatory reform.

Audience Demographics, Competition, and Infrastructure

Kumawood's core audience remains concentrated among Akan-speaking Ghanaians, for whom Twi-language content offers a cultural accessibility that English-language film cannot replicate (Kquofi and Croffie 2017). Consumption patterns have nonetheless shifted from communal, VCD-based viewing towards individualized, platform-based consumption, a shift that fragments the audience even as it expands its geographic reach (Darko 2022). Diaspora audiences illustrate this tension clearly: Clement Bonney's observation that some diaspora parents actively discourage their children from watching Kumawood films due to concerns about coarse language (personal communication 2025) suggests that reaching this commercially significant segment requires deliberate adjustments to content and quality rather than passive digital availability.

Competitively, Kumawood faces pressure from Nollywood's higher-budget, internationally distributed "New Wave" productions, from global streaming catalogues, and from short-form content on TikTok and YouTube that competes for the same attention (Jedlowski 2020; Oguamanam 2020). Infrastructural constraints compound this pressure: as director Jackson K. Bentum observed, "Kumawood is not dead; it is just waiting for its moment in the spotlight again...

we've stopped selling CDs, and that's why some people believe the industry is defunct" (personal communication, 2025), a comment that locates the crisis specifically in exhibition and distribution infrastructure rather than in any decline of underlying creative capacity.

Lil Win's Strategic Trajectory

Kwadwo Nkansah's transition from a well-known comedic actor to an industrial producer illustrates one route through which individual actors can attempt to reshape the conditions described above. His 2024 production *A Country Called Ghana*, budgeted at approximately US\$300,000 and featuring Nollywood actors including Ramsey Noah, received recognition at the Imo International Film Festival; his 2025 biopic *Captain Ibrahim Traoré: The Last African Hero*, budgeted at approximately US\$500,000 and involving Hollywood actor Jean-Claude Van Damme, received the Best Film in Africa award at the Global Stars Awards in London. Both projects, by Lil Win's own account, involved substantial personal financial risk: "you cannot expect success on a shoestring budget; international standards demand serious investment" (personal communication, 2025). These productions function analytically as a form of quality signaling (Bakker 2011): a costly, hard-to-imitate demonstration of commitment to international production standards, intended to build the brand credibility on which *The Hero Movie Album* subsequently depends.

The Hero Movie Album as Albumification in Practice

The *Hero Movie Album* comprises twenty feature films produced under Lil Win's Wezzy Empire banner and released as a coordinated collection (see Table 1). Analytically, the project combines four elements consistent with the albumification framework set out above: thematic coherence around African heroism and cultural pride, intended to create audience expectations that persist across titles; a staggered rather than simultaneous release schedule, mirroring the singles-before-album logic of recorded music and allowing early releases to help finance later ones; cross-promotion between titles, through shared marketing and cast overlap, intended to lower the marginal cost of promoting any single film; and a tiered pricing structure offering individual titles, bundled discounts, and premium full-collection packages with exclusive bonus content (Guiltinan 1987; Stremersch and Tellis 2002).

Table 1.

No.	Title	Director
1	Abednego	Jackson Bentum
2	D.N.A.	Adu Agyemang (Big Matt)
3	Who Is Your Friend	Adu Agyemang (Big Matt)
4	Redemption	Richard N. Appiah (Vision)
5	The Prophecy	Adu Agyemang (Big Matt)
6	The General	Kwasi Boadi O.T.
7	My Choice	Adu Agyemang (Big Matt)
8	The Black Sheep	Frank Fiifi Ghabin
9	The Secret Behind	Adu Agyemang (Big Matt)
10	Abrabo	Jackson Bentum
11	After My Death	Adu Agyemang (Big Matt)
12	Loyalty	Richard N. Appiah (Vision)
13	My Husband	Adu Agyemang (Big Matt)
14	Woman	Adu Agyemang (Big Matt)
15	Why Me?	Kwasi Boadi O.T.
16	Love for Money	Adu Agyemang (Big Matt)
17	The Orphanage	Adu Agyemang (Big Matt)
18	Asem Mp3 Nipa	Frank Fiifi Ghabin
19	Church Members	Kwasi Boadi O.T.
20	The M.P.	Adu Agyemang (Big Matt)

Films Included in The Hero Movie Album Project

Note. Kwadwo Nkansah (Lil Win) is credited as executive producer across all twenty titles. Compiled from Wezzy Empire promotional materials and interview data (personal communication 2025).

Figure 1.



Film poster for The Hero Movie Album depicting the twenty-five actors and actresses featured in the collection (Photo: Lilwin Television).

Reading Success Critically: Risk, Dependency, and the Limits of the Case

The preceding description should not be read as an endorsement of the project's eventual success, and this section exists specifically to guard against that inference. Financing twenty high-budget productions implies a total project cost plausibly in the range of several million US dollars, a figure that exceeds anything previously attempted in Ghanaian independent cinema and that rests substantially on personal loans and external financing rather than diversified institutional investment. This concentration of financial risk in a single individual is itself an analytical finding: it suggests that, at least in its current form, albumification as practiced here is better understood as an entrepreneurial wager than as a stable industrial model. Three specific vulnerabilities warrant emphasis. First, platform dependency: the project's commercial logic assumes favorable licensing terms from streaming platforms whose bargaining power, as discussed above, is structurally asymmetric relative to individual African producers (Srnicek, 2017; Tsika, 2025). Second, execution risk: coordinating twenty productions simultaneously strains managerial capacity in an industry that, according to interviewees such as Samuel Darko, lacks basic coordinating institutions. Third, audience risk: the fragmentation of attention towards short-form

content may limit the extent to which any bundled, feature-length collection converts visibility into sustained revenue, regardless of production quality. None of these risks are hypothetical; each follows directly from conditions already documented earlier in this paper. Should the project fail commercially, the consequences plausibly extend beyond Lil Win individually, potentially deterring other investors and reinforcing, rather than displacing, the low-risk production norms that the strategy was designed to overcome. The paper treats this possibility as a live analytical outcome, not a rhetorical concession.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Is Albumification Kumawood-Specific or a Generalizable Model?

A question left open by the analysis so far is whether albumification describes a strategy specific to Lil Win's particular resources and public profile, or a model with wider applicability across African film industries facing comparable conditions. The case material suggests a qualified answer. The general logic of bundling and vertical integration is not sector-specific; it draws on economic mechanisms documented well beyond cinema (Adams and Yellen 1976; Stremersch and Tellis 2002). What is specific to this case is the scale of personal capital, celebrity brand equity, and cross-border industry relationships that Lil Win brought to the project, resources that are not readily available to most Kumawood producers. This suggests albumification is best understood, at this stage, as a demonstration of a transferable organisational logic under conditions that are not themselves easily transferable. Whether the model generalises therefore depends less on the underlying economic logic, which appears sound in principle, and more on whether institutional mechanisms, of the kind discussed in the recommendations below, emerge to make comparable capital and coordination available to producers without Lil Win's individual resources.

Structural Inequality in Global Streaming Platforms

The analysis above has treated digital platforms partly as an opportunity structure and partly as a constraint; this section makes the constraint explicit rather than incidental. Global streaming platforms are not neutral distribution pipes. They set licensing terms, control algorithmic visibility, and determine which content libraries receive prominent placement, and they do so from

a position of substantial market power relative to individual African producers (Prey 2020; Van Dijk et al. 2018). Tsika (2025) documents this asymmetry concretely in the Nollywood context, showing how even commercially successful African content can be subject to unfavorable terms once absorbed into large international platform catalogs. Read against this literature, albumification's emphasis on aggregated bargaining power, offering platforms a substantial content library rather than a single title, can be understood as a direct, if partial, response to this structural asymmetry rather than simply an entrepreneurial branding exercise. It does not resolve the asymmetry; a single producer's negotiating leverage, however improved by bundling, remains modest against a global platform's. But it does represent a locally generated attempt to shift, marginally, the terms of an otherwise uneven relationship, and this is a more precise way of characterising its significance than describing it as a route to industrial revival in general terms.

Theoretical Contribution

This paper's theoretical contribution is best stated narrowly. It does not propose a new general theory of platform economics or of creative industry organization. Its contribution is the documented case of a specific, cross-sectoral transposition, from music industry bundling and vertical integration to film production in a resource-constrained, informally governed cinema sector, together with an account of the structural conditions (platform asymmetry, absent industry coordination, concentrated financial risk) that will determine whether that transposition proves viable. This extends existing platform economy scholarship, which has concentrated heavily on well-resourced media markets in the Global North (Cunningham and Silver 2013; Srnicek 2017), by specifying how bundling logic operates and what additional risks it carries when attempted from a position of structural disadvantage.

CONCLUSION

This paper has examined Kwadwo Nkansah (Lil Win)'s *The Hero Movie Album* as a case of albumification: the deliberate adaptation of music-industry bundling and vertical-integration practices to film production, undertaken in response to Kumawood's prolonged digital and commercial crisis. Three contributions follow from the analysis. First, the paper has shown that digital technology's effect on Kumawood cannot be reduced to a single narrative of decline or

renewal; it has functioned as both, exposing pre-existing structural weaknesses while creating distribution and monetization channels unavailable under the VCD model. Second, it has offered a bounded theoretical account of albumification, one that deliberately borrows from established bundling, vertical integration, and brand theory while remaining explicit about what it does not yet establish: namely, that the strategy works or that it can be generalized beyond a single, resource-rich case. Third, by situating the case within critical scholarship on platform capitalism, the paper has argued that any assessment of albumification's prospects must account for structural asymmetries between African producers and global streaming platforms, asymmetries that entrepreneurial strategy can partially address but not eliminate.

The paper's limitations follow directly from its design. As a single-case study conducted while the project was in an early stage of execution, it cannot report on commercial outcomes that had not yet materialized at the time of writing, and its interview sample, while purposively selected for relevance, is small and cannot be assumed to be representative of the wider industry. Its claims about generalisability are therefore offered as propositions for future research rather than as established findings. Future studies with access to post-release performance data, or comparative cases from other African film markets, would be well placed to test the boundary conditions specified here.

Recommendations

Four areas of intervention follow from the analysis, directed at policymakers and industry bodies rather than at individual producers. Infrastructure investment, particularly in exhibition venues, would reduce the industry's near-total dependence on digital platforms for revenue. Strengthened copyright enforcement would address the piracy problem that undermines both traditional and digital revenue streams. Dedicated film financing mechanisms, including loan guarantees and co-production frameworks, would help distribute the kind of concentrated financial risk this paper has identified as a central vulnerability of the albumification strategy as currently practised. Finally, stronger industry coordination, through a trade body with genuine standard-setting and negotiating authority, would help translate an individual producer's bargaining gains into terms available to the sector as a whole, addressing the specificity limitation discussed above.

Limitations

Three further limitations should be acknowledged. The study relies substantially on secondary sources for contextual and industry-level claims, though this is mitigated by the inclusion of primary interview data specifically targeting the case under study. The Hero Movie Album's early stage of development at the time of research means the paper offers a strategic analysis of design and intent rather than a definitive assessment of commercial outcome. Finally, the study's deliberate focus on a single case limits direct generalisability, a limitation the discussion has addressed explicitly rather than treating as a minor caveat.

Ethical Considerations

This research combines publicly available secondary sources with primary interview data collected from adult industry professionals speaking about their own public professional work. Verbal informed consent was obtained from all interview participants prior to data collection, including explicit consent to be identified by name in connection with their statements. No vulnerable populations were involved, and no personally sensitive information beyond participants' professional views was collected or reported. All secondary sources are cited and attributed in APA format.

Disclosure Statement

The researchers report no conflict of interest.

Declaration of AI

The authors declare that no AI tool was used for preparing this manuscript except for language editing.

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