

*Original Research Article*

## Print Media Coverage of I-League and IPL: A Comparative Study

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### ABSTRACT

Most popular two sports in India are football and cricket. Two spectacular and highly competitive sports tournament are organized every year in India. For football it is I-League and for cricket it is known as IPL (Indian Premier League). In both tournaments national and international players are participated. Most of the people of India and abroad watched and enjoyed these sports every year. Purpose of the present study was to analyze the print media coverage for these two top most important sports tournament of India. Two most circulated newspapers, one from Bengali and another from English published from Kolkata metropolitan city were considered for the present study. The print coverage of total days covered for completion of two sports event was considered to collected data. Area of news coverage (ANC) and area of pictorial coverage (APC) were the criterion measure for the present study. Simple geometric scale was used to measure the size of the news coverage. Mean and standard deviation were considered as descriptive statistics and difference between mean was analyzed by t-test. Significance of difference was judged considering only 0.05 level of confidence. All statistical calculations were done using standard statistical software. Result revealed that mean value for ANC and APC coverage was much higher for IPL (1567.29 cm<sup>2</sup> & 398.34 cm<sup>2</sup>) than the mean value of ANC and APC for I-League (394.38 cm<sup>2</sup> & 81.16 cm<sup>2</sup>). Same difference was observed both in Bengali and English news paper also. Result revealed that higher print media coverage in the form of news (ANC) and picture (APC) for IPL (t=15.79) than I-League (t=10.59) was significant statistically (p<0.05). It was concluded that the print media published significantly more news and picture in favour of IPL than I-League which indirectly indicated that cricket was the more popular and publicly accepted sports than football in present India.

**Key Words:** News coverage, Pictorial coverage, Print media, I-League, IPL.

### INTRODUCTION

The I-League, officially known as the Hero I-League is the country's primary football competition. It is a professional league of football in India for men's clubs. Contested by ten clubs, it operates on a system of promotion and relegation as well as a system of direct entry. The competition runs from January to May, with teams playing eighteen matches each, totaling ninety matches in the season. Most games

are usually played in the afternoons during the weekends or mid weeks. It is currently sponsored by Hero. <sup>[1]</sup>

In 1996 the first domestic league was started in India known as the National Football League. The league was started in an effort to introduce professionalism to Indian football. Despite that ambition, that has never been achieved. After the 2006-2007 NFL seasons, it was announced that the National Football League would be re-

launched and rebranded as the I-League for the 2007-08 season. The league's first season consisted of eight teams from the previous NFL campaign and two teams from the 2nd Division to form a 10 team league. Oil and Natural Gas Commission (ONGC), the title sponsors of the previous NFL, were named as the title sponsors of the I-League before the league kicked-off in November 2007.

The Indian Premier League (IPL) is an annual Indian Twenty 20 cricket tournament, founded in 2008 by the BCCI. It is contested between eight franchisee teams representing various Indian cities. The tournament is conducted in India between April and May. IPL is the most watched Twenty20 league in the world and in 2010 became the first sporting event to be broadcast live on YouTube. [2]

The brand value of the 2014 Indian Premier League was estimated to be around US\$7.2 billion. The IPL is currently known as the Pepsi Indian Premier League for sponsorship reasons. Of the eleven teams to have competed since its inception, five have won the title at least once: Kolkata Knight Riders, Chennai Super Kings and Mumbai Indians have won twice while Rajasthan Royal and Deccan Chargers have won one each. The Chennai Super Kings are the most successful team having won the title twice and having qualified for the finals in every season except in 2009 and 2014. Chennai have also reached the playoffs in every season since the league's inception. The current champions of the IPL 2015 session are the Mumbai Indians.

India's biggest property developer DLF Group paid \$2.50 billion (around US\$50 million) to be the main sponsor of the tournament for 5 years from 2008 to 2012. From 2013 season, the American food and beverage company PepsiCo took over title sponsorship for five years valued at \$3.968 billion (around US\$66 million),

and also exclusive beverage supplier for the IPL teams in the 2013 season. [2]

These two most popular national sports events influenced most of the sports person's life of India. Present study was planned to find out the print media coverage of these two events and compared them to each other. The study also tried to find out the causes behind the difference in coverage of print media if any between these two major sports events.

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

Coverage of eight leading daily newspapers on and from 08<sup>th</sup> April to 26<sup>th</sup> May 2015 for IPL and I-League respectively were considered for the present study (list of the papers considered are attached in [Appendix](#)). This list includes selected leading newspapers published in Bengali and English in Kolkata, West Bengal.

Variables measured for this study were area of news coverage (ANC) and area of pictorial coverage (APC).

Simple geometric scale was used as tool of measurement.

Mean and standard deviation were calculated as descriptive statistics and difference between two means was measured by t-test. Significance level was set only 0.05 levels in this study. All calculations were done using standard statistical software.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Maximum value, minimum value, Mean and standard deviation of area of news coverage (ANC) and area of pictorial coverage (APC) for I-League and IPL have presented in Table-1. The results of t-test of two variables between the two sports events have also been presented in the Table no. 1. Result shows that the mean values for both two variables were higher for IPL than the I-League and the mean differences between

two sports events (t-values) for ANC and APC were statistically significant.

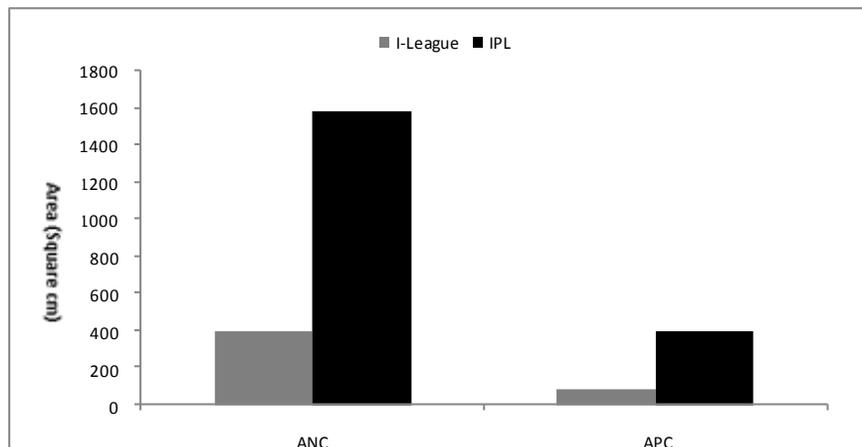
The mean value of ANC and APC of print media as measured in this study for both sports events have presented in Figure-1. The figure has shown the superior coverage in all news and pictorial aspects of sports publication in print media for IPL than the I-League. Daily ANC measured for

I-League and IPL in print media have presented graphically in Figure-2 in which it has found that IPL overwhelm I-League in this variable with much higher values. Daily APC measured for I-League and IPL in print media have also presented graphically in Figure-3 in which IPL sports event and IPL athletes received much higher coverage than I-League event and I-League athletes.

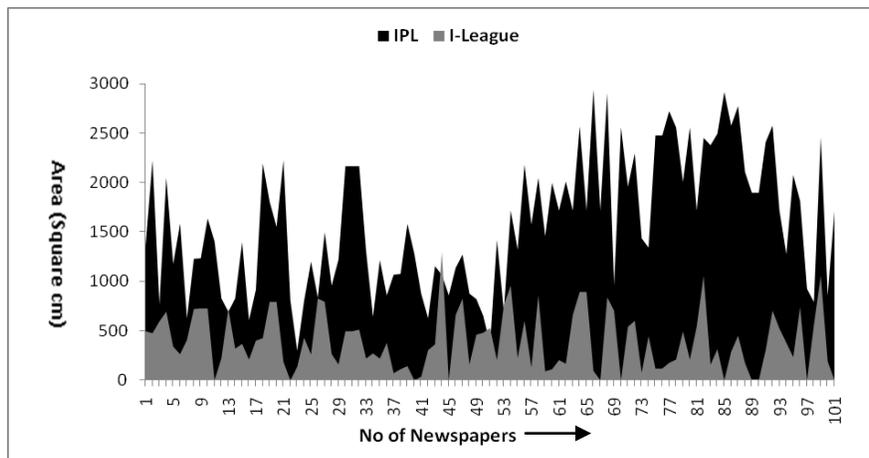
**Table-1: Descriptive statistics of considered variables and t-values between I-League and IPL**

| Sl No | Variables | Statistical Parameters | I-League | IPL     | t-value |
|-------|-----------|------------------------|----------|---------|---------|
| 1     | ANC       | Maximum                | 2087.5   | 2937    | 16.32*  |
|       |           | Minimum                | 32       | 300     |         |
|       |           | Mean                   | 394.38   | 1584.12 |         |
|       |           | SD                     | 293.89   | 668.37  |         |
| 2     | APC       | Maximum                | 836      | 1290    | 10.59*  |
|       |           | Minimum                | 0        | 0       |         |
|       |           | Mean                   | 81.16    | 398.34  |         |
|       |           | SD                     | 78.26    | 295.28  |         |

\* Significant at 0.05 level (as to be significant the CR would be 1.99).



**Figure-1: Comparison of Mean value of ANC and APC between I-League and IPL**



**Figure-2: Comparison of daily coverage value of ANC between I-League and IPL**

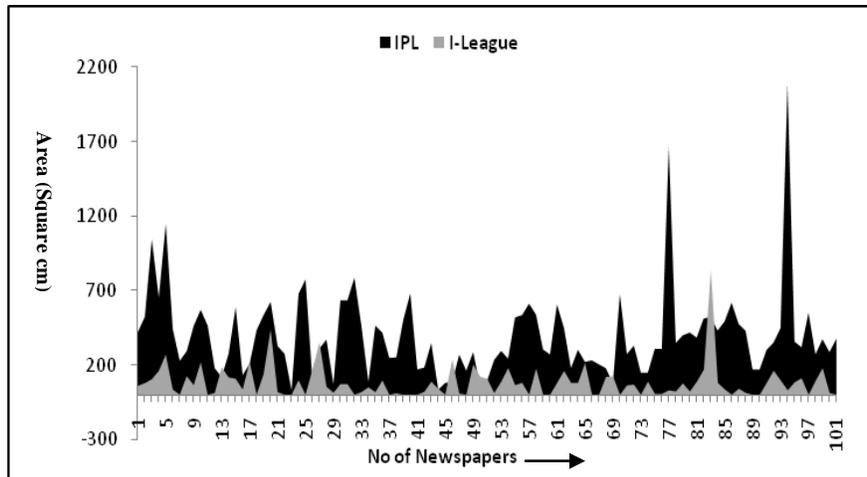


Figure-3: Comparison of daily coverage value of APC between I-League and IPL

Football and cricket both two games are very much popular in India. So event that includes any of two games received much attention of public. News paper also published more news and picture for this game. Cricket is immensely popular in India [3] and study reported that at present most of the school boys love to play cricket. [4] They also have chosen football as their second favorite game. This trend is almost same for young generation in this country. Football has for a long time languished behind cricket as a source of national pride. [5] This may be one of the cause of getting much more coverage of IPL event in print media then I-League.

But these are not the real cause of this fact. There are many more causes behind this reason of getting more print coverage of IPL in leading newspapers. These might be due to the (i) higher investment of corporate money, (ii) good marketing and presentation management, (iii) involvement of more corporate sector, (iv) direct involvement of many celebrities and film stars, (v) coverage of wide area and more cities of India and (vi) using the sentiment of the name of different metro cities (vii) Wide TV broadcasting through all over world etc. When compared these factors between I-League and IPL, it has

found that IPL beat I-League in each areas. The success of any league is dependent on the presence of a solid foundation and IPL has this foundation. [3] At present sponsoring agency of I-League is Hero Moto Corp but for IPL several corporate sectors like PepsiCo, Hero Moto Corp, Kingfisher are involved. [2] In IPL different corporate sectors invested more than US \$80 million where as in I-League the corporate investment is much less than that. The good marketing of the event and well presentation management also raised the popularity of this event. Not only corporate sectors, the IPL included many famous world cricketers as team player as advisor or coach and many famous film artists and celebrities included as part of the programme. Some of the film artist has ownership of team in IPL. Study reported that this trend of mixing local culture with world culture is growing day to day in world sports. [6] Involvement of corporate sector and Bollywood stars develops profit generating capacity of Cricket. [7] In this way IPL provided full entertainment to the spectators. IPL covered wide area of India by organizing league match at different venue. Using the name of a city with 'team-name' covered the sentimental part of the city's population and attracted more attention of the city's sports

lovers. This might be another important cause for high popularity of IPL in India.

The global broadcasting right of the Indian Premier League was secured by a consortium consisting of India's Sony Entertainment Television (Set Max) network and Singapore-based World Sport Group. The record deal has duration of ten years at a cost of US\$1.026 billion. As part of the deal, the consortium will pay the BCCI US\$918 million for the television broadcast rights and US\$108 million for the promotion of the tournament. Eighteen country circle all over the world and twenty nine companies or channel broadcasted the IPL live. I-League always suffered to getting good TV broadcasting deal. Even there was no sponsorship in the year of 2010-11. Only two TV Company agreed to telecast few live matches (75 only) worldwide in 2012-13. The quality and other technical matters related with this broadcast were not good in compare to IPL.

The innovative model of IPL in between business and sports makes the event grand success.<sup>[8]</sup> Study reported that the IPL of India became a major step in realigning the power structure in international sports.<sup>[9]</sup> The success of the Indian Premier League (IPL) is not only about the Indian control of international cricket, it is also about the rise of India.<sup>[10]</sup> Present study also revealed that IPL beat I-League in each and every aspect and received significantly higher news and pictorial coverage in daily newspaper of West Bengal.

## CONCLUSION

IPL received significantly higher ANC and APC than I-League in the leading print media of West Bengal.

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### **Appendix**

List of the Newspapers considered for the present study:

Bengali Newspapers: Anandabazar Patrika, Ei Samay, Bartaman, Dainik Pratidin, Aajkal. English Newspapers: The Times of India, The Telegraph, The Statesman.

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