

Indian Premier League- Boon or Bane

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Abstract: *This paper aims to analyze all the consequent factors associated with the Indian Premier League and to find out the impact of these consequent factors; whether they are having a positive impact or negative impact. Attempt is being made to suggest replication of strategies from the already well established Leagues of sports World, so that some of the critical factors leading Indian Premier League towards bane can be dealt cautiously and save the League from becoming a history. The findings of the study might be taken into consideration to overcome the negativity of the League and make it a real success in the future as well. So far as the popularity of the game is concerned, it provides a favorable platform for the researchers to analyze Indian Premier League and come out with best possible results for the upliftment of the game.*

Keywords: *Indian Premier League, Bane, Boon, Twenty20, Franchisee, League.*

I. Introduction

Indian Premier League(IPL) was started by Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) in 2008 with the intention of curtailing the private Cricket League ICL (Indian Cricket League), which was getting highly famous around the World^[1]. But the Indian Cricket League was not recognized by International Cricket Council and the players participating in it were banned. In order to improve the standards of domestic Cricket and provide fair chances to domestic players, BCCI decided to start a professional Cricket League and thus came into being, one of the most popular Leagues of the Sports World, i.e., Indian Premier League (IPL)^[2]. It was under the best guidance of Lalit Modi, that IPL got off to such a good start in 2008 with much fanfare.

IPL is a franchise based professional Cricket League. All the participating teams owned by different franchisee are named after various Indian States or Cities. The team formation is done through competitive bidding from a collection of local as well as foreign players^[3]. Participating players represent their respective franchise and are paid by the team owners. A total amount of US\$42 million are available for team owners to bid for the services of Cricketers^[4]. Each team has the provision of purchasing of a maximum of 10 overseas players out of which only four can be the members of playing eleven for each match^[5]. The format of this League is based on Twenty20 format, the shortest version of International Cricket^[6].

One of the main aims of BCCI behind the launch of Indian Premier League is to improve the capabilities of domestic players and provide a much competitive and better platform as compared to domestic circle of Cricket. Here, it is worth to note that besides this, another major cause for its launch was to create a profitable Cricket League^[7]. The League adapted the marketing practices of English Premier League (EPL) and American National Basketball Association (NBA)^[6]. Indian Premier League serves as a great contributor towards India's GDP^[8]. Moreover being one of the most popular Leagues of sports World, it serves as a great source of entertainment to millions^[9].

II. Methodology

2.1 Aim

The study has objective to find out the outcome of IPL; whether it shows positivity or negativity towards the game of Cricket, on players, on economy and to her associated fields. The fundamental aim of the study is to come out with the findings that will describe viability of the League and highlight the strategies and policies which can work wonders for the success of the League.

2.2 Procedure

This is an exploratory study of Indian Premier League. The available information by means of documents & contents serve as the data collection method. The data has been retrieved from available information about many IPL seasons, previous studies and media reports associated with IPL. Taking into consideration the nature and area of enquiry, the study has been presented in a descriptive narrative style. In order to clarify the study and come out with the best possible results, the information available about all the aspects associated with Indian Premier League have been consulted. A brief review of the strategies used in IPL has been conducted so as to point out if correction needs to be done to make the League a success.

III. Literature Review

Some researchers discussed about a new dimension for the Cricketing World. They highlighted the initial phase of IPL and the team formation in which players were assigned to various teams by means of auction^[10]. Siddhartha K Rastogi asserted about the final bidding Prices, Cricketing attributes of players and to her relevant information^[4]. Sanjeet Singh measured the technical efficiency of various teams participating in Indian Premier League^[7]. IPL has emerged as a great success and has been called Billion Dollar Baby^[11]. However Coates didn't agree with the fact that professional League games help a community or a city to increase revenue^[12].

Shashi Kadapa discussed the very high popularity of Indian Premier League with more than 140 million TV audiences and a brand valuation of more than 4 billion USD. He praised the IPL business model for integrating many complex factors like entertainment, glamour, marketing, pricing and the hard hitting Cricket. Moreover, he conducted a detailed analysis of 10 key issues that threaten the viability of IPL strategy, revenue model and sustainability of IPL^[9]. IPL has established a benchmark of Cricket marketing in the whole Cricket World. IPL is the most fashionable and entertainment Sports League in India^[6]. IPL provides a platform where international players from different countries and India's upcoming talent play together^[14].

Many researchers have tried their hand in figuring out the different aspects associated with the Indian Premier League. Some tried to highlight its impact on the national economy, some tried to analyse the strategies used in IPL, some others discussed its popularity by means of the viewership involved and its brand valuation, while some others tried to evaluate its impact on the game of Cricket. Though many researchers have tried to discuss outcome of IPL – its impact on youngsters, opportunities created for uncapped players and its contribution towards national economy.

In my opinion, this field is yet to be evaluated in a significant manner. So far as the popularity of the game is concerned, this field is of great interest and provides a favorable platform for me to analyze Indian Premier League and come out with optimum model of strategies and policies for the upliftment of the game and the League.

IV. Analysis And Discussion

On analysis of this study many key issues have been identified as critical factors which form the base for calling IPL as a boon or bane. The factors are:

- Impact on the game of Cricket.
- Impact on domestic circle of Cricket.
- Platform/Graveyard for emerging talent.
- Turn over for franchisees.
- Entertainment.

4.1 Boon

IPL has provided a new dimension to the game of Cricket. Soon after the advent of Twenty20 Cricket. IPL took over it in such a manner, that the overall scenario of this format got changed. Not only IPL, but all the Twenty20 Leagues are big boons for Cricket. But IPL being on top of the hierarchy, because of its great success, catches everybody's eye. The level of the Cricketers has gone higher whether the strike rate of batsmen is concerned or the wide variety of bowling variations especially in the final overs of the game is concerned. Batsmen play more fearless and innovative shots, leading sudden change in mindset among players which proves fruitful for them to chase down huge targets easily.

IPL provides a brilliant platform where inexperience meets experience. Not only the Indian domestic players, but the foreign uncapped players also get the chance to learn from the greats of the game. IPL provides a great platform for the amateurs and newbies to share dressing rooms and net sessions with the elite players, so that they can hone their skills at a very early stage of their Cricketing careers.

IPL provides this emerging talent a great platform where they can show their capabilities and create a chance for themselves to be included in their respective National squads. The recent inclusion of players like Tabraiz Shamsi in South African squad and Yuzvendra Chahal, K. L Rahul, Karun Nair, Rishi Dhawan, Barinder Sran & Mandeep Singh in the Indian Squad exemplifies it in a better manner. In the past, players like Jason Holder, Chris Moris, Jasprit Bumrah, Axar Patel & Mohit Sharma also highlighted their capabilities in IPL and got the attention of their National Selectors and finally resulted in their inclusion in National Teams.

Ten Participating teams in IPL require a minimum of 70 Indian Cricketers. If each player is to have a back-up, that 140 Cricketers of India are to be considered for a single IPL season. Where from such reserves will come? Before the IPL, the injury concerns were often a worrying factor for the Cricket board, as so many proper replacements were not available. Now the IPL is coming out with such a huge and rich reserve of talent and provide the selectors a ready pool of talented Cricketers. Isn't this a boon?

In today's aspirational World of glitter, one is not able to meet out the basic needs. So majority of the people face emotional un-stability because of lack of content. Same is the problem faced by many Cricketers who are psychologically depressed having concerns about their future. Can such a Cricketer give his best to the game in such a condition? IPL is providing the players a sufficient amount of money to achieve satisfaction, content and secure their future. Isn't this a boon?

Few years back, Cricket was just a passion and not an option for Profession. Many stories reveal how players had to fight against their families for allowing them to play the game that they love. Now, with the onset of IPL, Whole scenario got changed and a huge flow of money came into the game of Cricket. More and more players are embracing the game and Cricket is becoming a profession in India. Isn't this a boon for the game of Cricket?

No wonder Indian Premier League has grown as the second richest Professional League in the World after NBA at a brand value of \$ 4.3 billion^[15]. It's revenue streaming is from various sources like ticket sales, sponsorships, Internet and television Rights, Cellular Service Providers, VAS, Ground advertisements etc. The total economic output during 2015 edition is RS 2650 crore, both from direct, indirect or induced effect of economic activity of matches. India's economic sector is getting a real boost from IPL. The 2015 edition of IPL contributed Rs 1,150 crore to India's GDP^[8]. Isn't IPL's significant contribution towards Indian economy a great boon?

The success of any event can be judged through many factors. Once such factor is whether the event is profitable with respect to monetary investment. The IPL franchisees are technically efficient as they are managing to yield a handsome profit from their respective teams. Doesn't this prove the success of the League and a boon for franchisees as well?

Below "TABLE" present the exact figures of profit obtained by different franchisee in 2009 edition of IPL^[7].

Data for 2009 edition teams

TEAMS	EXPENSE (Rs. Cr)	REVENUE (Rs. Cr)	PROFIT (Rs. Cr)
Chennai Super Kings	89.5	111.2	21.8
Deccan Chargers	94.7	109.5	14.8
Delhi Daredevils	84.1	107.4	23.3
Kings XI Punjab	80.5	106.6	26.1
Kolkata Knight Riders	85	110.8	25.8
Mumbai Indians	99	106	7
Rajasthan Royals	71.3	106.4	35.1
Royal Challengers Bangalore	99.1	107.25	8.15

IPL has got a very high popularity with more than 140 million TV audiences. It acts as a great source of entertainment to millions around the World. IPL being a mega event not only promotes Cricket but acts as a great ambassador for spreading the cultural heritage of India to the World. Such is evident during the opening & closing ceremony of IPL. Moreover, improvement in the infrastructure of stadiums and other facilities has been another highlight of the event. Besides this, IPL has invited and attracted tourists throughout the World. In other words, Indian Premier League has given India a great name and Fame. Isn't this a boon?

4.2 Bane

- Cricket is a gentleman's game. As IPL is indulging into a lot of controversies regarding match fixing, gambling, etc. The moral part is getting thinner and thus producing a serious threat on the ethical values associated with the game.
- Since 2011 scandals have hit the League with charges of spot fixing & betting scandals, there has been a serious question mark on the trust in the franchisee. The League experienced a dooming down effect as brand value reduction of IPL from a high of \$ 4.13 billion in 2010 to \$ 2.92 billion in 2012, was observed^[9].
- These controversies and allegations are also leading towards the disinterest of viewers as they no longer take it as a fun. The foreign tourists which are the main charm of the event too show concerns about the morality of the League and in turn resulting in a decrease in Viewership.
- The mingling of the players from different countries in a single franchisee in IPL makes them vulnerable at the International level as they know each other's game very well.
- If the creation of IPL by BCCI lays its foundation on improvement of domestic Cricket, then how come it possible that its establishment lies on the grave of ICL.
- One of the main concerns is that college & school going students get distracted especially during examination session.

- Comparing the monetary benefits which players get from IPL with respect to their Cricket boards. IPL is proving them much more & this has lured many International players to cut short their International career. Thus raising a question on player's loyalty towards his country. Playing in IPL is not wrong, but playing at the expense of ignoring one's own country goes contradictory with the spirit of sports.

V. Conclusion

Like other events, IPL has its pros and cons. It has really shifted the paradigm of Cricketing World to new heights. IPL provides a brilliant platform for youngsters where they can catch the eye of selectors for their inclusion in their respective National squads. IPL, because of its huge fanfare and higher brand value is surely one of the mega events in the World of sports. It acts as a great promoter of cultural heritage of India to the World. IPL serves as a source of entertainment for millions throughout the World. It is surely a billion dollar baby. IPL is providing the players a fair amount of money with which they can fulfill all their needs & secure future. Moreover the franchisee's are also earning huge profits from the League. IPL also contributes a significant amount towards GDP of India.

IPL being such a great success should always review its strategies & policies for the viability of this League. One of the main concerns is to curtail spot fixing issues, controversies, allegations and gambling. The management needs to take harsh steps towards the culprits beforehand; otherwise IPL will sooner be a history, as already evident from the recent verdict of the supreme court of India by barring some franchisees from participation.

It is worth to praise that the management of Indian Premier League used an efficient business model, integrating so many complex factors like entertainment, glamour, marketing, pricing, hard hitting Cricket to make IPL as one of the World's most successful professional sports Leagues. Likewise, the management needs to consult expert personnel to review its policies time and again to keep its business plan working efficiently. Besides this, while framing out the fixture for the IPL, the examination session of the students should always be taken into consideration, so that the two may not coincide with each other.

After all, Cricket has always been a gentleman's game. So IPL should also stick to the basic principles and let the game to be played with real sportsman spirit. IPL should act as a brand ambassador for passing on the perfect message of universal brotherhood and friendship, which is the prime motto of a sport. Keeping apart all the qualitative effect of IPL on Cricket, one must confess that IPL is a great source of amusement for millions of Cricket lovers and presents a very exciting form of Cricket.

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