

## Sports Marketing - IPL's Perspective

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**Abstract:** The Indian Premier League (IPL) has become a dominant platform for advertising and branding, seamlessly blending sports with commercialization. Since its launch in 2008, IPL has transformed cricket into a high-energy entertainment spectacle, attracting global brands eager to leverage its massive viewership. The tournament's short format, prime-time scheduling, and broad demographic appeal have made it a lucrative opportunity for companies like Tata, Vodafone, and Dream11 and many others to enhance brand visibility through innovative product placements and collaborations. The IPL has also contributed significantly to the growth of India's sports culture and economy, offering financial support to athletes and sports associations. Ultimately, the IPL has reshaped sports marketing, becoming a key vehicle for brand awareness and consumer engagement in India. The research aims to provide a detailed overview of sports league business in terms of IPL in India.

**Keywords:** IPL, Sports Marketing, Branding, Brand Experience, Promotion, Crickertainment, Sponsorship, Audience Engagement.

### Introduction

#### 1.1 Sports Marketing

Sports' marketing is an ongoing process that emphasises on the promotion of sports events & teams likewise as the promotion of other products & services with the assistance of sporting events & sports groups. It's a service during which a physical product or a brand is being promoted.

Individuals are exposed to sports selling virtually all over, whether watching sports programs or whereas reading a newspaper or magazine or once merely walking down the road and searching through the advertisements and billboards.

It primarily focuses on the business of sports & offers a spread of employment opportunities. Sports trade is one among the foremost profitable industries nowadays, gaining popularity all across the world.

“Sports marketing is using sports to market products”. (Kaser and Oelkers, 2005)

#### Evolution of Sports Marketing

Even though sports marketing is previously used in sports, particularly in sports sponsorship and sports advertising, now the brand promotes this in sports such as Indian premier league, major baseball leagues etc. (Gardner, 1985)

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Sports marketing has taken a brand new form, shifting from the arena of promoting solely the large brands to an increasingly open and hyper-connected field. Earlier it had been sort of a one way communication between brands and fans currently being replaced by effective communication between brands, teams, players and fans. Earlier fans accustomed to broadcasting the sport and currently it's sort of a 24 /7 thing broadcasting everything LIVE (on-spot) and social media has ease the case as currently the fans will have interaction simply and watch as per their convenience.

Contemporary Sports Marketing is all about human connections which audiences or fans crave for. Marketing of sports will depend on the way Athletes will leave a mark. Fans will get attracted to those products whose content are advertised on different social media or advertising platforms by the athletes.

“Athlete as an influencer” will keep on growing in the near future, which will reflect the authenticity and overall trend of excitement, heartbreak, drama and glory.

### Indian Premier League (IPL)

The Indian Premier League (IPL) is a skilled Twenty20 cricket league in India sometimes contested between March and May of each year by Ten teams representing Ten completely different cities or states in India. The league was created by the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) in 2007. The IPL has an exclusive window in ICC Future Tours Programme. The IPL is the most-attended cricket league within the world. In 2010, the IPL became the primary sporting event within the world to be broadcast on YouTube. There are 17 seasons of the IPL tournament as of 2024. This time IPL title holders are the Kolkata Knight Riders, who won the 2024 season. According to Duff & Phelps' IPL Brand Valuation Report 2019, the overall IPL ecosystem value increased from USD 6.3 billion in 2018 to USD 6.8 billion in 2019—a growth of 7% after accounting for currency fluctuations, and 13.5% in INR terms, reaching INR 47,500 crores. This growth underlines the IPL's sustained ability to attract advertisers, broadcasters, and sponsors, despite economic uncertainties and changing market dynamics (Duff & Phelps, 2019).

### IPL: Birth of Cricketainment

The Indian Premier League (IPL) is a perfect blend of cricket and entertainment, creating a unique experience for fans worldwide. One of the key ways IPL connects cricket with entertainment is through its **celebrity involvement**. Bollywood stars, musicians, and influencers often own teams, perform during matches, and engage with fans on social media, making the league more glamorous and appealing to a wider audience. This fusion of cricket and entertainment attracts viewers who might not be traditional sports enthusiasts but are drawn by the star power associated with the league. **Spectacular opening ceremonies** featuring renowned artists, dancers, and musical performances add a festive atmosphere, setting the stage for an exciting tournament.

The digital world further strengthens the connection between cricket and entertainment. Engaging social media campaigns, behind-the-scenes content, and interactive fan contests keep audiences entertained beyond the game. Augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR)

technologies also provide fans with an enhanced viewing experience, merging cricket with cutting-edge entertainment. Lastly, collaborations with brands and influencers through advertisements, promotions, and creative storytelling ensure the league remains in the entertainment spotlight throughout the season.

IPL is a professional Twenty 20 cricket league created and promoted by the BCCI and backed by the International Cricket Council (ICC), an international governing body of cricket. The BCCI was instrumental in setting up a governing council to run the IPL as a virtual company. The IPL comprises a governing council that will have a five-year term and will run, operate and manage the league independently of the BCCI President I.S. Bindra, Vice-Presidents Rajiv Shukla, Chirayu Amin and Lalit Modi, Arun Jatiley, and former cricketers Mansur Ali Khan, Sunil Gavaskar and Ravi Shastri. For a start, domestic Twenty20 leagues would be conducted by the cricket boards of Australia, South Africa and England. The Indian Premier League also introduced the concept of Icon player. An icon player is a player who can only play for his home city in the competition. These icon players don't have to go through bidding. These icon players have an advantage that they are guaranteed to get paid at least 15% more than the next top earner in their team. Maurya, A. (2009)

**Four Domains of sports marketing**

Fullerton, S., & Merz, G. R. (2008) propose the four domains of marketing to be:

- a) Theme based strategies
- b) Product based strategies
- c) Alignment based strategies and
- d) Sports-based strategies

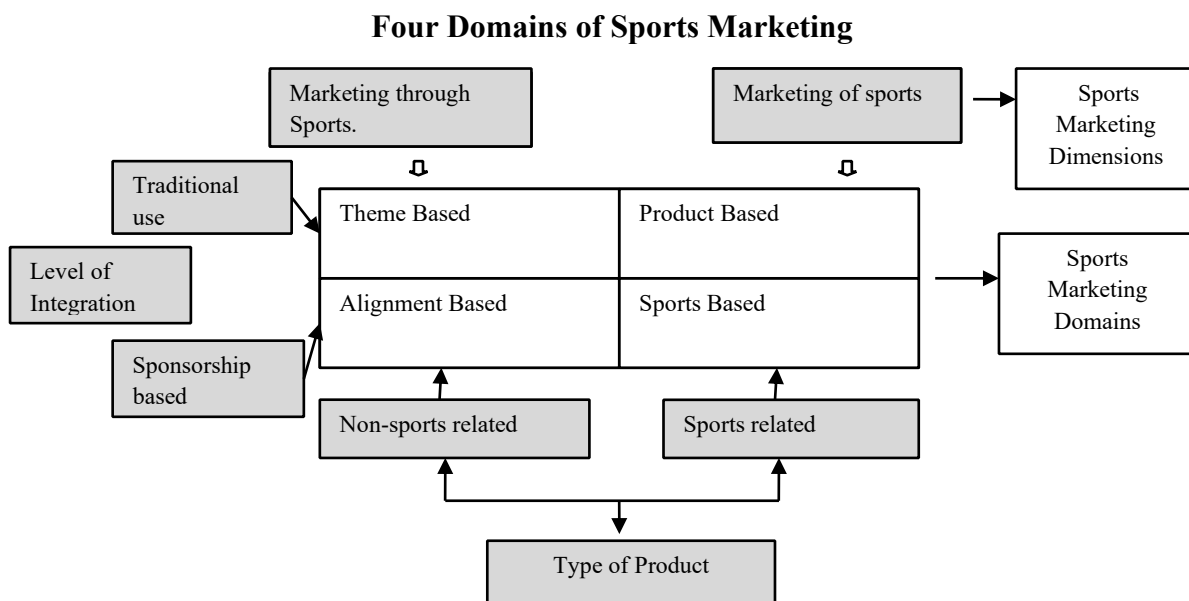


Fig. 1

Merz, Russ. (2008)

Fig 1 explains about four domains of Sports Marketing

i. Theme based strategies – Theme-based strategies is the use of traditional marketing strategies that incorporate a sports theme into the marketing program for non sports products. The marketer might opt to use sports-related information.

In keeping with Merz, Russ. (2008), theme-based strategies are often outlined because of the use of traditional marketing ways that incorporate a sports team into the promoting program for non-sports products. Since the brands market their product through sports, it's referred to as 'Marketing through sports', promoting through sports may be a dimension of sports promoting that executes a theme based strategy. Several marketers use sports events as platforms to charm shoppers to sell an outsized kind of product. In keeping with (Gray & McEvoy, 2005), most of those products have either little or no relationship in any respect with sports. From the promotional aspect of things, some organizations market sport products to a selected client phase whereas others market a variety of non-sports products. For instance, brands purchase advertising areas in stadiums throughout widespread sporting events like Indian premier league to show the brand's name and emblem on billboards and numerous banners within the stadium. The brands conjointly purchase air time on TV throughout the games that generate the foremost range of viewers. This proves to be dearly-won for brands however one expense that they're willing to create for sake of promoting the brand to the several audience needed. The promotion through sports and completely different sports clubs involve support, company events and boxes, authorized merchandise, names and pictures conjointly called "endorsement", advertising through broadcasters, promoting games/players/club/league or developing business opportunities. Even non-sports entities and products associate themselves with sport entities for the aim of selling.

ii. Product based strategies – Product based strategies refer to business approaches that focus on developing, designing, and delivering products that meet specific customer needs, create value, and offer a competitive advantage.

Product based strategies are another key domain of sports marketing. Once completely different sports product are marketed using traditional sports promoting ways once there's no regard to the game generally, it's called product primarily based ways. If a vendor of athletic shoes reduces the costs of the shoes as an incentive for retailers, this may be thought of as a product primarily based strategy in spite of being freelance from the sports entity since it's a sports connected product. Since sports generally is being marketed in such a way in such cases, it's referred to as 'Marketing of sport' that is another dimension of sports promotion. It's the promotion of a selected sport or a sporting event itself. Its objective is to draw in additional eyeballs to the game and gain additional viewership at sporting events. It primarily suggests that to advertise the game to the general public so as to form additional awareness and interest to those that don't realize it or have less information of the game generally. For example, cricket matches were recently contested within the U.S. of America where the game of cricket isn't extremely popular. The target of this tournament was to mix the incomparable best players of all groups spanning the last 20 years and pool the players into completely different groups. In keeping with ESPN Cricinfo, (2015), this league termed as "Cricket All-Stars" attracted over

60,000 fans to the 3 games held in New York, Houston, and Los Angeles. The target of the International Cricket Council to ‘globalize’ the game of cricket, which happens to be one amongst the foremost widespread sports within the world minus American and Europe.

iii. Alignment based Strategies– Alignment based strategies are approaches that ensure all organizational activities, resources, and goals are synchronized and directed toward achieving a unified vision or objective. These strategies emphasize internal processes, external market demands, and overall business objectives to enhance efficiency and maximize outcomes across the organization.

Once marketers of non-sports products align themselves with sports entities via any form of support like traditional sponsorships, endorsements, licensing agreements and venue naming rights; it’s called an alignment based strategy. For instance, McDonald’s struck a deal to sponsor the Olympics so as to sell additional nutrition as a result of many individuals watching the favored Olympic Games and it will increase the attention of the McDonald’s brand. (Fullerton, 2015)As the marketplace for support gets additional competition on a worldwide basis, all sports squares measure keen on securing the most important support deals with large brands. Since these corporations invest a great deal of cash within the name of support, they clearly expect the rewards to be even as huge if not more. Reports are created by corporations currently so as to live the effectiveness of associating their name with a sports entity. (ESPN Cricinfo, 2015)

iv. Sports based Strategies- Sports based strategies involve leveraging sports as a platform to achieve business, marketing, or organizational objectives. These strategies utilize the popularity and engagement aspects of sports to enhance brand visibility, foster customer loyalty, and create meaningful connections with target audiences. They can include sponsorships, partnerships, athlete endorsements, and sports-related events to align business goals with the passion and influence of sports.

Once sports brands sponsor different sports entities it’s classified beneath sports-based ways and it’s the ultimate domain of sports promoting. This makes the foremost sense as a result of associating sports product to sport entities for promoting functions ends up in a win-win state of affairs for everybody concerned. For instance, Reebok secured a venue naming support for a football game construction in England. This can be a sports brand associating itself to a different sports entity. The fans who come back to the soccer to look at the match continually have the name of Reebok in their minds because it is the name of the stadium. This creates a whole identity and will increase the whole awareness of Reebok; over ever before. Even endorsement partnerships are shaped between numerous sports brands and sports athletes, clubs and other sports entities. For instance, Nike sponsored widespread athletes like Michael Jordan, Cristiano Ronaldo and Tiger Woods at totally different times of its existence over the last thirty years.(Fullerton, 2015)

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

The findings from the literature are presented below:

Charles(1956) talks about how various groups of consumers see or perceive a product, brand, or model. He states that there is a psychological effect of how consumers are motivated and behave in terms of their perceptions of the product and the manufacturer. New understanding of perception has enormous implications for advertising, promotion and sales effort. The perception aspects of this research provide an advertiser with the knowledge of the features of the product that are seen as important, the good features they do not see in the product, the features they see as poor and unsatisfactory. With similar thoughts Kattunga, R. S. (2023) states that marketing is crucial in creating urgency and importance around products. It highlights how effective marketing can motivate consumers to view products as essential, which is particularly relevant in sports marketing. This vast audience provides brands a unique platform to promote their products, making sports marketing an increasingly effective strategy. Chakravarti, P. (2013) focuses on the key themes like branding, advertising, sponsorship, sports marketing, goodwill and product placement. To explore the market of sports, different types of marketing initiatives are undertaken by various kinds of businesses.

The paper ‘Globalization of Sports Beyond the Boundaries?’ where Maguire, J. (2011) states the interdependencies that embed sport in global processes, and capture, to varying degrees of success, the study of sport reveals patterns of significance for those seeking to understand globalization. The development of the t20 version of the game and the franchise model adopted by the IPL, but also by the concurrent tele mediatization of cricket.

Gupta, A. (2023), States that The Indian Premier League (IPL) has become a popular Twenty20 cricket tournament in emerging economies like India. This has led marketing executives to believe that the IPL can also be used to introduce new products and services, build brand awareness and image, and ultimately enhance brand equity on a larger scale. The tournament is already being branded as ‘the hottest athletic event’ by Forbes magazine with a brand value worth \$3 Billion in 2011. Mitra, S. (2010) emphasises the role of sports sponsorship in enhancing brand awareness and image. This suggests that sponsorships are a critical component of sports marketing. It indicates that sports marketing encompasses various methods, including endorsements, sponsorships, and event activations. These methods allow brands to connect with consumers on an emotional level, leveraging the loyalty associated with sports teams and athletes.

Kedar, M. S. (2015) states that these provincial teams have developed into distinct brands. It notes the use of various branding strategies, especially sensory branding, to create unique identities for each team. This branding approach is crucial for differentiating teams in a competitive market. Franchises utilize unique logos, color schemes, and uniforms to create a strong visual identity. This helps fans easily recognize their teams and fosters a sense of belonging. The use of vibrant colors and appealing designs is crucial in attracting attention and creating a memorable brand image.

Whereas, Naik, A. Y., & Gupta, A. (2013) outlines that how previous frameworks on brand equity in team sports had heavily relied on (Aaker, 1991) or (Keller, 1993) models and had also restricted themselves not taking a holistic view of responsibility of teams’ management towards fans and society in order to attract and retain loyal fans. Although, (Keller, 2001)

argued via his brand-equity pyramid the importance of holistic view of brand salience, brand performance, brand imagery, judgments, and customer feelings, coupled with brand resonance, for leveraging long-term loyalty of the customers. In the light of the above mentioned strengths, this study aims at applying (Keller, 2001)customer based brand-equity pyramid framework in the context of sports marketing for building or enhancing brand-equity of sport teams.

Sinha, J., I., Chitturi, R., & Contractor, S. H. (2022) says that The IPL has successfully blended cricket with Bollywood and entertainment, creating a unique spectacle that appeals to diverse demographics. It has attracted substantial investments and sponsorships, enhancing its marketability and reach. Mandal, S. (2022) however says that IPL opens avenues for exploring various marketing dimensions within the context of the Indian Premier League (IPL). The IPL is a prime example of how effective marketing strategies can significantly enhance brand visibility and consumer engagement. Research indicates that the league employs a mix of traditional and digital marketing techniques, including celebrity endorsements and social media campaigns, to attract a diverse audience. This dual approach not only boosts ticket sales and merchandise but also fosters a strong emotional connection with fans, which is crucial in sports marketing.

Ramani, S. (2008) highlights the rise of a bonanza in the cricketing world in the form of IPL, the glitz, glamour, entertainment, and business associated with it. The author points that players have now been turned into a mere commodity based on their popularity instead of their true cricketing records.

Kapoor, S., Lal, P., & Yadav, A. (2021) says the results revealed that two IPL teams, Rajasthan Royals and Royal Challengers Bangalore, were sponsored by major tobacco brands. Additionally, violations were noted where a smokeless tobacco company promoted its products on official telecast websites and television channels. This underscores the ongoing challenges in regulating tobacco sponsorships in sports. The paper concludes that despite the existing legal framework, tobacco sponsorships were widespread during IPL-13. The authors advocate for stronger exclusion criteria by international cricket authorities and national associations to ensure compliance with tobacco control laws and to promote a tobacco-free environment in cricket. The findings also relate to Article 13 of the WHO's Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO-FCTC), emphasising the need for global standards in tobacco advertising regulations, particularly in sports that attract large audiences like cricket.

The IPL's brand value reached approximately \$6.7 billion by 2019, showcasing its financial prowess. The league recorded a staggering viewership of 462 million in 2019, reflecting its widespread appeal. But Rana, A. S., & Bagchi, A. (2020) had a different viewpoint despite its success, some critics argue that the IPL's commercialization has negatively impacted traditional formats like Test cricket, raising concerns about the long-term sustainability of the sport.

The sponsorship evolution of the Indian Premier League (IPL) highlights its growing global appeal and economic significance. The Tata Group's extension of its title sponsorship from 2024 to 2028 for INR 2500 crore marks a historic milestone, being the highest-ever sponsorship amount in the league's history. This 13.7% increase over Vivo's previous sponsorship deal

underlines the IPL's escalating brand value and its ability to attract substantial investments from renowned corporations. The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) regards this partnership as a testament to IPL's status as a premier sporting event with international impact. Notably, the Tata Group's sustained involvement since replacing Vivo in 2022, following geopolitical tensions, reflects its commitment to fostering sports and entertainment in India. This record-breaking collaboration symbolizes growth, innovation, and excellence, further cementing IPL's position as a global cricketing and commercial powerhouse. Staff, E. (2024, January 20)

### Gap Identification

While prior studies emphasize the financial success, branding strategies, and sponsorship dynamics of the IPL, limited attention has been given to the increased business support received by IPL over the years.

The IPL targets a broad demographic, but the paper does not detail how brands or the league itself customize their strategy.

### Objective

The primary objective of this research paper is to explore the dynamics of sports marketing within the context of the Indian Premier League (IPL), emphasizing its role as a transformative platform in the global sports and entertainment industry. The paper seeks to examine how IPL has successfully integrated branding, sponsorships, and audience engagement to create a business model. Success of IPL in regards to viewership & sponsorship over the years.

### Methodology

This research paper is made with a descriptive approach to analyze the sports marketing dynamics of the Indian Premier League (IPL).

### Research Design

This study utilizes a **descriptive research design** to explore sports marketing strategies within the Indian Premier League (IPL). The IPL, known for its unique blend of cricket and entertainment, provides an ideal case to analyze the effectiveness of sponsorships, advertisements, digital marketing, and fan engagement initiatives.

The research relies on secondary data sources, including IPL marketing reports, industry publications, advertisements, and digital campaigns. By systematically analyzing these resources, the study examines how marketing strategies are designed and implemented to enhance brand visibility, attract audiences, and generate revenue.

This analysis offers actionable insights for marketers and stakeholders in sports marketing, helping them understand the impact of IPL's promotional efforts and their broader implications for the industry.

### Data Collection Method

### Sampling Techniques



This study does not involve the collection of data from a sample population. Instead, the research relied on a **secondary data analysis**. The focus was on analyzing all publicly available data related to Sports Marketing and IPL.

### Secondary Data:

For the purpose of this paper, review of reports, articles, and IPL statistics from reputable sources is conducted. Data from platforms like BCCI reports and market research firms supplement the study.

### Data Analysis

Fan involvement is a strength of the Indian Premier League (IPL), the most valuable cricket league in the world, with a brand valuation of \$8.4 billion in 2023.(Kumar, 2024b)

Advertisers pay high premiums to feature during the league matches. The league's ad revenue has grown three-fold in the last five years.

How IPL advertising rates have changed:

YEAR	TV AD RATE PER 10 SECOND	DIGITAL AD RATE PER CPM	TV AD REVENUE
2019	Rs.12.5 lakh	Rs.120	Rs.2100 crore
2020	Rs.12.6-12.7 lakh	Rs.180	Rs.3000 crore
2021	Rs.14 lakh	Rs.250	Rs.3500 crore
2022	Rs.15-18 lakh	Rs.199-277	Rs. 4300 crore

Table 1

(Story in Charts | the Rise of IPL to the World's Second Most Valuable Sports League, 2022)

We can see how from 2019 to 2021, there was a relatively steady growth in TV ad rates, with a sharper increase in 2022. The range of ₹15–18 lakh in 2022 suggests a premium was charged for prime-time slots or key matches, reflecting heightened demand and competition. Digital ad rates saw a sharper percentage increase compared to TV ad rates, reflecting the shift toward digital platforms. From ₹120 in 2019 to a peak of ₹250 in 2021, representing a 108% rise. We can see Increased reliance on streaming platforms for live sports, higher engagement rates on digital platforms with interactive and targeted ads and rise in mobile and internet penetration in India. Revenue has nearly doubled from 2019 to 2022, showcasing the growing investment by advertisers in IPL. The substantial jump in revenue despite minimal changes in TV ad rates suggests higher ad volume and increased match viewership during lockdowns. Digital ad rates grew faster in percentage terms than TV ad rates, highlighting the shift in consumer behavior toward streaming platforms. However, TV ad revenue remains dominant due to higher ad rates and broader reach.

### Comparison of IPL Viewership Trends

IPL Viewing Avenue	2021(in %)	2022(in %)	2023(in %)
JioCinema & TV	57	17	67
TV	70	70	55
Disney+Hotstar	57	67	31
Mobile apps of DTH Players	26	14	27
Social Media	26	25	24
Websites/Apps to check scores	24	34	23
Newspaper/ Magazines	16	27	16
Cricket Stadium	8	6	12
Airtel Tv	11	26	15
Radio	7	18	5

Table 2

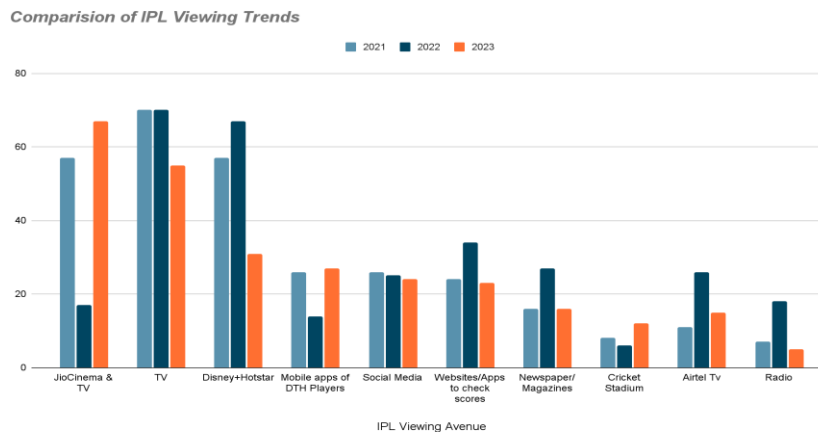


Figure 2

Source: (*Online Flipbook*, n.d.)

The above data shows the comparison of various avenues and how it affected the metrics of IPL from 2021-2023. We can see a clear digital shift to platforms like JioCinema, which overtook traditional TV in 2023. This shift may reflect increasing smartphone penetration, affordable internet access, and the popularity of OTT platforms. We can also see the decline in print media, radio, and score-checking websites/apps which indicates that audiences prefer dynamic, real-time content over static mediums. The analysis demonstrates significant shifts in IPL viewing patterns from 2021 to 2023, emphasizing the growing dominance of digital platforms and the gradual decline of traditional and static mediums. These insights are crucial for broadcasters, advertisers, and organizers to strategize effectively and align with evolving audience preferences.

**Viewership Trends of first five seasons**

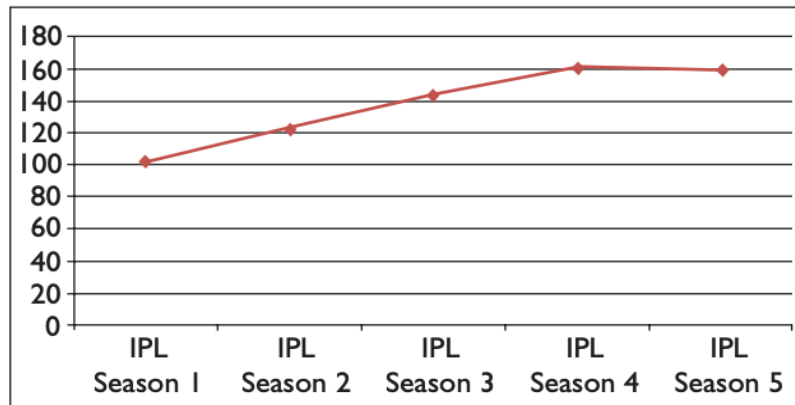


Figure 3

Source:Gupta et al. (2013) <http://dspace.iimk.ac.in/xmlui/bitstream/handle/2259/839/61-72.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>

Curiosity among people to watch IPL was generated by creating buzz marketing among viewers. It was launched in 2008 and accumulated a total viewership of 102.2 million as shown in Figure 2 and the (2012) season of IPL accumulated a cumulative viewership of 159 million viewers (Bhat, 2012). The IPL's intriguing features, like its shorter 20–20 format, involvement of Bollywood and celebrity team owners (Shahrukh Khan, Preity Zinta, and Shilpa Shetty), cricket player auctioning, the presence of multiple celebrity cricketers on a single team, the high number of close finishers in the tournament, and the introduction of the concept of cheerleaders (foreigners) for the first time in Indian sport history, contribute to its larger fan base and viewership than any other form of the game. Indian companies find it impossible to avoid participating in a tournament with such tremendous brand-building potential since marketers see it as a crucial platform for expanding their businesses.

**IPL Teams Revenue in FY23**



Figure 4

Source: Soni, Y. (2024)

Indian Premier League (IPL) serves as a major festival for its passionate followers. This annual Twenty20 cricket tournament features 10 teams representing various Indian cities competing for the championship trophy. As of December 2022, consulting firm D and P Advisory valued the IPL at \$10.9 billion, showcasing its immense economic and cultural impact. Similar to traditional festivals, IPL provides a lucrative opportunity for businesses to thrive. Companies allocate significant marketing budgets to sponsor teams and air advertisements during matches. Both established conglomerates like Reliance and Tata, as well as emerging startups like Dream11 and Cred, invest heavily in IPL sponsorships. Notably, sponsorship revenue accounted for an average of 17% of IPL teams' total revenue in FY23. However, data from teams like Punjab Kings, Sunrisers Hyderabad, and Gujarat Titans were not included in this analysis, as their sponsorship earnings were not disclosed in their annual reports.

### Sponsorship by Startups



Figure 5

Source: Akshit Pushkarna (22 Mar'24)

### 32 Startups High On IPL Frenzy This Year

The IPL 2024 season has witnessed a significant surge in startup participation, with 32 startups joining the sponsorship landscape—a remarkable 68% increase compared to the 19 startups involved last year. This growth highlights the increasing appeal of IPL as a marketing platform for emerging businesses. Dream11, a prominent name in sports sponsorship, has backed 8 startups this season, while its subsidiary OTT platform, FanCode, has supported 6. This active involvement by Dream11 and its affiliates underscores their strategic efforts to leverage IPL's extensive reach for brand building and audience engagement. However, notable startups like The Souled Store, Unacademy, Swiggy Instamart, Open, Jar, Cars24, and Ather Energy have opted out of sponsoring IPL this year. Their absence may indicate a shift in sponsorship strategies or budget allocations, reflecting the evolving priorities of businesses in aligning with

the league. Despite this, the sharp rise in overall startup participation demonstrates IPL's enduring appeal as a platform for brand visibility and consumer engagement.

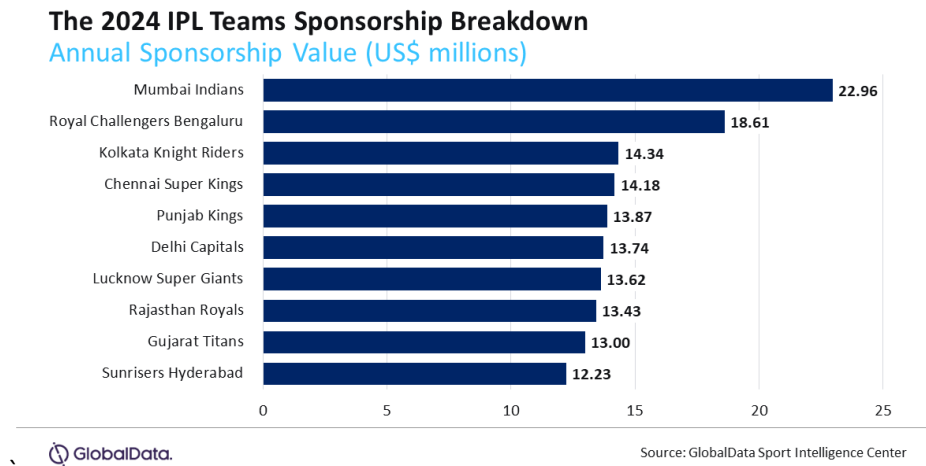


Fig. 6

Source: <https://www.globaldata.com/media/sport/2024-indian-premier-league-generate-99-31-million-sponsorship-revenue-says-globaldata/>

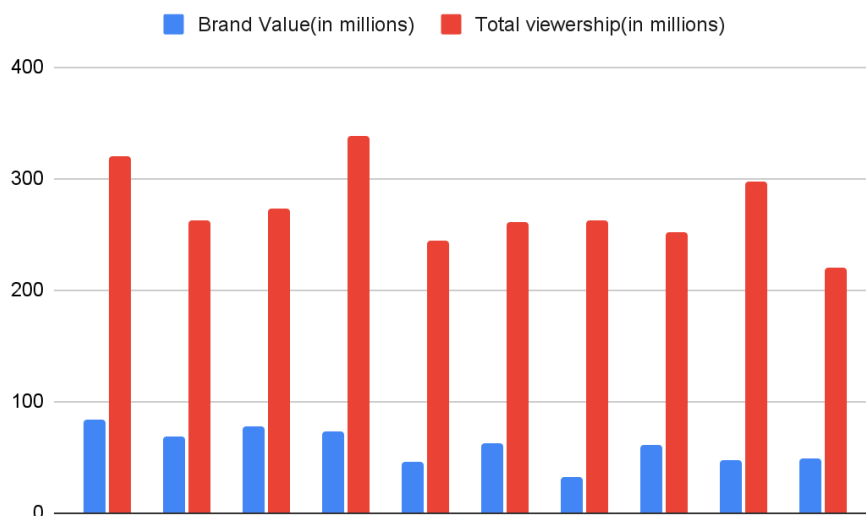
The graph provides an analysis of the annual sponsorship values for IPL teams in 2024, revealing significant disparities. The Mumbai Indians lead with \$22.96 million, indicating a strong brand presence. Following them, Royal Challengers Bengaluru secures \$18.61 million, while teams like Kolkata Knight Riders and Chennai Super Kings fall within the \$13 to \$14 million range. The trend shows a steady decline in sponsorship values, with Sunrisers Hyderabad and Gujarat Titans notably below \$13 million. This data highlights the varying commercial attractiveness of each franchise, influenced by factors such as team performance and market engagement, thereby enhancing our understanding of the sports sponsorship landscape.

### Relation between Brand Value and Total Viewership

The 2023 IPL team data reveals insights into brand value and audience engagement. The Mumbai Indians lead with a brand value of \$83 million and the highest viewership at \$319.92 million, indicating a great fan following. Chennai Super Kings also showed strong engagement with 337.68 million viewers, despite a lower brand value of \$73.6 million. Kolkata Knight Riders maintain a competitive brand value of \$76.8 million and viewership of 272.26 million, reflecting their popularity. Meanwhile, newer teams like Lucknow SuperGiants, with a brand value of \$31.8 million and viewership of 262.54 million, demonstrate effective market entry. However, teams such as Sunrisers Hyderabad face challenges, ranked lowest in both brand value (\$48.8 million) and viewership (220 million), suggesting a need for improved branding and performance strategies. Overall, the data illustrates the correlation between team success, fan engagement, and financial valuation within the IPL.

Year	Teams	Brand Value(in millions)	Total viewership(in millions)
2023	Mumbai Indians	83	319.92
	Royal Challengers Bangalore	68	262
	Kolkata Knight Riders	76.8	272.26
	Chennai Super Kings	73.6	337.68
	Punjab Kings	45	243.6
	Delhi Capitals	62.4	260.1
	Lucknow Super Giants	31.8	262.54
	Rajasthan Royals	61.3	251.7
	Gujrat Titans	47.4	296.92
	Sunrisers Hyderabad	48.8	220
	Correlation		0.5418216381

A correlation of **0.5418** between Brand Value and Total Viewership indicates a **moderate positive relationship** between the two variables. Since the correlation is positive, it suggests that as **Brand Value increases, Total Viewership tends to increase as well** (and vice versa). It implies that while Brand Value and Total Viewership are related, other factors also influence the relationship. Correlation does not imply causation. While the two variables move together, it doesn't necessarily mean one directly causes the other.



## Results & Findings:

The analysis highlights a mutually beneficial relationship between sponsorships and the growth of both the Indian Premier League (IPL) and the associated brands. The findings reveal that sponsorships have played a pivotal role in elevating IPL's valuation. For IPL, these sponsorships not only provide substantial revenue but also enhance its global reputation and entertainment value, making it a premier sporting event. On the other hand, brands have benefited from IPL's massive viewership, which offers unparalleled reach and engagement with a diverse audience. The synergy between IPL's dynamic platform and sponsors' innovative campaigns has resulted in increased brand awareness, improved customer engagement, and higher sales for sponsoring companies. This partnership model demonstrates how IPL has become a powerful vehicle for brands to amplify their market presence while simultaneously fueling the league's commercial success and sustainability.

IPL plays beautifully with advertisements; they always launch their ad campaigns two months before the competition, and each year they come up with a brand-new tagline that generates excitement. We have seen signs of the IPL almost everywhere, right from the huge billboards to the players' T-shirts and behind public buses.

Influencer marketing has been successfully used to promote the league and increase brand awareness. The IPL has collaborated with popular cricket players such as M.S. Dhoni, Virat Kohli, and Rohit Sharma create content and promote the league on their social media channels. The IPL has also partnered with celebrities from other fields, such as Bollywood and music. The IPL has worked with social media influencers who have a large following in the cricket community. These influencers create content about the IPL and promote it to their followers.

Overall, the IPL has effectively used influencer marketing to reach and engage with its target audience, increase brand awareness, and create buzz around the league. The IPL saw a revolution in sports marketing in 2023 when it adopted cutting-edge technology including artificial intelligence (AI), augmented reality (AR), and virtual reality (VR). These innovations in technology were expertly used to improve fan interaction, provide personalised experiences, and enhance the overall atmosphere of the viewing experience. Additionally, by successfully utilising social media tools for marketing, the IPL was able to reach a worldwide audience and build an enormous fan base.

They changed their promotion techniques and started creating hashtags that generated buzz on social media. The league's brand value is growing every year, which means it makes more money and gives sponsors and broadcasters good returns.

The findings from the Day-After Recall survey conducted by Kadence International and Crisp Insights reveal critical insights into brand recall during IPL games. Despite the overwhelming number of brands advertising during matches, individual viewers recall only 3-5 brands on average, highlighting the intense competition for attention among advertisers. Interestingly, mobile screen viewers demonstrated a higher brand recall compared to those watching on larger screens. This indicates a shift in media consumption habits, with viewers increasingly engaging with IPL content on personal devices, likely due to convenience and accessibility. The survey by Sengar, N. S. (2024) which involved telephonic interviews with male and female respondents aged 15-65 across key cities linked to the 10 IPL teams, underscores the significant

influence of IPL on audience perception of brands. By assessing brand recall a day after viewing, the survey provides a clear measure of the immediate impact of IPL advertising on viewers. With approximately 1,500 interviews conducted weekly throughout the IPL, the study reflects a comprehensive and dynamic analysis of audience behavior. The results suggest that while IPL remains a highly effective platform for advertisers, capturing and retaining viewer attention requires strategic and innovative branding efforts tailored to evolving consumption patterns.

**Limitations:**

1. Questionnaire Survey of IPL fans to know the impact on them after seeing the advertisements.

2. Only secondary data taken.

a. Data for attention span and memory recall of fans is missing.

b. Data from brands and sponsors are also required for a better clarity for primary data.

**Research Gap**

Despite extensive studies on the financial, operational, and fan engagement aspects of the IPL, several critical areas remain underexplored.

Firstly, while much attention has been given to the league's brand-building and sponsorship strategies, limited research exists on the long-term impacts of such strategies on smaller market participants, such as niche brands and startups, that associate themselves with the IPL ecosystem. There is little research on the dynamics of how new entrants to the sports marketing domain can sustainably capitalize on such large-scale events, particularly under capital constraints

This paper aims to address these gaps

**CONCLUSION**

The Indian Premier League (IPL) has evolved into a powerful economic and branding phenomenon, offering immense growth opportunities for stakeholders and advertisers alike. Its unique blend of sports, entertainment, and celebrity appeal has made it a global experiential brand, fostering strong emotional connections with fans. The tournament's ability to attract premium sponsorships, drive massive revenues, and engage audiences through innovative marketing strategies highlights its unparalleled success. While controversies have posed challenges, their impact has been short-lived, underscoring IPL's resilience as a mega-brand. IPL's format continues to provide advertisers a targeted, impactful platform to elevate their visibility and connect with a diverse audience.

The Indian Premier League as a tournament has returned method manners since its origination. IPL has a branded industrial offering that gives a high level of gain and growth opportunities to the varied parties and stakeholders who are concerned with the tournament. IPL's business model provides an enormous economic output to the Indian economy. The tournament has seen a shift from international firms like Nike, Adidas, Reebok sponsoring to growth of national brands as official kit suppliers. Similarly, every team jersey has vast potential for prospective advertisers to push their complete through means that of Sports promoting.



The reachability and viewership numbers of the tournament has helped advertisers pay vast sums as expenditure for international connect and complete building advantages through the league. The spectators supporting their several groups or players as symbolic fans has helped within the growth of sports support and complete promotion that overall ends up in an expertise based mostly positive emotional perspective and viewer response. The growing brand value of IPL has its derivation from a wide form of sources keeping in mind the audience vernacular tastes, cricketing gyaan and therefore the Bollywood, celebrity quotient. In Indian Premier League, main sponsors (lead spots on the team jersey) are prized at 100% a lot of premium as compared to different co-sponsors. Supporting the researcher's analysis, it's assessed that on the average, franchises pay around 200th to 30 minutes of their revenues towards promoting, advertising and team promotional activities throughout the two-month long tournament. The tournament has become a definite complete in itself by means that celebrity possession, high cash spends, licensing, partnership and support, fan zone, diary spot and alternative miscellaneous kinds of associations result in a complete by itself. Varied sporting activities throughout the Indian Premier League tournament just like the fan park event, tv advertisements, selling, in-stadium promotional freebies undertaken by the team franchise has helped in deed exposure and support that ultimately has remodeled into complete advantages and large revenue gains for both, the franchise and the brand advertisers.

The mega brand IPL can be fully fledged through fields of branding, promoting and service experiences that engage the audience in many ways to perform, move and actively interact in ideas of brand name expertise and coordination. The fruitfulness of the viewing expertise ends up in the creation of the IPL has an experiential brand. Cricket in the sort of IPL format provides the viewers a way to flee from his daily mundane life and issues. The pleasure of looking at cricket cum entertainment helps him to beat stress and gain happiness. Each popular brand has a distinctive proposition hooked up to that that helps it to tell apart from the remainder.

Though the tournament has been systematically related to a variety of controversies and spot fixing scandals, these problems appear to possess a brief term impact on the complete advertisers. Previously, DLF and dope did terminate their title support contracts; however such a forceful step was solely taken when jurisdiction verdicts were glided by the Supreme Court. Indian Premier League as a tournament offers an upright grip to advertisers for a short 2 month amount so as to promote and market their brand. Since, the audience is already segmental into cricket fans it becomes simple for the advertisers to complete their campaign in an exceedingly artistic manner so as to grab attention concerning their competition on a worldwide platform. Sports marketing has played a significant role in making the Indian Premier League as a brand.

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