

Economic Impact Of The Indian Premier League On The Developing Economy Of India

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Abstract

Commenced by the fugitive Indian businessman and cricket administrator, Lalit Modi in 2008, the Indian Premier League, which is popularly known as the IPL, has been in existence since the past 16 years and has had some exceptional effects on the game of cricket and the economy of the country it originated from, India. It is based on the T-20 format of cricket, which is much more aggressive and competitive than its fellow leagues, as it comprises both raw domestic talent and well-experienced international players. The intense marketing, sponsorships, auctions, media production, tourism, merchandising, and investments greatly impact the economy. The study presented below explores the everlasting impact of the IPL on India's diverse and developing economy.

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I. Introduction

History of the game:

- As Ashis Nandy famously said, "Cricket is an Indian game accidentally discovered by the British." The origins of cricket in India can be traced back to 1721, when British sailors introduced the game along the Kutch coast, piquing the curiosity of the local population. As British merchants became more established in India, cricket began to gain traction. We see evidence of this growing popularity with the first recorded match in 1751 and the subsequent founding of the Calcutta Cricket Club in 1792. (*History of BCCI, Indian Cricket's Governing Body, n.d.-b*)
- The Parsi community was the first Indian group to embrace the sport, forming their own clubs in the mid-19th century. In 1886, a Parsi team even travelled to England to delve deeper into its history. Their celebrated win against the British in 1889 stands as a truly significant milestone to date. (*History of BCCI, Indian Cricket's Governing Body, n.d.-b*)
- By the early 20th century, cricket had evolved into a unifying force across India's diverse communities. The formation of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) in 1928 marked a major milestone, leading to India's admission as a Full Member of the International Cricket Council (ICC). India played its first Test match in 1932. While their initial years were marked with considerable hurdles, the team persevered and ultimately achieved their first Test victory in 1952 against England. (*History of BCCI, Indian Cricket's Governing Body, n.d.-b*)
- The 1983 World Cup victory marked a significant turning point, highlighting both India's cricketing excellence and the BCCI's organisational strength. This pivotal achievement firmly established India as a dominant force on the global cricketing stage.

Background of IPL:

Established by Lalit Modi in 2008, who went out of the way to bring his revolutionary idea to life, the IPL has had seventeen splendid seasons over the course of its existence. Young domestic players can now make a name for themselves and earn a permanent spot in their country's team by showcasing their unique gameplay. Moreover, beyond individual opportunities, the IPL has positively influenced players' mindset toward the game, as it allows them to compete with some of the worlds' best cricketers and collaborate with teammates and opponents from diverse regions and backgrounds. Today, it stands tall as one of the most popular sporting leagues in the world and a major financial force, generating significant figures in revenue annually. Without a doubt, the IPL has transformed the world of cricket and drawn a great deal of attention to its distinctive business and financial model.

Our Objectives:

This research paper aims to investigate the multifaceted economic impact of the Indian Premier League (IPL) on the Indian economy. The study focuses on the following key objectives:

1. To analyse brand valuation trends of the IPL over time, examining its evolution from inception to becoming a multi-billion-dollar sports property.
2. To conduct sectoral analysis and assess IPL's influence on core industries, including:
 - Sports and entertainment by exploring its commercialisation and global appeal.
 - Tourism and hospitality, through trends in hotel bookings, match-related travel, and regional economic activity.
 - Media and broadcasting, by studying the revenue generated through broadcasting rights and digital platforms.
3. To evaluate advertisement and sponsorship dynamics, including title sponsorships, team endorsements, ad rate inflation, and return on investment for brands.
4. To assess employment generation and ancillary sector growth, focusing on direct and indirect job creation, from stadium staff to logistics, event management, merchandise, and catering.
5. To understand the impact on small and medium enterprises (SMEs), including local vendors, merchandisers, and businesses benefiting from increased footfall during IPL seasons.
6. To explore IPL's role in the digital economy and technology sector, through innovations in fan engagement, streaming platforms, fantasy leagues, and online ticketing systems.

II. Literature Review

Objective

This literature review examines existing research on the economic impact of the Indian Premier League (IPL), analysing revenue generation, employment creation, tourism, and media rights. Additionally, it explores comparative studies on other global sports leagues, particularly the English Premier League (EPL), to provide a broader perspective. By reviewing key sources, methodologies, and findings from prior research, this study identifies gaps in the literature and outlines how this paper aims to address them.

Revenue Generation and Economic Growth

IPL's Contribution to GDP

Several studies highlight the IPL's significant contribution to India's Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

- KPMG India (2015) estimated that the IPL contributed approximately ₹1,150 crore (US\$140 million) to India's GDP.
- PvtCourt (2020) reported that the IPL added nearly \$6.7 billion to the Indian economy.
- ET Edge Insights (2021) found that the IPL's impact reached ₹11.5 billion (US\$182 million), with increasing economic significance each year.
- StartUpTalky (2023) stated that the IPL's ecosystem valuation had surged by 28% in one year, reaching \$10.7 billion.

These studies establish that the IPL plays a crucial role in India's economic expansion, similar to how the English Premier League (EPL) contributes to the UK's GDP through broadcasting rights, ticket sales, and sponsorship revenue (Dobson & Goddard, 2011).

Revenue from Broadcasting and Sponsorships

The IPL's revenue streams primarily include broadcasting rights, sponsorships, ticket sales, and merchandising.

- BCCI Reports (2018-2022) stated that Star India acquires IPL's broadcasting rights for \$2.55 billion, making it one of the most expensive cricket broadcasting deals.
- Forbes India (2022) revealed that the IPL's 2023-2027 media rights were sold for \$6.2 billion, surpassing major global sports leagues like the NBA.
- Economic Times (2023) estimated that sponsorship revenue for IPL teams increased by 40% post-pandemic, indicating strong financial resilience.

These findings align with global trends, as seen in the NFL and EPL, where media rights and sponsorships account for a substantial share of league-generated revenue (Andreff, 2019).

Job Creation

The IPL has created thousands of direct and indirect jobs across multiple sectors.

- Kumar & Agarwal (2022) reported that IPL franchises generate employment in coaching, marketing, administration, security, and logistics.
- Economic Survey of India (2019) estimated that IPL-related activities provide seasonal employment to over 20,000 people, including hospitality workers, event managers, and travel operators.

- Gupta (2021) highlighted the rise of fantasy sports platforms like Dream11, which have created thousands of IT and data analytics jobs due to IPL's popularity.

This reflects the job market impact of major sports leagues worldwide, such as the EPL, where clubs drive regional employment growth in retail, hospitality, and media industries (Dobson & Goddard, 2011).

Tourism and Hospitality

Tourism and hospitality have been among the biggest beneficiaries of IPL's success.

- Bagchi & Dasgupta (2021) studied IPL's influence on sports tourism, estimating that the league generates approximately 45,000 room nights annually.
- Business Standard (2023) reported that IPL seasons lead to an average 25% increase in hotel bookings in host cities.
- SME Futures (2023) found that restaurants, bars, and lounges experienced a 30% rise in food and beverage sales during IPL match screenings.

The economic benefits of sports tourism during the IPL align with research on the FIFA World Cup and the Olympics, both of which boost local economies through increased travel and spending (Preuss, 2004).

Media and Digital Economy Growth

With the rise of digital media, IPL has driven growth in the streaming industry and the fantasy sports sector.

- Rath (2023) found that fantasy sports platforms saw a 24% revenue increase, reaching \$342 million during IPL 2023.
- Economic Times (2023) reported that JioCinema's free IPL streaming attracted over 500 million viewers, disrupting traditional sports broadcasting.
- Statista (2023) estimated that IPL-related content generates over 1 billion social media impressions per season.

This trend mirrors the digital transformation seen in the NFL and EPL, where streaming rights and social media marketing have overtaken traditional broadcasting revenue (Andreff, 2019).

Comparative Studies with Other Global Sports Leagues

Comparative studies suggest that the IPL has followed a similar economic trajectory to established leagues like the EPL, NFL, and NBA.

- Smith & Stewart (2019) analysed revenue models of global sports leagues and found that IPL's rapid growth in sponsorships and broadcasting revenue follows the pattern of the EPL's expansion in the 1990s.
- Deloitte Sports Business Group (2020) ranked IPL among the top 5 most valuable sports leagues in the world, comparing its economic impact to the NBA and NFL.
- Chatterjee (2022) studied franchise-based sports models and concluded that IPL's revenue generation and commercialisation model rival those of the MLB and La Liga.

These findings reinforce the view that the IPL has successfully positioned itself among the world's top sports leagues, both in terms of economic value and global appeal.

Gaps in Literature and Scope for Further Research

While extensive research exists on the IPL's economic impact, some areas require further exploration:

- Long-term economic impact: Most studies focus on short-term financial gains; research on the IPL's impact on India's economy over decades remains limited.
- Impact on grassroots cricket: While IPL generates revenue for franchises and the BCCI, its trickle-down effects on domestic cricket infrastructure needs deeper evaluation.
- Sustainability concerns: The environmental and social impact of the IPL, particularly its carbon footprint and water consumption, is an emerging research area.
- Comparative Studies with Other Leagues: While some papers reference global leagues, detailed economic comparisons between the IPL and leagues like the EPL or NBA remain scarce.
- Digital Economy and IPL's Role: The impact of the IPL on OTT platforms, fantasy sports, and e-commerce is an emerging area requiring further research.
- Regional Economic Disparities: Studies rarely analyse how IPL revenue distribution affects smaller cities versus major metropolises in India.

This paper aims to bridge some of these gaps by analysing IPL's broader economic influence while comparing it with global sports leagues. The literature confirms that the IPL has had a profound economic impact on India, contributing significantly to GDP, job creation, tourism, and media growth. However, future research should focus on long-term economic sustainability and its impact on grassroots cricket.

III. Methodology

This study employs a secondary research approach, gathering and synthesising data from various credible sources to assess the economic impact of the Indian Premier League (IPL). The methodology involves the following key steps:

Data Collection from Industry Reports and Studies

- Data was extracted from industry reports published by reputed consulting firms like Deloitte, KPMG, and EY, which analyse IPL's financial impact.
- Annual IPL brand valuation reports from agencies like Duff & Phelps (now Kroll) provided insights into franchise growth, media rights, and sponsorship trends.
- Government reports and BCCI financial disclosures were reviewed to understand the league's direct and indirect contributions to India's GDP, along with articles from The Economic Times and Brand Finance.

Analysis of IPL Brand Valuation and Sector-Specific Economic Impact

The growth of IPL's brand valuation (e.g., from \$4.16 billion in 2016 to over \$10 billion in 2023) was used as a proxy for its increasing economic influence.

Sector-specific financial data was compiled to map IPL's impact on industries like:

- Tourism & Hospitality: Hotel booking trends, flight ticket surges, and match-day economic activity.
- Retail & Local Vendors: Demand spikes for IPL merchandise; small businesses benefiting from fan engagement.
- Digital Economy: Rise in e-commerce sales, increased user engagement on fantasy sports apps, and ad revenue trends.
- Media & Sponsorship: Media rights revenue (e.g., IPL 2023 broadcasting deal worth ₹48,390 crore), advertising revenue from digital and TV platforms.

Industry-Specific Analytical Framework

To systematically assess IPL's economic footprint, an industry-specific framework was developed based on data-driven insights:

1. Direct Impact – Revenue from ticket sales, sponsorships, and broadcasting deals.
2. Indirect Impact – Increased sales in related industries (e.g., food & beverages, tourism).
3. Induced Impact – Employment creation and regional economic upliftment due to IPL-related activities (promotions, social media, infrastructure development, etc.)

IV. Impact Of Ipl On The Economy

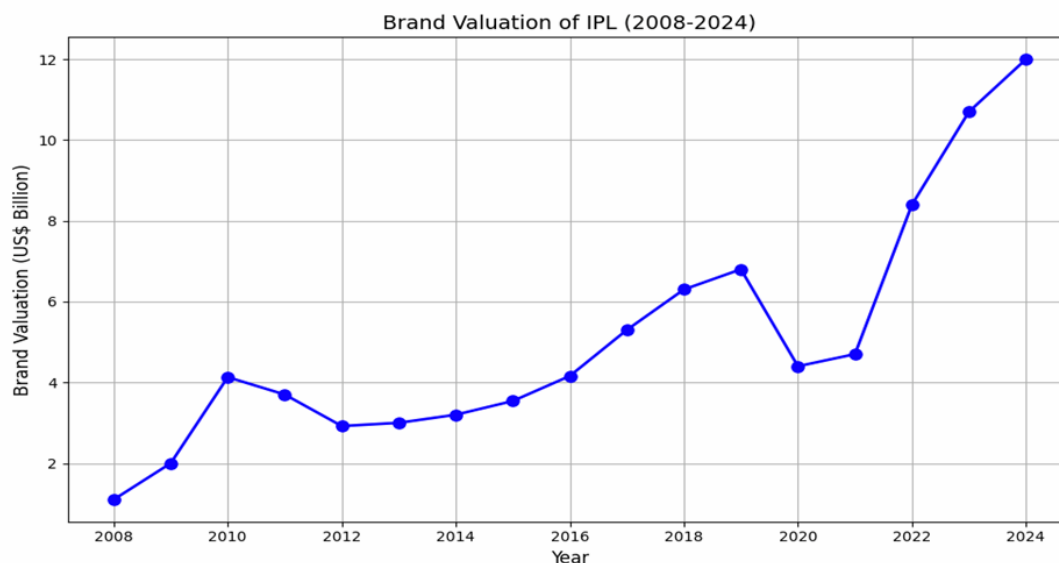
Brand Valuation Trends:

Brand value is the monetary/financial worth of a brand. It's a market-based number that's more arbitrary than a concrete value, but it still affects a company and the market.

- After establishing the league, the competition commenced on 18th April with a double round robin league stage. The season ended with 2 semi-finals followed by the final match of the tournament, which resulted in the victory of Rajasthan Royals. IPL soon became India's first unicorn with a brand value of \$1.1 billion in the first year itself. (*Dnp-Web-Admin, 2023*)
- The brand value of the league almost doubled in its second run in 2009, reaching the \$2 billion mark. From this point on, it was clear that there would be no looking back for the investors and management. IPL has made a concrete name for itself in the major cricketing countries after proving to be of great potential and profitability. (*D'Souza et al., 2018*)
- In 2010, it became the first sporting event to be broadcasted live on YouTube, and it was the third year of IPL being sponsored by the real estate giant, DLF. The league showed an increase of over 106% in its brand value and was estimated to be \$4.13 billion by its third year. However, following the third edition of the IPL, Lalit Modi, who held the roles of founder, chairman, league commissioner, and BCCI vice-president, faced

suspension by the board. This action was prompted by allegations concerning questionable financial practices, irregularities, as well as accusations of misconduct and indiscipline. (Subramanian, 2010)

- After the occurrence of this shocking episode, the brand value of IPL took a dip and declined by \$460 million. It came down from a powerful \$4.13 billion figure to \$3.7 billion in 2011. (Pande, 2011)
- "The honeymoon is over; the IPL juggernaut has surely hit a speed breaker," said M Unni Krishnan, MD of the India office of Brand Finance. "Now, its sustainability will largely depend on infusing governance policies to align all the stakeholders towards win-win relationships, thereby preserving the value in the long run." The 2012 season also did not prove to be of much growth for the league's brand value.
- There was noticeable growth in the brand value of the league from 2013 to 2015, with the value floating a little above the \$3 billion mark. Finally, in 2016, it increased up to \$4.16 billion and then crossed the \$5 billion mark in 2017.
- Reports showed an increase of approximately \$1 billion for the 2018 season compared to the previous year, followed by the 2019 season, in which the league's brand value reached \$6.8 billion. (V.G.S,2019)
- Due to the outbreak of the Coronavirus, the IPL was held in the second half of 2020 in the UAE. With almost every sector facing an economic downturn, the IPL too, experienced a 22% reduction in its brand value, bringing it down to \$4.4 billion. (B. Online, 2021)
- Thereafter, in 2022, the league's valuation nearly doubled from \$4.7 billion in 2021 to \$8.4 billion, as fans returned to stadiums, given the receding of the pandemic.
- It crossed the \$10 billion mark in 2023, going up to \$12 billion in 2024.



Sectoral Analysis:

IPL is a massive economic engine that drives growth across multiple sectors in India. From media and broadcasting to tourism, hospitality, real estate, and employment, the league's financial impact extends far beyond the cricket field, shaping industries and boosting the economy.

Sports and Entertainment:

The league has proved to be a continuous source of entertainment for the fans and has brought significant changes in the cricketing world. Initially, its concept was alien to the Indian fans and players, but with rapid growth and increasing acceptance, the IPL has revolutionised the way cricket is played, viewed, and commercialised. Introduction of a franchise-based model and popularised shorter formats attracted international players, making cricket more dynamic and entertainment-driven. The league has also fostered young talent, provided financial stability to cricketers, and elevated India's position as a global cricketing powerhouse.

- Players like Hardik Pandaya, Jasprit Bumrah, Ishan Kishan and many more who faced certain challenges in domestic cricket got an opportunity to showcase their talent through this format and league, which subsequently paved their way in making it to the Indian team.

- Playing among world-star sportsmen gives the young players a niche platform to gain invaluable experience, improve their skills under high-pressure situations and adapt to international standards. This can enhance their career prospects, often leading to national team selections and lucrative opportunities in global T20 leagues.
- Its reach and success inspired the cricket boards of other countries to launch their own T20 leagues like the Australian Big Bash League(2011), Pakistan Super League(2016), Caribbean Premier League(2013), USA's Major League Cricket(2023).
- As far as the entertainment aspect is concerned, cheerleaders, live music, interaction with international players, etc., have enhanced the experience for the fans. Moreover, the social media presence of the franchises has fostered a direct relationship with the fans as they get to witness the behind-the-scene dynamics in dressing rooms, field trips, team games and interviews.
- The intense IPL auctions keep the fans engaged even during the off-season, and various social media trends are taken up by the fans even after the tournament's completion.

Tourism & Hospitality:

The IPL transforms host cities into bustling travel destinations, attracting both domestic and international visitors. Hotels, airlines, and local transport services witness increased demand, while restaurants, cafes, and bars thrive with heightened footfall. The tournament also promotes cricket tourism, encouraging fans to explore cities beyond match venues, benefiting heritage sites, shopping districts, and entertainment hubs.

- The IPL's international appeal draws visitors from around the world, thereby enhancing India's global profile as a premier destination for sports tourism. This increased visibility contributes to the nation's reputation and economic growth.
- In 2019, the IPL led to 4 lakh domestic and foreign tourist arrivals in India, generating US\$ 68 million for the Indian hospitality sector. (*Deo, 2023*)
- Rajeev Kale, President & Country Head of Holidays, MICE, stated that their company has witnessed a surge in demand of over 60-70% for travel to match venues for both April and May 2023 compared to 2022. (*MARC Insights, 2024*)
- The Indian Sports Tourism market is projected to grow at a CAGR of 17.1% to reach USD 52.9 billion by 2033. (*KPMG, 2024*)
- According to the Ministry of Tourism, IPL 2024 generated \$450 million in direct and indirect tourism revenue. Cities hosting playoff matches like Ahmedabad and Chennai reported hotel occupancy rates of over 90%. (*Our Business Ladder, 2024*)

Media and Broadcasting:

The Indian Premier League has had a transformative impact on the broadcasting and media landscape, revolutionising the way sports content is consumed in India and globally. The sale of broadcasting rights generates remarkable revenue, with global broadcast rights alone generating over a billion dollars. The split of media rights between TV and digital platforms has also fostered greater competition, ensuring higher revenues for the BCCI and creating new opportunities for advertisers and sponsors.

- According to a report on the Economic Times of India, BCCI sold the global broadcast rights for its official Twenty20 tournament, the Indian Premier League, for \$918 million to the Singapore-based sports marketing agency, World Sport Group (WSG), for 10 years. Sony Max (SET Max) was the official broadcaster for the tournament for the first five years. SET signed a back-to-back agreement with WSG for the TV broadcast rights, while the on-ground rights and new media rights remained with WSG. (*Tnn, 2008*)
- The Sony-WSG partnership invested an extra \$108 million in promotional expenses for the tournament. Their contract started with the first edition in April that year and continued until 2017. (*Tnn, 2008*)
- Star India displayed a keen business sense and strong interest in Indian cricket by acquiring the global broadcasting and digital rights for the IPL. The company secured the deal for ₹16,347.5 crore (\$2.55 billion) for a five-year period, beginning with the 11th edition of the tournament in 2018. (*Gollapudi, 2017*)
- The BCCI's decision to separate the IPL's broadcast rights for television and digital platforms proved to be a strategic masterstroke. Not only did it generate massive revenue for the cricket board, but it also broke STAR's monopoly, sparking the first major competition between a dominant TV broadcaster and an emerging digital giant.
- Disney-owned Star India secured the TV broadcasting rights for the Indian Premier League from 2023 to 2027 through an online auction. Meanwhile, Viacom 18 won the digital streaming rights for the same period. The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) earned over 480 billion rupees from this five-year media deal, making the IPL the second most valuable sports league in the world based on per-match value. (*Keelery, 2024*)

- "We are overwhelmed with the record-breaking viewing figures for TATA IPL 2024. Disney Star has started the 17th season from where it left off last year, doubling down on fan-centred initiatives that seek to drive passion and fandom for the tournament," Disney Star stated as it recorded a viewership of 35 crores in the first 10 matches of the tournament. (Sreejith Rajan, 2024)
- Disney Star revealed the remarkable increase in the overall watch-time for the tournament, with it being watched for a total of 80.28 billion minutes in 2024, which is a 20% increase from the previous year. (Laghate, 2024)

The IPL has redefined sports broadcasting by incorporating cutting-edge technology, interactive viewing experiences, and regional language coverage, making cricket more accessible and engaging for a diverse audience. Overall, the IPL has set new benchmarks for sports broadcasting, influencing the way leagues worldwide negotiate media rights and engage with fans. Its success has demonstrated the power of live sports as a premium entertainment product, reshaping the future of sports media in India and beyond.

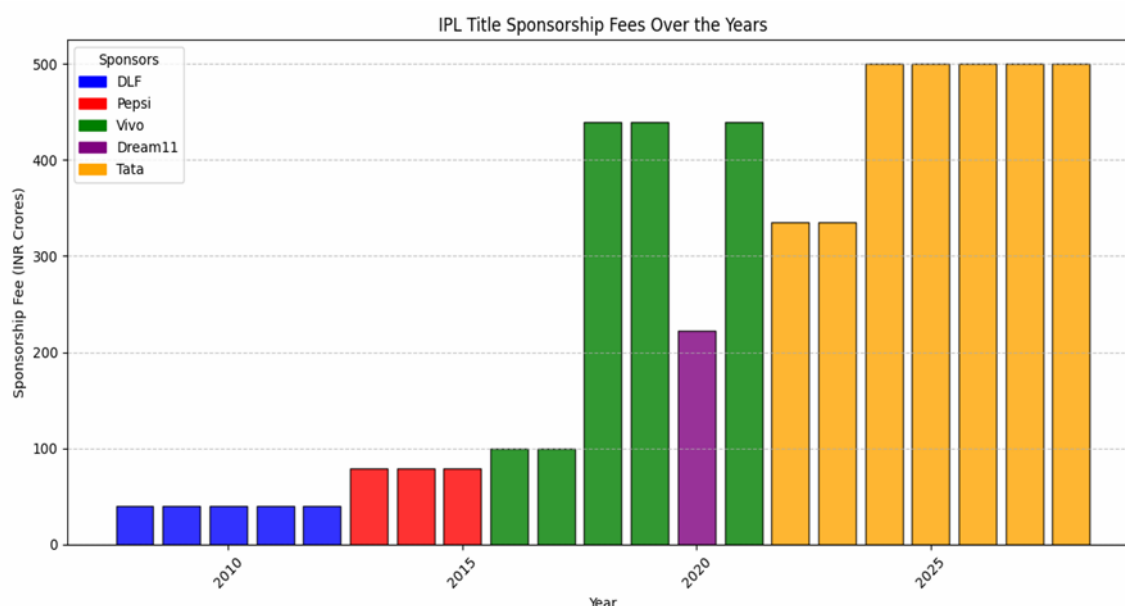
Advertising and Sponsorship:

The Indian Premier League (IPL) has experienced significant growth in advertising revenue since its inception, rising from ₹350 crore in 2008 to an estimated ₹6,000-7,000 crore in 2025, driven by increasing TV and digital ad rates, premium sponsorship deals, and expanding viewership. Notable milestones include ₹1,000 crore in 2015, ₹2,000+ crore in 2018, ₹4,000-4,500 crore in 2022-23, and a projected ₹4,500 crore from TV & digital alone in 2025. These figures underscore IPL's dominance as one of the most commercially lucrative sporting leagues globally.

- In the 2008 edition of the IPL, Sony earned around ₹350 crore in advertising revenue. For the second season of the tournament, the broadcaster signed deals with global giants such as Coca-Cola, Airtel Digital, and Havells India.
- According to the report, the analysis by D&P pointed out that the title and associate sponsorship rights also brought in Rs 36 crore and Rs 48 crore, respectively. (Dnp-Web-Admin, 2023)
- As the second season of the Indian Premier League approached its climax, advertising rates for the two semi-finals and the final surged significantly, driven by the expectation of large viewership. Multi Screen Media (MSM), the official broadcaster of the tournament in India, charged ₹10 lakh for ten-second ad spots during the last three matches. This represented a nearly 150% premium over the standard IPL advertising rates. When the tournament began, ten-second ad spots were available for ₹3-4 lakh. (Mulchandani, 2009)
- According to an article in the Economic Times, the advertising ecosystem of the Indian Premier League 2025 is projected to generate between ₹6,000 - ₹7,000 crore in revenue. This includes earnings from television and digital advertising, team sponsorships, and on-ground advertisements. (Farooqui, 2025)
- Additionally, media experts predicted that the 10 IPL franchises will collectively generate around ₹1,300 crore from team sponsorships. Leading teams such as Mumbai Indians, Chennai Super Kings, Gujarat Titans, and Royal Challengers Bengaluru are expected to secure sponsorship revenues ranging between ₹100 crore and ₹150 crore each. (Farooqui, 2025)
- For the 2025 season, the broadcaster set a revenue target of ₹4,500 crore, marking an increase from the estimated ₹4,000 crore earned through TV and digital platforms in the previous year. To achieve this goal, the company secured 12 sponsors across various industry sectors. (Patel, 2025)
- IPL teams also see frequent sponsor turnover, especially in lower-tier deals that focus solely on digital assets. Many brands opt for these rights as part of short-term, season-long awareness campaigns.
- Since the IPL's inception in 2008, the title sponsorship rights have changed hands six times. Pepsi initially signed a five-year deal but exited after three years in 2015. Vivo then took over in 2018 with a five-year agreement, but it was cut short after two seasons. Vivo later returned in 2021 on a three-year deal, which ended prematurely after a year, including an early termination fee.
- In 2023, the league earned \$140.4 million from 10 sponsors. In 2024, the IPL's central sponsorship portfolio was valued at \$99.4 million, positioning it just below the English Premier League, with additional sponsorship inventory still available for sale. (Cronin & Cronin, 2025)
- In 2022, companies like Swiggy Instamart, Aramco, Visit Saudi Arabia, and Upstox joined the IPL's central sponsorship portfolio mid-cycle. However, none of these brands carried over into the new commercial cycle in 2024. But India remains a key priority for Saudi Arabia, and it is likely that brands such as Aramco will return to sponsoring the cricket league at some point. (Cronin & Cronin, 2025)
- Some brands choose multi-team sponsorship over central sponsorship for consistent visibility and targeted regional reach. This strategy is popular among established brands in traditional industries. Newer brands have

also adopted this approach. After losing central sponsorship, Dream11 signed eight team deals, including four front-of-shirt sponsorships totalling \$9.6 million per year. Acko, which had six deals in 2022, scaled down to three in 2024 for \$1.4 million annually. (Cronin & Cronin, 2025)

- BKT Tires sponsors six teams for \$5.4 million per year, while Astral Pipes has deals with five teams worth \$2.6 million annually. Jio is the only brand sponsoring all ten teams, securing sleeve placements for \$7.2 million annually. (Cronin & Cronin, 2025)
- The IPL title sponsorship fees have seen a significant upward trend over the years, reflecting the league's growing commercial value. From 2008 to 2012, DLF held the title sponsorship at INR 40 crores per year, followed by Pepsi from 2013 to 2015, nearly doubling the fee to INR 79.4 crores. (Mundra, 2025)
- Vivo entered in 2016, further raising the stakes to INR 100 crores, before making a massive leap to INR 439.8 crores per year from 2018 onwards. (Mundra, 2025)
- Dream11 briefly took over in 2020 with INR 222 crores, after which Tata acquired the rights from 2022 for 335 crores, escalating to INR 500 crores annually from 2024 onwards. (Mundra, 2025)



This sharp increase highlights IPL's rising brand value and its attractiveness to corporate sponsors. [6]

Employment and Ancillary:

The Indian Premier League (IPL) has significantly influenced employment and various ancillary industries in India, contributing to economic growth in multiple sectors. The league provides jobs to players, coaching staff, ground personnel, security staff, and event organisers. The tournament also stimulates employment in sectors such as advertising, marketing, media, event management, tourism, hospitality, logistics, and transportation.

- “Since its inception in 2008, the IPL has left an indelible mark on the Indian economy. Drawing millions of cricket enthusiasts from around the world. The tournament has generated a surge in job opportunities, particularly within the hospitality and entertainment sectors.” Gupta contends.
- A study by the Indian Institute of Management Bangalore found that the IPL created over 4 million jobs in 2019. These jobs ranged from roles in sports management and media to entry-level positions in logistics and hospitality. (Arasu, 2024)
- Hotels, restaurants, travel agencies, tour operators, and other tourism-related businesses experience increased demand, leading to the creation of seasonal jobs to cater to the needs of IPL tourists.
- IPL leads to an increase in job demand for broadcasting, commentary, social media, and digital media. Different franchises hire social media managers and content creators to record and post content on various social media platforms.
- During the IPL season, there is a significant increase in the sales of team merchandise, official gear, and other cricket-related products. This opens up job opportunities in sales and merchandising, including roles in retail,

e-commerce, marketing, promotions, and licensing. Businesses take advantage of the IPL craze to drive sales and boost revenue, leading to more employment in these sectors.

- With high-profile matches and international players in the IPL, security plays a vital role. Stadiums, teams, and organisers must ensure the safety of players, officials, and fans. This creates demand for security personnel, logistics coordinators, and other related roles to handle security arrangements throughout the IPL season.
- Restaurants, pubs, bars, and entertainment venues see a surge in visitors as fans come together to watch matches and celebrate their team's victories. This boosts employment in the hospitality and entertainment sectors, creating opportunities in food and beverage services, customer service, event management, and promotions.
- The success of the IPL has significantly influenced start-ups, driven innovation and encouraging entrepreneurship. These growing ventures not only generate job opportunities but also bring fresh ideas and advanced technologies into the market. The league provides a powerful platform for start-ups to promote their products and services, helping them gain visibility and expand. Several start-ups, such as My11 Circle, Dream11, ACKO, and Six5Six, have thrived in this dynamic ecosystem created by the IPL.

The table below is taken from the article "How IPL Contributes to India's GDP Growth: A Deep Dive into the Economic Impact", MarketingStuff.in (Arasu, 2024)

Sector	IPL-related Jobs Created
Sports Management and Operations	32,000
Media and Broadcasting	25,000
Hospitality and Tourism	45,000
Logistics and Event Management	18,000
Ancillary Services	35,000

Small Businesses (Merchandising, food and beverage):

The IPL has a significant impact on small businesses, especially through the increased demand for merchandise. Local shop owners selling team jerseys, cricket accessories, and fan collectables experience a rise in sales, particularly in cities where matches are held. Small manufacturers producing flags, posters, and banners also benefit, receiving more orders and earning a seasonal yet considerable boost in revenue.

Merchandising-

- The IPL has catalysed the growth of India's sports merchandise market, which was valued at \$1 billion in 2023, with the league contributing nearly 40% of the revenue. This surge is driven by fans purchasing team jerseys, caps, and memorabilia, benefiting small-scale manufacturers and local retailers alike. (*Our Business Ladder*, 2024)
- Influencers and celebrities promoting team jerseys and accessories drive sales through social media platforms. Digital campaigns and exclusive online drops create hype around IPL-themed collections.
- Smaller cities, including those in Tier 2 and Tier 3 categories, have increasingly embraced IPL merchandise, highlighting the league's growing influence. Online shopping platforms like Amazon and Myntra saw a 25% rise in IPL-themed product sales during the 2024 season. (*Our Business Ladder*, 2024)
- Kiosks and stores near stadiums experience high demand for match-day purchases, including apparel and souvenirs. Local street vendors benefit from selling unofficial but popular IPL-themed items such as scarves, wristbands, and flags. Fans in smaller cities often prefer affordable alternatives over official merchandise.
- However, there are some problems which these small businesses have to face because in Tier 1 cities, the market is flooded with unofficial and low-quality replicas that compete with official merchandise, which the fans prefer to buy. The sales of such goods peak during the season but drop significantly after the tournament's completion.

Food and Beverage Industry-

- Food and beverage sales at IPL venues present a highly profitable opportunity. According to a Deloitte report, each IPL match brings in around \$100,000 in F&B revenue per stadium. Fans typically purchase quick snacks, drinks, and local delicacies. (*Our Business Ladder*, 2024)
- The popularity of digital platforms has also contributed to this trend, with food delivery apps like Swiggy and Zomato experiencing a 40-50% surge in orders during IPL matches. In 2024, Swiggy delivered over 5 million orders throughout the season, with biryani and pizza emerging as top choices among fans. (*Our Business Ladder*, 2024)
- The suspension of the IPL in 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic adversely affected small businesses. Food delivery platforms experienced a decline in orders, and merchandise sales plummeted, highlighting the league's integral role in sustaining these sectors.
- Swiggy stated that the IPL played a major role in helping food delivery businesses recover 80-85% of their pre-COVID costs, with over 100 million orders placed through the app during the season. Zomato's Founder and CEO mentioned that food delivery was one of the safest recreational activities for customers during the pandemic. However, the suspension of the IPL by the BCCI led to a decline in online orders, causing significant losses for food delivery businesses. (*Mize*, 2021)

The IPL has significantly boosted India's sports merchandising industry, creating opportunities for brands, retailers, and small businesses. With the rise of e-commerce and digital marketing, IPL merchandise continues to expand its reach, further strengthening the economic impact of the league.

Digital Economy and Technology

The IPL boasts a vast digital presence, drawing millions of viewers across social media and online streaming platforms. This provides businesses with exceptional opportunities for content marketing and digital advertising, significantly enhancing their reach and audience engagement. It has also significantly influenced various other facets of India's digital economy, notably in the realms of fantasy sports platforms, online ticketing, sports analytics, AI-driven engagement, and the burgeoning sports betting market.

Digital Content and Viewership-

- The 2024 IPL season attracted over 500 million unique viewers, with a substantial portion tuning in via digital platforms, reflecting the shift from traditional television to online streaming. Reliance is leveraging neuroscience studies, including brain mapping, to demonstrate higher engagement rates for its streaming ads, aiming to attract small business advertisers. (*Reuters*, 2025)
- In 2020, the IPL contributed approximately \$6.7 billion to India's economy, with a significant portion stemming from digital content distribution and e-commerce.
- India's digital economy is expanding at twice the rate of its overall economy and is projected to account for 20% of the GDP by 2029, with events like the IPL playing a pivotal role in this growth. (*ET Bureau*, 2025)
- There's been a surge in demand for professionals skilled in digital content creation, social media management, and online marketing. The need for robust streaming services has led to investments in IT infrastructure, generating employment in tech development and maintenance.

Sports Betting and Fantasy Cricket-

- In 2021, the Law Commission of India recommended legalising regulated betting to curb illegal activities and boost tax revenues, though comprehensive legislation is still pending.
- Many countries around the world have legalised sports betting, either fully or with certain restrictions. The United Kingdom, for example, has a well-regulated gambling industry that plays a major role in its economy. Examining the regulatory models of such nations can provide valuable insights into possible approaches India could adopt.
- The legality of sports betting in India is primarily governed by the Public Gambling Act of 1867, a colonial-era law that does not explicitly address online betting or betting on sports. This has led to a complex and evolving legal environment, with discussions ongoing about potential regulation to address modern gambling practices. However, traditional sports betting remains largely illegal, leading to debates on regulation and potential revenue generation. (*Legality of Sports Betting in India*, n.d.)
- India's fantasy sports market was valued at ₹34,600 crore in 2021 and is anticipated to grow at a CAGR of 32% between 2022 and 2032. (*India Fantasy Sports Market Size, Statistics, Growth Trend Analysis, and Forecast Report 2022-2032*, n.d.)

- Dream11, a prominent platform, has experienced substantial growth, adding approximately 70-80 million users over the past two years, reaching a total of 235 million users. (*Business Today Desk, 2025*)
- The sports betting market in India was valued at USD 6.91 billion in 2024 and is projected to reach USD 16.83 billion by 2033, exhibiting a CAGR of 7.1%. (*India Sports Betting Market Size, Trends and Forecast 2033, n.d.*)

Sports Analytics-

- The integration of data analytics and AI has transformed team strategies and fan experiences in the IPL.
- Teams utilise advanced analytics for player performance evaluation, strategy development, and injury prevention, leading to more competitive matches.
- AI-driven platforms provide personalised content and interactive experiences, enhancing fan engagement during the IPL season.

V. Discussion And Unique Insights

- The Indian Premier League (IPL) has evolved into a major economic force, significantly contributing to India's GDP, employment, tourism, and media industry. Secondary research highlights its transformation into a global sports brand, comparable to leagues like the English Premier League (EPL) and National Football League (NFL). Its multi-billion-dollar ecosystem thrives on broadcasting rights, sponsorships, ticket sales, and digital media expansion.
- The IPL contributes billions to the Indian economy annually. In 2020, it added \$6.7 billion, with growing foreign direct investment (FDI) from international brands. Its media rights were sold for \$6.2 billion (2023-2027), showcasing its immense commercial appeal. Sponsorship revenues have grown 40% post-pandemic, benefiting brands, franchises, and advertisers alike.
- The league generates both direct and indirect employment, from coaching and team management to hospitality and retail. IPL seasons lead to a 25-30% increase in hotel bookings and restaurant revenues in host cities. Infrastructure improvements, such as stadium upgrades and better transport networks, further boost local economies.
- IPL has driven the rise of digital media, with platforms like JioCinema attracting 500 million viewers through free streaming. Fantasy sports platforms have seen 24% revenue growth, reinforcing IPL's role in India's digital economy. The league's brand value, estimated at \$10.7 billion in 2023, continues to strengthen India's position in the global sports business.
- Beyond its direct economic impact, IPL enhances India's global reputation as a sports and business hub. It serves as a blueprint for other Indian sports leagues and boosts the e-commerce and tech sectors through merchandise sales and streaming. Its role in sports tourism and grassroots cricket development remains an area for deeper exploration.
- While IPL's short-term economic benefits are well-documented, long-term GDP impact and sustainability issues need further study. Its environmental impact, including carbon footprint and resource consumption, requires attention. Additionally, research is needed to assess how IPL revenues trickle down to grassroots cricket and long-term sports development.

VI. Conclusion

- The Indian Premier League (IPL) has emerged as a key driver of economic growth in India, contributing significantly to GDP, employment, tourism, and digital transformation. With billions generated through broadcasting rights, sponsorships, and tourism, IPL has strengthened multiple industries, from media and technology to hospitality and retail. The league has also positioned India as a major player in the global sports economy, attracting foreign investments and expanding the reach of Indian cricket worldwide.
- Beyond its direct financial impact, IPL has fuelled the rise of digital platforms, fantasy sports, and e-commerce, creating a year-round revenue cycle beyond the cricket season. Its successful franchise model serves as a blueprint for other Indian sports leagues, such as the Pro Kabaddi League (PKL) and Indian Super League (ISL), offering a sustainable model for sports-based economic development.
- Looking ahead, IPL can inspire the growth of other sporting events in India, driving continuous economic activity throughout the year. If managed sustainably—with attention to grassroots sports development and environmental concerns—the IPL could set a precedent for how sports can fuel long-term economic growth and solidify India's position as a global sports and business hub.

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