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## **GLOBAL DISRUPTION, LOCAL ADAPTATION: REALITY TELEVISION AND GLOBO IN THE STREAMING ERA FROM BROADCAST TO PLATFORMS**

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### **Globo in the Streaming Era: Ruptures, Continuities, and the Future of Brazilian Reality Television.**

The transformations brought by digital platforms and streaming services have profoundly altered the dynamics of media production and consumption in Brazil, reshaping the long-established structures of television broadcasting. Historically, TV Globo has been the dominant force in Brazil's media landscape, pioneering national cultural production, setting audience standards, and establishing a robust international distribution network. However, the global expansion of streaming services has reconfigured traditional audiovisual models, challenging Globo's dominance and requiring strategic shifts in content production, distribution, and monetization. This study explores Globo's adaptation strategies by focusing on reality television—a genre that has emerged as a central pillar of the network's response to digital platformization. Reality television has proven to be one of the most resilient and adaptable formats within the shifting media ecosystem. It provides an important lens through which to analyse the broader restructuring of traditional broadcasters as they navigate disruptions in audiovisual models and the challenges of sustaining audience engagement in an era of fragmented media consumption. In Brazil, reality TV has become a powerful tool for Globo, allowing it to implement multi-platform strategies that span linear television, pay-TV, and streaming services via Globoplay. By leveraging reality television, particularly *Big Brother Brasil* (BBB), Globo has maintained its relevance in a hyper-competitive landscape where global streaming services, such as Netflix and Amazon Prime Video, exert increasing pressure on national broadcasters. This paper is informed by the Critical Media Industry Studies (CMIS) framework (Havens, Lotz, & Tinic, 2009), drawing on industrial-level analyses to examine how media institutions negotiate technological disruptions and reconfigure production practices. It aligns with recent scholarship on streaming-induced industrial shifts (Lotz, 2017; Lobato & Lotz, 2021) while addressing a key gap: the adaptation strategies of legacy broadcasters operating within the Global South. Although research on

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platformization has predominantly focused on global tech giants, the strategies of national media conglomerates like Globo remain underexplored, particularly in relation to digital labour dynamics and the emergent creator economies that increasingly shape contemporary audiovisual production.

This study engages with three key areas of inquiry: (1) the ruptures and continuities of digital media scholarship as they relate to national television industries, (2) disruptions in audiovisual models driven by digital platforms, and (3) the implications of digital labour ruptures for industry professionals working within these evolving structures. By analysing Globo's adaptation strategies through the lens of reality television, the research sheds light on how traditional broadcasters sustain relevance amid changing distribution models and audience behaviours.

The study draws on qualitative semi-structured interviews with executives, directors, and producers in Brazil, both inside and outside Globo. These interviews provide a nuanced understanding of how industry professionals perceive their shifting roles, the increasing demands for cross-platform content production, and the pressures of algorithm-driven distribution models. As a researcher with 20 years of experience in the Brazilian television industry, including 12 years as part of Globo's directing team, I adopt an insider perspective to critically analyse the tensions between established production models and emerging platform-driven strategies.

One of the key findings of this research concerns the shifting labour dynamics within Globo and the broader Brazilian media industry. The rise of digital platforms has introduced an increasing reliance on freelance and short-term contracts rather than stable, long-term employment structures. This reflects broader trends in digital labour studies, where the on-demand economy and algorithmic management have disrupted traditional employment patterns in media production. Additionally, the study examines how Globo negotiates the growing influence of peripheral creator economies—including independent content creators and social media influencers—who now play an essential role in shaping audience engagement and monetization strategies. While Globo has historically functioned as a centralized content producer, its engagement with digital-native creators reflects a hybridized approach to content development that merges institutional expertise with decentralized production practices.

Beyond labour considerations, this research contributes to discussions on media globalization by situating Globo within the wider context of Global South media industries. Previous scholarship has highlighted the dominant role of Globo in shaping Latin American television, particularly through its telenovela production and competition with regional giants like Televisa and Clarin (Guerrero, 2021; Porto, 2012). However, in contrast to framing Globo as an isolated model, this study situates its adaptation strategies within Brazil's specific media ecology, where local economic constraints, regulatory frameworks, and audience behaviours influence platformization dynamics in distinct ways.

Furthermore, the study interrogates the broader implications of streaming-induced disruptions in audiovisual models. While international platforms operate within a neoliberal framework that prioritizes global scalability, Globo's strategies reveal a countervailing force: the persistence of national broadcasters that leverage hybrid

business models combining advertising revenue, subscription-based streaming, and strategic partnerships with telecommunications providers. This hybridization complicates dominant narratives that frame streaming as an outright replacement of broadcast television, instead highlighting how legacy institutions recalibrate their business models to sustain competitiveness.

By analyzing *Big Brother Brasil* as a case study, this research offers a detailed examination of how a single reality TV format functions as a microcosm of Globo's broader adaptation strategies. The show exemplifies how Globo utilizes interactive audience engagement mechanisms (such as real-time voting, multi-platform content extensions, and social media integration) to maintain its competitive edge. Additionally, the research explores how Globo's adaptation strategies reflect broader trends in platformization, including the algorithmic curation of content, data-driven audience analytics, and the increasing convergence between television and digital ecosystems. In conclusion, this study contributes to ongoing debates in digital media scholarship by situating Globo within the context of global disruptions and local adaptations. It examines how reality television functions as both a site of industrial resilience and a site of contestation, where the shifting power dynamics between broadcasters, platforms, and independent creators are negotiated in real-time. By foregrounding issues of digital labour ruptures and peripheral creator economies, the research provides critical insights into the evolving landscape of media production in the Global South. As streaming-induced transformations continue to unfold, understanding how national broadcasters like Globo navigate these challenges remains crucial for a more comprehensive assessment of contemporary media globalization.

### **Keywords**

Ruptures and continuities of digital media scholarship, Disruptions in audiovisual models on digital platforms, Digital labour ruptures, Peripheral creator economies, Streaming television, Brazilian media industry, Globo, Reality television, Digital transformation, Media globalization.

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