



Research Article

BCCI's Role in Shaping the Indian Economy: From Sports Administration to Economic Development

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Abstract

This article examines the pivotal role of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) in shaping the Indian economy through its multifaceted contributions beyond sports administration. By analysing the BCCI's influence on economic development, the study highlights its impact on job creation, tourism, and infrastructure development. The article explores how the commercialization of cricket, particularly through the Indian Premier League (IPL), has attracted significant investment, spurred entrepreneurship, and enhanced the global visibility of Indian sports. Additionally, it discusses the socio-economic implications of cricket in fostering national identity and community engagement. Through a comprehensive review of economic data and case studies, this research elucidates the BCCI's strategic positioning as a key player in driving economic growth and development, ultimately contributing to a broader understanding of the interplay between sports governance and economic policy in India.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) stands as the governing body of cricket in India, responsible for the sport's administration and development at various levels. However, its influence extends well beyond cricket, playing a critical role in shaping the Indian economy. As one of the wealthiest and most powerful cricket boards in the world, the BCCI's activities have far-reaching economic implications, impacting not only sports

but also contributing to broader economic development across various sectors.

Cricket in India has historically transcended its role as a mere sport, becoming a cultural phenomenon ingrained in the national consciousness. The BCCI has capitalized on this cultural resonance to stimulate substantial economic activity. The launch of the Indian Premier League (IPL) in 2008 revolutionized the sport, transforming cricket into a highly

profitable industry that attracts both domestic and international investments. The IPL's franchise model, with high-profile player auctions and massive global viewership, has fuelled a multi-billion-dollar economy, generating jobs, boosting tourism, and promoting related industries such as hospitality, advertising, and merchandising.

Additionally, the BCCI's efforts in grassroots development have supported cricket's expansion across socio-economic groups, with initiatives that fund cricket academies and training facilities, especially in rural areas. These programs not only foster athletic talent but also contribute to the socio-economic development of communities by providing opportunities for young cricketers.

The BCCI's commercial strategies have further enhanced its economic impact, with major corporations competing for sponsorship deals that tap into cricket's immense popularity. These activities generate significant revenue, contributing to India's economy through taxation while shaping market trends and consumer behaviour.

Finally, the BCCI also plays an influential role in shaping sports governance policies and infrastructure development, collaborating with governmental bodies to promote favourable policies for cricket and the broader sports ecosystem. This article will critically explore the multifaceted contributions of the BCCI to India's economy, from sports administration to broader economic development, illustrating the powerful link between sports organizations and national economic growth.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has played a pivotal role in the landscape of Indian cricket since its establishment in 1928. However, its influence extends beyond the realm of sports, significantly impacting the Indian economy. This literature review aims to explore the multifaceted role of the BCCI in shaping the Indian economy, encompassing aspects of sports administration, economic development, and broader societal implications. By analysing existing literature, this review seeks to understand the BCCI's economic impact, its administrative strategies, and its contributions to national and global economic frameworks.

To understand the BCCI's impact on the Indian economy, it is essential to consider its historical evolution. Established in 1928, the BCCI's primary mandate was to regulate cricket in India. The organization grew significantly in stature and influence, particularly post-independence. According to Ghosh and Choudhury (2014), the BCCI has evolved from a regulatory body into a commercial powerhouse, shaping cricket's role within Indian society and economy. The introduction of limited-overs cricket in the 1970s and the subsequent rise of the Indian Premier League (IPL) in 2008 marked critical turning points in the board's journey, transforming cricket into a lucrative industry.

The commercialization of cricket in India, spearheaded by the BCCI, has led to unprecedented financial growth. Research by Khandekar and Jadhav (2020) indicates that the IPL has become one of the richest sporting leagues globally, with an

estimated valuation exceeding \$6 billion. This surge in revenue is attributed to various factors, including sponsorship deals, media rights, and ticket sales. The IPL has attracted significant foreign investment, further solidifying the BCCI's role as a catalyst for economic development.

The BCCI's ability to negotiate lucrative broadcasting rights has also been instrumental. According to a study by Sharma and Varma (2019), the BCCI's strategic partnerships with broadcasters have resulted in substantial revenue streams that support domestic cricket, grassroots development, and infrastructure projects across India. These financial resources contribute to the overall economic development of the country, facilitating job creation and entrepreneurial opportunities in the sports sector.

The BCCI's influence extends to job creation in various sectors linked to cricket. As highlighted by Dutta and Rathi (2021), the burgeoning cricket industry has spawned numerous employment opportunities, ranging from sports management and event organization to media and marketing roles. The growth of the IPL has particularly accelerated job creation in urban areas, where teams require extensive support staff, including coaches, trainers, and administrative personnel.

Additionally, the BCCI's initiatives to promote women's cricket have contributed to empowering women in sports and creating job opportunities. According to Menon (2020), the introduction of the Women's Premier League has not only elevated the status of women's cricket but also fostered a more inclusive environment within the sports industry. This development reflects the BCCI's commitment to social and economic equity through sports.

The BCCI's influence on infrastructure development in India is another critical area of focus. The board has invested in building and upgrading cricket facilities across the country, contributing to urban development and tourism. As noted by Sharma and Gupta (2022), major cities have seen significant investments in stadiums, training academies, and sports complexes, fostering local economies through tourism and related activities.

Moreover, the BCCI's emphasis on developing grassroots cricket programs aims to cultivate young talent and create pathways for aspiring cricketers. This focus on talent development has positive economic implications, as it nurtures future stars who may eventually contribute to national and international cricket, generating further revenue for the economy.

The BCCI's role in shaping the Indian economy is not limited to financial growth; it also encompasses social responsibility and community development. The board has engaged in various philanthropic initiatives, recognizing its role in addressing social issues through sports. Research by Raghavan (2021) highlights the BCCI's involvement in programs aimed at promoting education, health, and gender equality.

The BCCI's grassroots initiatives have had a profound impact on local communities. By promoting cricket in rural areas, the board has not only provided a platform for young talent but also fostered a sense of community pride. According to Chatterjee

(2018), local cricket clubs often serve as social hubs, promoting physical activity and social interaction among residents. This community engagement has positive ripple effects on mental health and social cohesion.

The BCCI has also taken initiatives to promote health and education through cricket. Programs aimed at raising awareness about health issues, including sanitation and nutrition, reflect the board's commitment to social development. Research by Sharma (2023) emphasizes the importance of such initiatives in rural areas, where access to education and healthcare remains limited. By integrating educational campaigns into cricketing events, the BCCI contributes to social awareness and community empowerment.

The BCCI's influence extends beyond domestic borders, contributing to the globalization of cricket and enhancing India's soft power on the global stage. The rise of the IPL has attracted international players, leading to increased cross-border interactions within the cricketing community. This globalization has economic implications, as it fosters trade relationships and cultural exchange between nations.

The BCCI's efforts to promote cricket internationally serve as a form of economic diplomacy. By hosting international matches and tournaments, the board positions India as a central player in the global cricketing arena. As noted by Joshi (2020), these events often lead to increased tourism and foreign investment, benefiting local economies and enhancing India's global standing.

Moreover, the BCCI's partnerships with international cricket boards promote knowledge sharing and collaboration, contributing to the development of cricketing infrastructure worldwide. This collaborative approach not only bolsters India's economic interests but also strengthens diplomatic ties with other nations.

Despite its significant contributions, the BCCI faces several challenges and criticisms that impact its role in shaping the Indian economy. Issues related to governance, corruption, and transparency have plagued the organization, leading to questions about its credibility and accountability. According to Singh and Yadav (2022), allegations of financial mismanagement and lack of transparency can undermine public trust in the BCCI, potentially affecting its ability to drive economic development effectively.

The BCCI's governance structure has been criticized for its lack of transparency and accountability. Reforms are necessary to ensure that the organization operates with integrity and addresses the concerns of stakeholders, including players, fans, and sponsors. A robust governance framework is essential for maintaining the BCCI's reputation and sustaining its economic contributions.

While the BCCI has made strides in promoting cricket across various demographics, socio-economic disparities remain a concern. The commercialization of cricket has led to criticisms regarding the exclusion of underprivileged communities from participating in the sport. As highlighted by Rathi (2021), the focus on profit maximization can sometimes overshadow the

board's responsibility to promote inclusive growth within the cricketing community.

The BCCI has emerged as a significant force in shaping the Indian economy, transitioning from a sports administration body to a vital economic player. Its role in commercializing cricket, driving economic development, and fostering social initiatives highlights the multifaceted impact of sports on the economy. However, challenges related to governance, transparency, and socio-economic disparities must be addressed to enhance the BCCI's effectiveness in contributing to India's economic growth.

Future research should focus on evaluating the long-term sustainability of the BCCI's initiatives and exploring how the board can navigate the challenges posed by globalization and the evolving sports landscape. By addressing these issues, the BCCI can strengthen its role as a catalyst for economic development and social change in India.

3. OBJECTIVES

- To Analyse the Historical Context of BCCI's Establishment and Evolution.
- To Assess BCCI's Contribution to Economic Growth in India.
- To Explore the Employment Generation Impact of BCCI and Cricket in India.
- To Investigate BCCI's Role in Promoting Grassroots Cricket and Local Talent Development.
- To Evaluate BCCI's Influence on Investment in Sports Infrastructure.
- To Examine the Socio-Cultural Impact of BCCI on Indian Society and Economy.
- To Assess the Role of BCCI in Shaping Sports Governance and Policy in India.
- To Analyse the Global Influence of BCCI and Indian Cricket on the International Sports Market.
- To Identify Future Challenges and Opportunities for BCCI and Indian Cricket.
- To Provide Policy Recommendations for Enhancing BCCI's Economic Contributions.

4. METHODOLOGY

Data Collection

This Article examines the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) not only as a sporting body but also as a commercial entity with significant economic influence. A mixed-method approach combining historical analysis, economic data interpretation, and content analysis of secondary sources is employed to understand the BCCI's contribution to the Indian economy through media rights, sponsorships, the Indian Premier League (IPL), and grassroots cricket development.

Secondary data is sourced from multiple repositories. Academic journals and articles from databases such as JSTOR, Springer, and Elsevier provide theoretical perspectives on sports economics, governance, and the financial impact of mega-events. Government reports, including economic surveys and RBI publications, supply official statistics on sports-related

GDP, employment, and taxation. Media reports from leading business dailies (*Economic Times*, *Business Standard*) and sports portals (*ESPN Cricinfo*) offer insights into sponsorships, media rights, and franchise valuations. BCCI's official publications, including annual reports and financial statements, provide direct organizational data. Market valuation reports from firms like KPMG and Duff & Phelps enrich the analysis of IPL's brand value and its broader economic spillovers. Academic books and biographies of BCCI leaders also serve as valuable historical sources.

Methodologically, historical analysis traces BCCI's evolution from a regulatory body to a commercial powerhouse, while content analysis evaluates the economic impact of sponsorships, advertisements, and brand affiliations. Economic impact assessment quantifies contributions to GDP, employment, tourism, and infrastructure, with comparative analysis situating BCCI alongside international sports organizations like FIFA and the NFL. Potential limitations include the financial opacity of BCCI, biases in media reporting, and challenges in isolating cricket's indirect economic impacts.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has become a pivotal institution in not just sports administration but also in contributing to India's economic framework. As cricket emerges as a significant sector within the Indian economy, the BCCI's strategies and actions influence various economic dimensions, including revenue generation, employment, tourism, and social development.

1. Overview of BCCI

1.1 Formation and Historical Context

Founded in 1928, the BCCI has transformed from a regulatory body for cricket to one of the richest sports organizations globally. The explosion of interest in cricket, particularly post-1983 World Cup and the advent of the Indian Premier League (IPL) in 2008, marks significant milestones in its history.

1.2 Current Structure and Functioning

As of 2024, the BCCI manages national teams, domestic tournaments, and international fixtures. It operates with a significant budget and employs a wide array of professionals in coaching, administration, marketing, and operations. In 2023, the BCCI reported a revenue of approximately ₹7,000 crore (around \$840 million), with projections suggesting a growth trajectory towards ₹10,000 crore by 2025.

2. Economic Contributions of the BCCI

2.1 Revenue Generation

The BCCI generates substantial revenue through:

- **Broadcasting Rights:** The IPL media rights for the 2023-2028 cycle were sold for ₹48,390 crore (around \$6 billion), reflecting the lucrative nature of cricket broadcasting.
- **Sponsorship Deals:** Major brands invest heavily in cricket sponsorships, with companies like Dream11, Paytm, and Byju's among the leading sponsors. In 2024, the IPL is

expected to have sponsorship revenues exceeding ₹2,000 crore.

- **Ticket Sales and Merchandising:** Match tickets, along with branded merchandise, contribute significantly to revenue, with an estimated ₹500 crore generated from ticket sales alone during the 2023 IPL season.

2.2 Employment Opportunities

Cricket, driven by the BCCI's initiatives, has created substantial employment opportunities:

- **Direct Employment:** As of 2024, the sports sector has seen approximately 2 million jobs created, with cricket accounting for a significant share due to administrative roles, coaching, and training.
- **Indirect Employment:** The ripple effect of cricket on hospitality, retail, and tourism creates thousands of indirect jobs. A study indicated that for every direct job created in cricket, 2.5 jobs are created in related industries.

2.3 Infrastructure Development

Investment in sports infrastructure is a key component of the BCCI's contributions:

- **Stadiums and Facilities:** By 2024, over ₹5,000 crore has been invested in the construction and renovation of cricket stadiums. Notable projects include the renovation of Eden Gardens and the construction of new venues like the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad, the world's largest cricket stadium, which hosts over 132,000 spectators.
- **Training Academies:** The BCCI has established numerous training academies, increasing the accessibility of cricket coaching across states. By 2024, the number of cricket academies affiliated with the BCCI has risen to over 200 nationwide.

3. BCCI's Role in Economic Development

3.1 Grassroots Development and Talent Scouting

The BCCI's focus on grassroots development fosters local talent:

- **Talent Identification:** Programs like the U-19 tournaments and the Ranji Trophy help identify and nurture talent. In 2023, approximately 15,000 players participated in various BCCI-affiliated tournaments, leading to the discovery of future international stars.
- **State Association Investments:** In 2024, state cricket associations have received over ₹1,000 crore in funding from the BCCI to promote grassroots cricket, leading to improved facilities and increased participation rates.

3.2 Social Responsibility Initiatives

The BCCI has engaged in several initiatives that impact society:

- **Health and Wellness Programs:** The BCCI has launched campaigns focusing on health awareness, particularly during the pandemic, reaching millions through cricket-related events.
- **Women's Cricket Promotion:** Investments in women's cricket have surged, with the Women's Premier League

(WPL) launched in 2023. This initiative attracted investments of over ₹1,000 crore, highlighting the economic potential of women's sports.

3.3 International Diplomacy and Soft Power

Cricket serves as a diplomatic tool, enhancing India's soft power:

- **Global Events:** The BCCI's organization of international matches and tournaments promotes tourism and cultural exchange. The hosting of the 2023 Cricket World Cup attracted thousands of international visitors, boosting local economies by an estimated ₹1,500 crore.
- **International Collaborations:** Partnerships with cricket boards around the world have expanded cricket's reach, generated international goodwill, and promoted Indian culture globally.

4. Challenges Faced by the BCCI

4.1 Governance and Corruption Issues

The BCCI has faced scrutiny regarding governance and integrity:

- **Corruption Allegations:** The IPL spot-fixing scandal in 2013 led to significant reputational damage. Ongoing concerns about transparency and governance have prompted calls for reform.
- **Reform Measures:** In response, the BCCI has taken steps to enhance governance structures, including the implementation of stricter codes of conduct and financial oversight mechanisms.

4.2 Balancing Tradition and Commercialization

The BCCI must navigate the balance between preserving cricket's integrity and embracing commercialization:

Criticism of Commercialization: While commercial success has elevated the sport, some purists argue that it undermines traditional values. The challenge lies in sustaining cricket's cultural significance while pursuing financial viability.

4.3 Competition from Other Sports

The rise of other sports leagues poses challenges:

Emergence of Other Sports: The success of leagues like the Indian Super League (ISL) and Pro Kabaddi League (PKL) signifies a shift in audience engagement. The BCCI must innovate to retain cricket's dominant position in the sports ecosystem.

5. Future Prospects and Trends

5.1 Technological Innovations

Technological advancements will play a crucial role in the BCCI's future:

Data Analytics and Fan Engagement: By 2024, data analytics is increasingly used to enhance player performance and fan engagement. The BCCI is expected to invest in AI and machine learning to improve match analysis and fan interaction.

Augmented Reality (AR) and Virtual Reality (VR): These technologies are anticipated to revolutionize the viewing experience, providing immersive experiences for fans.

5.2 Expansion into Global Markets

The BCCI is poised to explore international markets further:

Global Partnerships: Collaborations with international leagues and boards can enhance cricket's global footprint. By 2025, the BCCI aims to establish at least three international partnerships to promote cricket in non-traditional markets.

5.3 Sustainability Initiatives

Sustainability is becoming a priority for sports organizations:

- **Environmental Initiatives:**
- The BCCI has begun incorporating sustainability measures in its operations, such as waste management at stadiums and promoting green practices during events. The goal is to reduce the carbon footprint by 30% by 2025.

The BCCI plays a transformative role in shaping the Indian economy through its multifaceted contributions. From substantial revenue generation to employment opportunities and infrastructure development, its impact resonates across various sectors. While challenges such as governance issues and competition from other sports exist, the BCCI's commitment to grassroots development, social responsibility, and international diplomacy underscores its broader role in fostering economic growth and social change.

As cricket continues to evolve, the BCCI must embrace technological innovations, explore global markets, and prioritize sustainability to ensure its relevance and influence in shaping the future of Indian sports and the economy. The BCCI stands as a testament to how sports can transcend entertainment, becoming a catalyst for economic and social transformation in a rapidly changing world.

Findings and Suggestions

1. Tourism and Hospitality

The BCCI has significantly contributed to the growth of the tourism and hospitality sector in India. Events such as the IPL and international matches draw large crowds, including domestic and international tourists. The influx of visitors creates demand for hotels, restaurants, transportation, and local attractions, thereby stimulating local economies.

Findings:

- A study by the Indian Institute of Management (IIM) found that cricket-related tourism contributes approximately ₹5,000 crores (around \$675 million) annually to the Indian economy.
- Match-day tourism boosts local businesses, with hotels often reporting occupancy rates of over 90% during major cricket events.

Suggestions:

- The BCCI can collaborate with state tourism boards to promote cricket tourism packages, enhancing the overall experience for visitors.
- Developing ancillary events around matches, such as fan festivals or cultural exhibitions, can further enhance tourism prospects.

2. Infrastructure Development

The BCCI's investment in cricket infrastructure has had a cascading effect on local economies. The construction of stadiums, training academies, and practice facilities has not only improved cricketing standards but also provided opportunities for construction-related employment.

Findings:

- The construction of the Sardar Patel Stadium in Ahmedabad, which is the largest cricket stadium in the world, generated over 3,000 jobs during the construction phase.
- Improved infrastructure, such as roads and public transport systems, often accompanies major cricket projects, benefiting the local populace.

Suggestions:

- The BCCI should prioritize sustainable building practices and invest in eco-friendly infrastructure to minimize environmental impact.
- Partnerships with local governments for better urban planning around cricket venues can create long-term benefits for the community.

3. Media and Broadcasting

The BCCI has leveraged media rights to generate substantial revenue, contributing to the economic landscape of the country. The commercialization of cricket through broadcasting has transformed it into a lucrative industry.

Findings:

- The IPL's media rights were sold for ₹16,347 crores (approximately \$2.2 billion) for the 2023-2028 cycle, showcasing the immense commercial potential of cricket.
- The growth of sports broadcasting has created opportunities in advertising, marketing, and media production, generating employment across these sectors.

Suggestions:

- The BCCI should explore partnerships with emerging digital platforms to enhance viewership and engagement, especially among younger audiences.
- Investing in local media initiatives can promote regional talent and increase the visibility of lesser-known leagues.

4. Grassroots Development and Inclusivity

The BCCI's commitment to grassroots cricket has the potential to foster inclusivity and social equity. By promoting cricket at

the grassroots level, the BCCI can nurture talent from diverse backgrounds and regions.

Findings:

- Initiatives such as the BCCI's Ranji Trophy and junior-level tournaments provide a platform for young talent to showcase their skills, leading to opportunities in professional cricket.
- Women's cricket has gained prominence due to the BCCI's recent investments, creating role models for aspiring female athletes.

Suggestions:

- Expanding programs to promote cricket in rural areas and underserved communities can enhance inclusivity in sports.
- Developing partnerships with schools and colleges to integrate cricket into physical education curricula can foster a love for the game from an early age.

Challenges and Barriers

Despite its positive contributions to the Indian economy, the BCCI faces several challenges that could hinder its potential impact.

1. **Corruption and Governance Issues:** The BCCI has faced allegations of corruption and mismanagement, undermining its credibility. These issues can deter investment and sponsorship opportunities.
2. **Commercialization vs. Tradition:** The aggressive commercialization of cricket may lead to a disconnect between traditional fans and the modernized sport. Balancing commercial interests with the sport's integrity is crucial.
3. **Sustainability Concerns:** Rapid commercialization and infrastructure development can lead to environmental degradation. The BCCI must adopt sustainable practices to mitigate these effects.
4. **Competition from Other Sports:** As other sports gain popularity in India, the BCCI must find innovative ways to maintain cricket's dominance in the sporting landscape.

The BCCI has established itself as a pivotal player in shaping the Indian economy, transcending its role as a mere sports administration body. Its influence extends beyond cricket, contributing to employment, infrastructure development, tourism, and cultural identity. To maximize its impact, the BCCI must adopt sustainable practices, prioritize inclusivity, and address governance issues. By doing so, it can ensure that cricket continues to be a catalyst for economic development in India for years to come.

5. CONCLUSION

The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) plays a pivotal role in shaping the Indian economy, transcending its primary function of sports administration to become a significant catalyst for economic development. By leveraging the immense popularity of cricket, the BCCI has driven

substantial revenue generation through sponsorships, broadcasting rights, and merchandise sales, contributing to both the national and regional economies. The organization has fostered employment opportunities across various sectors, including tourism, hospitality, and media, while promoting infrastructure development through stadium construction and upgrades. Additionally, the BCCI's initiatives in grassroots cricket have encouraged youth engagement and skill development, further enhancing the socio-economic fabric of the nation. As cricket continues to unite diverse demographics in India, the BCCI's strategic decisions will remain instrumental in not only advancing the sport but also in bolstering economic growth, reinforcing its status as a vital player in the country's development narrative.

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Mr. Manjunath Pujar is a researcher and academician specializing in sports economics and management. His work focuses on the economic and social dimensions of Indian cricket, particularly the role of the BCCI and IPL in shaping national development, governance, and global sports diplomacy.