

Economic Impact of the Indian Premier League on Global Cricket

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<p><i>Type: Article</i> <i>Received: 20 March 2026</i> <i>Revised: 03 April 2026</i> <i>Accepted: 21 May 2026</i> <i>Published: 03 June 2026</i></p>	<p>The Indian Premier League (IPL) has emerged as one of the most influential professional cricket leagues in the world, significantly transforming the economic and commercial structure of global cricket. Since its launch in 2008, the league has generated substantial revenue through broadcasting rights, franchise ownership, sponsorship agreements, and player auctions. This study analyses the economic impact of the IPL on international cricket, focusing on revenue generation, player labour markets, commercialization of the sport, and changes in cricket governance. A mixed-methods approach combining financial data analysis and literature review is used to examine the league's economic influence. Findings indicate that the IPL has significantly increased global cricket revenues and created new economic opportunities across sports media, tourism, and employment sectors. However, the dominance of franchise leagues has also raised concerns regarding financial disparities among cricket boards and the sustainability of traditional cricket formats. The study concludes that balanced governance and equitable revenue distribution are necessary to ensure the long-term stability of global cricket.</p>
	<p>Keywords: IPL; Economic Impact; Global Cricket; Revenue Generation; Commercialization.</p>

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Introduction

The commercialization of sports has accelerated rapidly over the last two decades, driven by broadcasting technology, corporate sponsorship, and digital media platforms. In cricket, one of the most significant developments in this transformation have been the creation of the Indian Premier League (IPL). Established in 2008 by the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI), the IPL introduced a franchise-based competition model that combines international players, entertainment elements, and large-scale media investments. The league quickly became the most financially successful cricket tournament in the world. High value broadcasting deals, corporate sponsorships, and player auctions have significantly increased the commercial value of cricket. As a result, the IPL has reshaped player labour markets, influenced international cricket scheduling, and expanded global audience engagement. Despite its economic success, the IPL has also generated debate within the cricket community. Concerns have been raised regarding financial inequality among cricket boards, increased player workload, and declining interest in traditional formats such as Test cricket. This paper evaluates the broader economic implications of the IPL on global cricket.

Literature Review

Academic research widely recognizes the IPL as a major driver of cricket's commercialization. Gupta and Saxena (2013) highlight how the franchise model and corporate investment significantly increased the financial value of cricket. Borooah and Mangan (2011) analyse the IPL player auction

system and demonstrate how market driven bidding mechanisms elevated player salaries and altered labour market dynamics. Rumford (2011) emphasizes the globalization of cricket through the IPL's international broadcasting strategy. Majumdar (2015) argues that the league has transformed cricket into a modern entertainment product by integrating sports competition with media, advertising, and celebrity culture. However, critics note that excessive commercialization may create structural imbalances in global cricket. Mehta (2018) suggests that franchise leagues may undermine traditional cricket structures, while Ghai and Zipp (2020) highlight the growing influence of the BCCI in global cricket governance.

Table 1. IPL Governance Milestones and Economic Implications (2008–2024)

Year	Milestone	Governance Change	Economic Impact	Source
2008	IPL Inauguration	BCCI establishes IPL; 8 franchises auctioned	\$1.04B broadcast deal (Sony)	BCCI (2008)
2010	Modi Suspension	Lalit Modi removed; interim governance	Sponsorship drops 18%	ESPNcricinfo (2010)
2013	Spot-Fixing Scandal	Anti-Corruption Unit formed	Brand value dips	Duff & Phelps (2013)
2014	"Big Three" ICC Takeover	BCCI, CA, ECB gain veto power	IPL contributes 38% of ICC revenue	ICC (2014)
2017	Franchise Expansion	2 new teams added	\$2.55B Star India deal	BCCI
2019	Conflict of Interest Rules	Lodha Committee reforms	Ownership regulations strengthened	Lodha Committee
2022	Media Rights Auction	Viacom18 + Star win rights	\$6.2B media deal	Deloitte (2022)
2023	WPL Launch	Women's IPL model introduced	\$572M media rights	BCCI (2023)
2024	Overseas Expansion	Partial overseas season	Expected \$200M+ boost	Economic Times (2024)

Research Methodology

This research adopts a mixed methods approach combining quantitative financial analysis with qualitative literature evaluation. Data Sources: Secondary data was collected from BCCI financial reports, IPL franchise valuation reports, ICC financial distribution records, and sports industry publications. Player auction data from recent IPL seasons was also analysed. Analytical Methods: Quantitative analysis focuses on revenue growth, broadcasting rights valuation, and salary comparisons between leagues. Qualitative analysis examines themes related to commercialization, governance, and labour market changes in professional cricket.

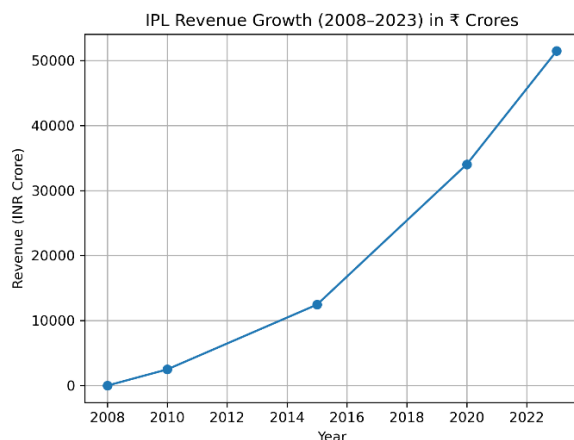


Fig. 1. IPL Revenue Growth (2008–2023)

Findings

The analysis indicates that the IPL has 150,000 100,000 80,000 experienced substantial financial growth since its inception. The league’s brand value exceeded \$11 billion in 2023, with broadcasting rights accounting for the majority of total revenue. Sponsorship deals and franchise investments further strengthen the league’s economic structure. The success of the IPL has also inspired the creation of multiple franchise-based leagues across the world. These leagues replicate the IPL model by combining private investment, media partnerships, and player drafts.

Table 2. Comparison of Top T20 Leagues (2023)

League	Country	Annual Revenue (INR Crore)	Avg. Player Salary (INR)
IPL	India	51,460	₹9,96,00,000
BBL	Australia	1,494	₹1,24,50,000
PSL	Pakistan	996	₹83,00,000
CPL	Caribbean	747	₹66,40,000

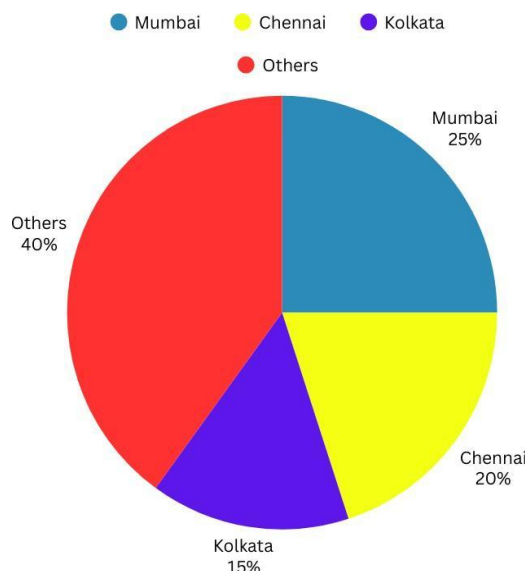


Fig. 2. Revenue Distribution Among IPL Teams

Discussion

The IPL represents a transformation in cricket’s economic model. By integrating entertainment and professional sport, the league has significantly expanded the global audience for cricket. The tournament has also created a global labour market in which players from different countries participate in franchise competitions. However, the concentration of financial power within a few major leagues may

create challenges for smaller cricket boards. Many boards struggle to retain players due to the financial incentives provided by franchise leagues. Additionally, the increasing focus on short format cricket may reduce interest in traditional formats such as Test matches.

Conclusion

The Indian Premier League has fundamentally reshaped the global cricket economy. Through major broadcasting agreements, sponsorship deals, and franchise ownership structures, the league has transformed cricket into a highly profitable global sports industry. While the IPL has generated significant economic benefits and expanded cricket's global audience, it has also created structural challenges related to governance, financial balance, and scheduling. Future policy decisions by international cricket authorities will play a critical role in ensuring sustainable growth for the sport.

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