

Adaptations versus original film premieres trends in broadband society: a comparative analysis

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Abstract

In the era of the Broadband Society, cloud journalism, and streaming, the film industry is trying to modify traditional distribution channels. The adaptation of literary classics was one of the most widespread practices to obtain well-known, quality material for new productions. The objective of this research is to understand empirically what differences are involved in industry's major production and distribution companies' choice between adapting preexisting material or creating an entirely new film, as well as the benefits of adaptations. The methodology is comparative and quantitative, consisting of collecting data on films from the five major distributors (*Universal, Warner Bros, Disney, Sony, and Paramount*) from 2010 to 2019 and analyzing variables to detect market trends related to adaptations during that decade. We observed a higher percentage of adaptations as well as correlations between adaptations and film genre, distributor and genre, adaptations and awards, awards and genre, and genre and the film's evaluation, as well as between distributor and average budget, adaptations and budget, adaptation and opening weekend box office takings, genre and profit, adaptations and worldwide box office revenues, ratings and worldwide box office takings, and awards and worldwide box office takings; however, this was not observed between adaptation and profit and the breakeven point. It is concluded that, despite the fact that the trend of using this practice has not increased in recent years, it provides a great advantage compared with debuting new intellectual property.

Keywords

Film industry; Adaptations; Films; Cinema; Film premieres; Audiovisual; Audiovisual market; Communication; Distribution; Genres; Box office; Profitability; *Universal; Warner Bros; Disney; Sony; Paramount*.



1. Introduction

Audiovisual consumption, through various media, requires constant sources of content. The film industry is a key production hub in the audiovisual field, in its various sectors. The constant creation of content, or cloud journalism (Fondevila-Gascón, 2010), is a key factor in Broadband Society (Fondevila-Gascón, 2013), which requires a high rate of delivery of creations, and provides them from increasingly numerous and adaptable media and devices.

The film industry is no stranger to this, and is trying to respond to the wave of new viewing options for consumers –non-linear television, streaming (Karim, 2019), video on demand, digital platforms, or hybrid broadcast broadband television (Fondevila-Gascón *et al.*, 2021a)– which are added to some that were more established, such as cable television (Fondevila-Gascón, 2004). Given this requirement and backed by the strategic refocusing of the industry (Von-Rimscha; Wikström; Naldi, 2014; Mikos, 2017), even in China (Díaz-Cintas; Zhang, 2022), it is academically relevant to consider the type of content and narratives that may be more appropriate and profitable. At this juncture, the debate between adaptations and proprietary productions, intensified in recent years, has arisen (Lock; Verevis, 2012; Smith, 2017).

2. Theoretical framework

The origin of adaptations goes hand in hand with cinema, a phenomenon linked to the Industrial Revolution. Technological, economic, and cultural advances coincided with the diversification of art and the creation of cinema, inspired by *tableaux vivants*, dance, mime, photography, and theater. This phenomenon was found in the advertising catalogs for the works related to *East Lynne* (1902) –*Home again, abandoned* (Elliott; Marsh, 2002). Moving pictures were initially a great attraction (Bluestone, 1968, p. 6).

Before cinema, there were adaptations in painting, literature, theater, and music (Alqadi, 2015). Currently, adaptations inundate areas such as computer games (Papazian; Sommers, 2013) or theme parks (Baldwin-Lind, 2016), as well as radio and television (Leitch, 2017). Likewise, cutting-edge platforms are emerging that allow for complete immersion in an image, such as virtual reality (Grau, 2003). An adaptation is a work directly related to an earlier work, but without replicating it in its entirety. Normally, there is a degree of replication, but the essence of the original is maintained, that is, that the viewer recognizes that it is an adaptation of a certain work. There are many approaches to adaptation, depending on the authors: as a product (transposition from one work to another, including the possibility of changing the medium or even the genre into which the adaptation is rendered), procedure (rewriting a story with the aim of transmitting it to new generations without necessarily having a creative process behind it, such as urban or folk legends), or adaptation of the original writing (the intertextuality that the translated work maintains with the original; Cattryse, 1997). Likewise, adaptations (Wagner, 1975) can be by transposition (where the original literary text is carried over without any substantial change), by commentary (where the original text is voluntarily or involuntarily altered), or by analogy (where the resulting adaptation contains quite a few changes, and the result can be considered a different work of art). This provides one more tool for analysis and for determining what the new medium adds when reinterpreting and transforming the work (Alqadi, 2015).

Discussing how faithfully a book has been adapted as a cinematographic work is a common subject, as the adapted film is often considered an object of the product of its literary source (Vidal, 2012). Differences between the original work and the adaptation occur, just as individual interpretations of the same work differ (Lothe, 2000). Novels and cinema are interlinked with each other (Cartmell; Welehan, 1999), such that adapting a work in text format and in film format transforms the final result due to the language used (López-Gutiérrez; Nicolás-Gavilán, 2015). Major American film production companies opt for adaptations because they generally tend to bring in more profits (Crane, 2014; Buchsbaum, 2017). In addition to film adaptations, production companies monetize revenues through the sale of intellectual property licenses so that other companies can sell toys, computer games, or apparel featuring the characters in the film and the universe created for the film (Hutcheon, 2006). Film production companies value this monetization factor (Seger, 1992).

One of the main uses of adaptation is to enable the viewer to form an opinion of past society (Mee, 2017). The viewers can compare it with the current context and project it into the future (Sanders, 2016), considering that stories from the Victorian era sometimes repeat themselves (Boehm-Schnitker; Gruss, 2014); it was an era that criticized the morality, discipline, and prejudices of society, adapting and changing the perspective, denouncing injustices (Gutleben, 2001). Producers nowadays take into account the viewers' opinion on the topics that they are addressing, such that the audience often co-creates the work (Bowler; Cox, 2009).

As a result of the audience's power, the producer can understand their tastes and preferences about one genre or another. Period cinema, which evokes nostalgia from the historical facts of the plot or the setting of the scene, pictures and paintings, and literary sources, stands out (Vidal, 2012). Period cinema is the cornerstone of historical cinema, based on documented historical sources and adaptations of the classics. It is common to fall into the trap of thinking that costume films gather historical facts to denounce previous events. On the contrary, these events are used as a secondary environmental framework for the main plot of a work. Critics of period cinema point to an esthetic excess and an inauthenticity of the representation of the past since it does not fit the realities of the time (Monk; Sargeant, 2002). Often the scenes are different from those of the original.

One indicator in film adaptations is the budget, since a novel can be written by a single person with minimal equipment. The three options are adaptation with a sufficient budget, adaptation without a sufficient budget and without keeping as faithfully to the original work, or an outright lack of budget (Camarillo, 2014). The budget is one of the factors that can determine how a film is created and is rendered on the big screen. If the budget is a limiting factor, the filmmaker can have an influence by making decisions that may or may not be aimed at providing a product faithful to the original (Gaffney, 1981) and avoiding stereotypes (Fondevila-Gascón; Rom-Rodríguez; Santana-López, 2015), depending on the point of view (who tells the story and how they tell it, what the focus of the story is, the characters, or the environment) and the tone (what values and emotions the film conveys). The scriptwriter is important since they convey a story through dialog and narration. In the case of adaptations, screenwriters are in charge of modifying and adjusting the language of the work to the medium to which it is to be adapted (Sinyard, 1986).

However, changes in the presentation of the final product may be dependent on artistic decisions. Films should be considered cinematographic variants of the written work, which is simply communicated in a cinematic way, since they belong to another medium featuring a much more visual type of communication than its predecessor (Lothe, 2000). This is how it goes throughout the history of cinema (Dudley, 2000). Works of classical literature inspired movie studios, which turned to renowned literary adaptations and achieved box-office successes. Thus, using literary classics to create films not only made them easier to market but also showed audiences, who are currently more interested in social media comments (Fondevila-Gascón *et al.*, 2021a; 2021b; 2021c), a new way to experience classic works (Mooney, 2021).

The purpose of this research is to analyze whether a film based on a classic work or intellectual property (IP) that has some fame and a popularity base has an advantage in terms of market positioning and profitability, based on several quantitative variables, compared with a new intellectual property, regardless of whether the final adaptation has been reworked. It should be taken into account that film belongs to a different medium, with different rules. Even in genres such as children's films, there is often a concerning lack of interest in detail, perhaps because of the limited attention that critics pay to such films or the permissiveness of the target audience (Davis, 2009).

Reflecting on the importance of the final product's being faithful to the original work, we address the value of adaptations compared with original material. Once the source material has been created, all that can be done with it is to adapt and recycle it over and over again, without adding any value to the original (Smith, 2009). Though adaptations that deviate from the literary work are not faithful, those that do not innovate are seen as unambitious, unoriginal, and without literary value. So why adapt?

The act of adapting literature endows the final version with an intrinsic value through the appreciation of the work and the dissemination of new interpretations of it (Anushirvani; Alinezhadi, 2016), going beyond the copyright (Varian, 2005). Anushirvani and Alinezhadi use the adaptation of *The great Gatsby* to explain that, despite incorporating a large number of elements from the novel into the film, the sensations at the end of the book or novel are different, which may be part of the director's ultimate intention. Making adaptations of a work does not devalue the literary classic or the recent adaptation; on the contrary, it recognizes their value and historical contribution to popular culture (Chagas, 2013).

These constant changes in the adaptations involve evolution of and alterations to the final result with each new adaptation, although they can also be viewed as differences from the original work that can undermine the adaptation. In this sense, Chatman (1980) argues that the accelerated pace of movies detracts from the experience considerably. Films that prioritize transposition over interpretation may fail (Cartmell; Whelehan, 1999). Adapting is not mirroring what can be read on the pages on the big screen but rather transmitting ideas by using the cinematographic language itself, providing value and a new way of expressing it in an audiovisual environment (Geraghty, 2007). Novel and cinema have evolved uniquely (Hollands, 2002; Elliott, 2003). Hollywood often acts as a magnet for international films reimagined in an American context (Verevis, 2017), quite apart from the personal learning factor (Girardi, 2013) in terms of the critical thinking that allows us to form our own opinions.

The adaptation–new creation dichotomy is important when it comes to film production, driven by the industry's increased demand for content.

3. Methodology

The research is comparative in nature (whether film production companies use or do not use adaptations) and uses quantitative techniques. Data from online film industry databases were analyzed. Once this information was collected, it was subjected to relevant variables that would allow an objective answer to the given hypothesis.

The primary data source for information on these variables was *Internet Movie Database (IMDb Pro)*, one of the largest databases on the Internet, which collects information on more than 10.1 million titles from the film, television, video game, and streaming content industries. The variables analyzed are based on this source, agreed upon by the industry sector. Once all the information had been obtained and the database had been created, the *SPSS* statistical program was used to cross-reference the various variables to answer the questions posed and identify market trends.

The database used in this research is our own, based on information obtained from more generalized online databases. It synthesizes a series of variables (adaptation or new intellectual property, year and season of release, and operational return on investment [ROI]) relevant to the parameters of a film's success at the box office.

With the objective of obtaining a sample of sufficient size and in an appropriate time period to show market evolution, the market segment analyzed –of an international nature– is the operations of five of the most important film production companies in the time period 2010-2019. With this sample, we will obtain information about variables on more than 600 films ($n = 653$) over a 10-year period, which can be considered a sample of sufficient size to be representative of the film industry.

The variable that acts as the central axis of the research is that which identifies the films as adaptations or new intellectual property (IP). Since the objective is to identify whether being based on a previous work is really a strength for a production, the most effective way to check this is to relate this variable to the rest. This study also has the scope to answer secondary questions that may arise as we identify trends that have developed over the last decade when cross-correlating these variables and that may add or detract from whether a film is an adaptation.

Furthermore, this analysis is limited by the fact that it is not possible to know the marketing budget of a film. This is particularly damaging, since advertising investment is a major factor in a film’s box office takings, an indicator that determines whether it will be successful in theaters. This implies an opportunity cost in terms of correlating variables that could provide relevant metrics, such as the increase in ROI based on such investment, or whether production companies consider it necessary to invest more or invest less in films depending on whether they are adaptations. As this information is not public, no interpretations can be made based on it. In addition, we must exclude isolated cases that may not be representative of the database sample. For example, we ruled out collecting information on singularities such as *Marvel’s* films, since it would be unreliable to tie their box office results to the fact that they are adaptations, as their success is largely due to the social phenomenon created by all the films from this production company.

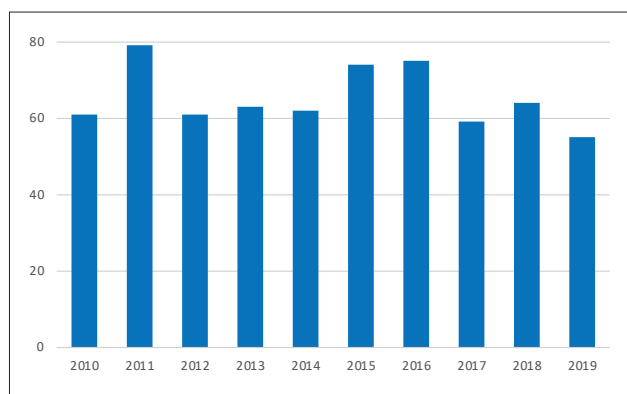
Finally, it is necessary to define what the authors consider to be an adaptation in this study, since this is the only variable that may be subject to interpretation. First, we must note that we have identified three types of adaptations (from most to least faithful): transpositions, commentaries, and analogies (Wagner, 1975). In this study, works that can be considered analogical (having a source of inspiration but great creative freedom) will also be considered adaptations, since what we want to demonstrate is that the mere fact of starting from a known source (and therefore most likely sharing setting, scenarios, characters, or story) positively influences the success of a film, without necessarily implying a high level of faithfulness.

4. Results

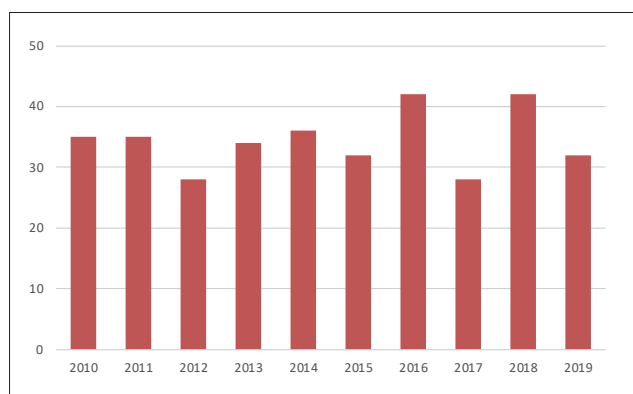
4.1. Correlations of adaptations produced in the decade 2010-2019

Data were collected for 653 films in the period between January 1, 2010, and December 31, 2019 (Graph 1). The average annual film production during these 10 years remained relatively constant, with notable peaks in 2011, 2015, and 2016 and a slight decline in 2019.

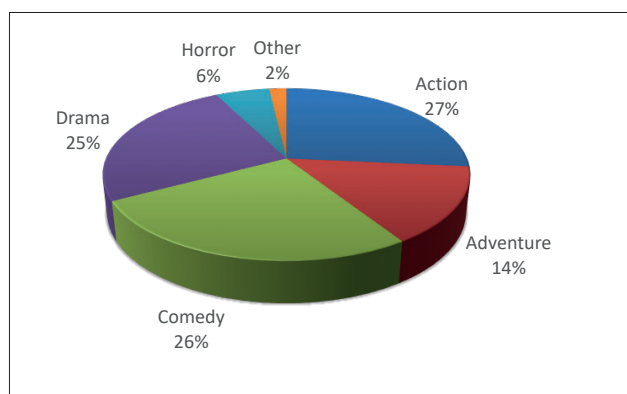
However, we can see that the adaptations did not follow a specific pattern (Graph 2). Of particular note were 2016 and 2018, which exceeded 40 adaptations in total. The average number of adaptations produced was around 35 releases per year, but it did not show any relationship with years of release. The total number of adaptations slightly exceeded that of new intellectual property. Of the 653 total films analyzed (titles such as *Leap Year*, *The Dilemma*, *Contraband*, *Mama*, *Ride Along*, *Blackhat*, *Hail, Caesar!*, *Split*, *Insidious: The Last Key*, or *Glass*, to cite one per year of the sample), 341 were classified as adaptations and 312 as non-adaptations. In total, in the decade 2010-2019, 52.2% of the films that were released were adaptations.



Graph 1. New films released by year



Graph 2. Adaptations released by year



Graph 3. Film genres

The decade's most popular film genres (Graph 3) were action (26.5%), comedy (26.3%), and drama (25.3%), followed distantly by adventure (14.4%) and horror (5.7%). To determine whether the variables of adaptation and genre were related to each other, these two qualitative variables were crossed in a chi-squared test, in which it was determined that these variables were indeed related ($X^2 = 49.64$; $p < 0.0001$), with action, adventure, and drama being adapted most often.

Table 1. Genre versus adaptation

		Action	Adventure	Comedy	Drama	Horror	Other
Is the film an adaptation of preexisting material?	Yes	114	56	60	96	9	6
	No	59	38	112	69	28	6

The genres most likely to be adaptations of preexisting material were action, adventure, and drama. The film genres most likely to be new intellectual property were comedy and horror (Table 1).

The chi-squared test between the variables adaptation and distributor showed that they were independent of each other ($p > 0.05$). Therefore, we determined that whether a film is an adaptation does not depend on the distributor from which it originates. The same result was obtained ($p > 0.05$) when cross-correlating the variables adaptation and benefit.

Table 2. Genre versus distributor

Film distributor by genre		Action	Adventure	Comedy	Drama	Horror	Other
Universal Studios	n	44	18	66	32	14	6
	%	25.4%	19.1%	38.4%	19.4%	37.8%	50.0%
Warner Bros	n	66	18	37	49	14	3
	%	38.2%	19.1%	21.5%	29.7%	37.8%	25.0%
Walt Disney	n	8	44	7	11	0	0
	%	4.6%	46.8%	4.1%	6.7%	0.0%	0.0%
Paramount Pictures	n	52	14	29	17	9	2
	%	30.1%	14.9%	16.9%	10.3%	24.3%	16.7%
Sony Pictures	n	3	0	33	56	0	1
	%	1.7%	0.0%	19.2%	33.9%	0.0%	8.3%
Total	n	173	94	172	165	37	12
	%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

There was some association between a film's distributor and the genre to which the film belongs. Having anticipated values less than 5, the conditions for a chi-squared test were not met. However, a certain pattern of association was observed. In the case of *Universal Studios*, comedy and horror productions stood out, and in the drama genre, it was lower than the amount anticipated (i.e., the proportional figure attributable a priori). *Warner Bros*, on the other hand, specialized in action films, where it was well ahead of expectations, and it was also more likely to distribute horror films. In the case of *Walt Disney*, it clearly specialized in the adventure genre, leaving aside all other genres without exception. *Paramount Pictures* also excelled much more prominently in the action genre than expected. Finally, the studio *Sony Pictures* stood out for participating in the distribution of comedy and drama films (Table 2).

We also found a correlation between being an adaptation and the number of times the films received awards. The results of the Mann-Whitney U test ($z = 3.34$; $p = 0.001$) showed that adaptations (see "Average of the range" column) benefit from receiving more awards than new creations (Table 3).

The correlation between the number of awards a film receives and the genre to which it belongs was tested ($X^2_{\text{Kruskal-Wallis}} = 35.86$; $p < 0.0001$). The genres most likely to receive awards from the institutions were drama, followed closely by adventure and, significantly behind that, action. Finally, the genres least likely to receive awards were comedy, horror, and the rest of the genres analyzed (Table 4).

Table 3. Adaptation versus awards

Is the film an adaptation of preexisting material? versus no. of times the film won an award	n	Average of the range
Yes	311	323.73
No	290	276.63
Total	601	

Table 4. Awards versus genre

N. of times the film won an award versus genre of the film	n	Average of the range
Action	152	289.48
Adventure	92	337.91
Comedy	158	252.38
Drama	156	353.80
Horror	33	250.38
Other	10	248.00
Total	601	

Table 5. Ratings

Mean user rating	Statistic
Mean	6.542
Median	6.500
Standard deviation	0.89
Minimum	1.6
Maximum	8.8
Range	7.2
Interquartile range	1.2

Finally, the Kruskal-Wallis test also determined that there was a relationship between the genre of the film and the mean user rating ($\chi^2_{\text{Kruskal-Wallis}} = 78.99; p < 0.0001$). Of the 653 cases, the mean score was 6.62 points, with the median being 6.50 points and the mode 6.20 (Table 5). The highest rated genre was drama, far exceeding the rest. After that, we found adventures and, far below that, action, comedy, and the rest of the genres studied. The genre that was least likely to receive awards was horror (Table 6).

4.2. Impact of adaptations at the economic level

Regarding adaptations and economic impact, there was a correlation between the film distribution company and the average budget ($\chi^2_{\text{Kruskal-Wallis}} = 159.59; p < 0.0001$). *Sony Pictures* was the company that, on average (according to *IMDb* data), allocated the lowest budget to the films it distributed, averaging three times less than the next lowest budget, *Universal Studios*. It is followed by *Warner Bros* and *Paramount Pictures*, which are very close to each other. *Walt Disney* was last due to animated films' high cost of production (Table 7).

With respect to whether being an adaptation influences the budget allocated to the films, the correlation between these two variables was also demonstrated ($z = 6.48; p < 0.0001$). Production companies allocated, on average, 60.8% more budget to adaptations than to original productions (Table 8). The relationship between being an adaptation and opening weekend box office takings ($z = 2.65; p = 0.008$) was also confirmed, with a box office difference of 13% favoring adaptations over original productions (Table 9).

Regarding the impact of adaptations on film profits (Graph 4), for 85.9% of the films analyzed, final box office takings exceeded their budget, so these films can be considered to generate profits, albeit without considering marketing expenses, which were unknown. However, it was determined that there was no relationship between adaptations and exceeding the breakeven point ($z = 1.60; p = 0.110$). A total of 86% of adaptations generated profits, and 85.8% of original productions also generated profits, a difference that was insufficient to identify a correlation between these two factors.

Table 6. Ratings versus genre

Mean user rating versus genre of the film	n	Average of the range
Action	173	307.82
Adventure	94	364.56
Comedy	172	275.77
Drama	165	416.79
Horror	37	183.73
Other	12	250.75
Total	653	

Table 7. Distributor versus budget

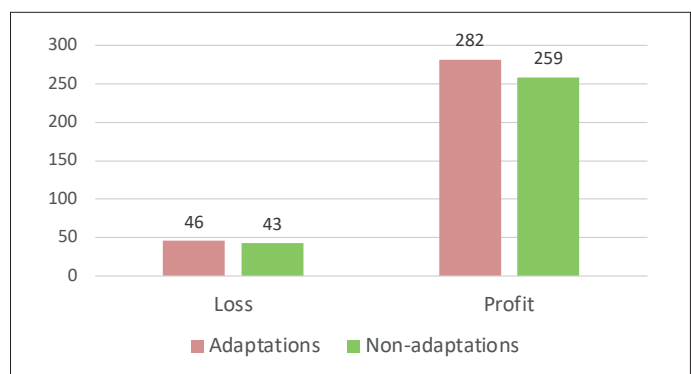
Film distributor versus film budget	n	Average of the range
Universal Studios	176	304.93
Warner Bros	186	350.11
Walt Disney	70	446.83
Paramount Pictures	123	340.09
Sony Pictures	75	91.58
Total	630	

Table 8. Adaptation versus budget

Is the film an adaptation of preexisting material? versus film budget	n	Average of the range
Yes	328	360.58
No	302	266.53
Total	630	

Table 9. Adaptation versus opening box office takings

Is the film an adaptation of preexisting material? versus opening weekend box office takings	n	Average of the range
Yes	338	342.06
No	308	303.13
Total	646	



Graph 4. Profit-making films: adaptations and new IP

Table 10. Adaptation versus ROI

Is the film an adaptation of preexisting material? versus ROI	n	Average of the range
Yes	328	304.38
No	302	327.58
Total	630	

In response to the question of how much more adaptations could earn than original productions, we found that original productions earned, on average, 7.8% more than adaptations (Table 10), although when cross-correlating these variables, no significant difference was observed ($p = 0.110$).

The genres most likely to receive awards from the institutions were drama, followed closely by adventure and, significantly behind that, action

Table 11. Genre versus profits

Profits		Action	Adventure	Comedy	Drama	Horror	Other
Loss	n	18	5	29	34	1	2
	%	10.4%	5.3%	17.5%	22.7%	2.7%	20.0%
Profit	n	155	89	137	116	36	8
	%	89.6%	94.7%	82.5%	77.3%	97.3%	80.0%
Total	n	173	94	166	150	37	10
	%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

With regard to the genre to which the film belonged and whether it generated profits (Table 11), a pattern of association was observed, but we could not carry out a chi-square test, as conditions for this test were not met –the anticipated values were less than 5. Action, adventure, and horror films were the ones that most frequently bring in profits. On the other hand, comedy and, above all, drama were the ones that would most frequently lead to losses.

As for the relationship between adaptations and domestic and worldwide opening box office takings (Table 12), there was a trend that persisted throughout the three box office variables, whereby, on average, adaptations unequivocally grossed more than new IPs. There is a correlation between adaptations and the box office takings achieved during the opening weekend ($p = 0.008$). On average, adaptations grossed 45.6% more than non-adaptations on the opening weekend.

Continuing with this trend, a stronger correlation than in the previous case was detected between adaptations and domestic box office takings ($p = 0.001$). Adaptations show 33.9% higher profits on average.

Finally, the highest relationship of all cases was observed between the variables adaptation and worldwide box office takings ($p < 0.0001$). On average, adaptations grossed 36.5% more at the international level (Tables 13 and 14).

Table 14. Box office test statistics

	Opening weekend box office takings	Film’s domestic box office takings	Film’s worldwide box office takings
Mann–Whitney <i>U</i> test	45,779.000	44,504.000	43,886.000
Mean of box office takings	26,329,176.64	84,560,282.59	217,114,583.50
<i>p</i> (sign.)	0.008	0.001	0.000

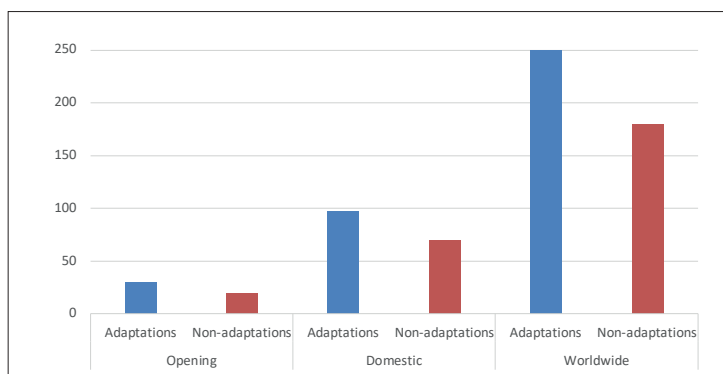
On average, adaptations grossed 59.2% (\$30.9 million) in the opening weekend, whereas new productions grossed 40.8% (\$21.3 million). The average domestic takings of the adaptations was \$96.3 million; that of the non-adaptations was \$71.8 million. Finally, the average worldwide box office takings for adaptations was \$248.9 million, whereas that of non-adaptations dropped to \$182.2 million (Graph 5).

Table 12. Adaptation versus domestic box office takings

Is the film an adaptation of preexisting material? versus the film’s domestic box office takings	<i>n</i>	Average of the range
Yes	337	345.94
No	309	299.03
Total	646	

Table 13. Adaptation versus worldwide box office takings

Is the film an adaptation of preexisting material? versus the film’s worldwide box office takings	<i>n</i>	Average of the range
Yes	341	353.30
No	311	297.11
Total	652	



Graph 5. Average gross box office takings (in millions of dollars)

Table 15. Correlation between ratings and worldwide box office takings

		Mean user rating	No. of times the film won an award
Film's worldwide box office takings	Spearman's rho	0.137**	0.246**
	Sig. (bilateral)	0.000	0.000
	n	652	600
Mean rating received from users	Spearman's rho		0.645**
	Sig. (bilateral)		0.000
	n		601

** Significance <0.001

A correlation between the variables ratings and worldwide box office takings was also observed ($r = 0,137$; $p < 0.0001$). Spearman's test showed a significant positive, albeit weak, correlation between the two variables. When a film's rating increases, its worldwide box office takings also increase (Table 15).

We observed very similar results with the variables awards and worldwide box office takings. In the ratio test, we were able to observe a significant ($r = 0,246$; $p < 0.0001$) and positive correlation between the two variables, which on this occasion was slightly stronger than in the previous case. The greater the awards a film receives, the greater the film's worldwide box office takings (Table 15).

5. Discussion and conclusion

The main objective of this research was to analyze the benefits that a film adaptation can bring through various film distribution companies' results during a specific period of time (2010-2019). Previous research (Bowler; Cox, 2009; Fondevila-Gascón *et al.*, 2021b; 2021c) had attributed advantages to adaptations, such as the relevance and popularity of their literary matrix and their dissemination on social networks, as well as the budget's determining role in the final result (Cattrysse, 1997; Camarillo, 2014). Similarly, this stems from the predominance of North American production (Crane, 2014), although the growing demand for content is causing an expansion to other countries (Buchsbaum, 2017).

“ The current situation stems from the predominance of North American production, although the growing demand for content is causing an expansion to other countries ”

The present research supports previous findings and perceptions with quantitative data, so that adapted films are attributed with an inherent advantage over productions that start from scratch. In terms of production, so often metrically analyzed in Broadband Society (Fondevila-Gascón, 2013) and required in concept of cloud journalism or content flow (Fondevila-Gascón, 2010), we observed that adaptations did not follow an exact trend in rate of production, although this was stable throughout the period covered (2010-2019). Neither was there a much higher number of adaptations than films that started from scratch, although they were a slight majority of all films released in this period (52.2%). Some genres tend to be adapted more than others, with action, adventure, and drama at the forefront.

The five distribution companies analyzed (international leaders in the sector) tended to favor one or several genres, and they produce films from these genres more frequently than the others. *Disney* stands out in particular, as it focuses on the adventure genre over all others. This genre is not related to adaptations, with profitability being prioritized over of the creative core of production.

In this line, these trends were not related to the possible generation of return on investment, since 85% of the films achieved profits, with no apparent relation to the genre to which they belonged. The industry can be seen as utilitarian, interpreting that there is no strategy to promote one type of production or another but rather that results take precedence. This has gone beyond other findings, such as the fact that adaptations have won more awards than new productions. Additionally, the number of awards received and the average rating obtained by the films according to their genre have been increasing: comedy, drama, and adaptation were the most awarded and highest-rated genres.

From an economic perspective, adaptations have major advantages over new intellectual property. Films based on adaptations received on average a 60.8% higher budget than non-adaptations. On the contrary, no significant differences were demonstrated between the adaptations and whether they achieved profits or the return on investment achieved.

However, in net box office takings, the adaptations obtained significantly higher profits in the three types of box office takings measured. Domestic box office takings were the least marked (a not inconsiderable 33.9% more profit than new productions). In worldwide box office takings (36.5% higher) and opening weekend box office takings (45.6% greater), the trend was confirmed. Thus, in

“ The industry can be seen as utilitarian, interpreting that there is no strategy to promote one type of production or another but rather that results take precedence ”

the opening weekend, on average, adaptations grossed \$9.6 million more than their non-adaptation counterparts. In domestic box office takings, they grossed \$24.5 million more, and in international box office takings, \$66.7 million more. It follows that the film industry, in the interest of obtaining more profits, should intensify its commitment to adaptations. This is a contribution of knowledge transfer that stems from the present research, and that can illuminate changes in trends in the types of film production.

From an economic perspective, adaptations have major advantages over new intellectual property. Films based on adaptations received on average a 60.8% higher budget than non-adaptations

Finally, a significant correlation was also observed between the variable adaptation and the variables score and rewards, although in both cases the correlation was weak. In general, the higher the box office revenues, the better the films were rated and the more awards they received.

As limitations of the research, the selected cohort can be expanded, and in addition, specific data on investments inherent to film productions, such as marketing resources, can be incorporated. This would shed light on possible future lines of research, both geographically (analyzing data by country and continent, even comparatively) and over time (tracking the same variables every decade, for example).

In short, adapting a preexisting literary material offers advantages for film production companies when it comes to considering an adaptation intellectual property created from scratch. Not only are there clearly greater economic benefits, but adaptations tend to be more rewarded and better valued, which can positively influence adaptations retroactively. If this is combined with a strategy whereby the production company specializes in a certain film genre, optimal results are obtained. In terms of industrial knowledge transfer, it is recommended that film production companies adapt preexisting literary material that has achieved a certain level of impact, as it will be profitable in the most tangible indicators.

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