

"THE INFLUENCE OF MEDIA NARRATIVES ON THE EMERGENCE OF GAMBLING CULTURE IN INDIA"

AUTHOR – ABHINAV SINGH & MR. AYUSH SARAN,

* STUDENT AT AMITY UNIVERSITY, UTTAR PRADESH- LUCKNOW

** ASSISTANT PROFESSOR AT AMITY UNIVERSITY, UTTAR PRADESH- LUCKNOW

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Abstract

The rise of gambling, in India has led to the development of a gambling scene influenced by social and economic aspects at play in society. This research delves into how media stories play a role in shaping this burgeoning culture by examining media portrayals of gambling through a lens we explore how these representations impact public perception by portraying it as an appealing and esteemed form of leisure. Our findings highlight that media depictions not only validate gambling but also elevate gamblers to a higher social standing thereby intensifying the widespread interest, in gambling activities. This research delves into how media portrayals influence. Mirror the beliefs and standards of society regarding gambling, as a form of entertainment. The results shed light on the cultural factors that shape gambling habits in India and emphasize the need for truthful media representations and well-reasoned legislative actions to lessen gaming's potential detrimental impacts.

Introduction

Both the number of people who gamble and the amount of money made by the worldwide gambling industry have been increasing. This also applies to India. In actuality, the rise of a larger gambling culture is correlated with the expansion of gaming in India. This is a result of both the easing of social norms that had previously restricted widespread engagement in gambling activities and the liberalization of the economy, which made it easier for foreign businesses to enter the market. This gambling culture is produced through a complex synthesis of diverse socioeconomic factors, of which the media is a notable part. Media discourses are believed to facilitate the production of collective desire for gambling by constructing it as an attractive and legitimate form of leisure activity, and also conferring high status upon some participants in these activities. One of the current trends in Indian

media is the growing quantity of print articles about the expansion and earnings of gambling, its well-known players, and its connection to social order.⁸⁶⁸

India's gambling market is now growing at a rapid pace. It now incorporates new areas like online and casino gambling in addition to more established ones like sports betting and lotteries. There is evidence of an Indian gambling culture in the origin, maintenance, and widespread societal acceptability of these gaming types.

The term 'culture' as applied in the phrase 'gambling culture' is derived from sociology and anthropology, and usually refers to patterns in and processes by which a society expresses, shapes, and understands its activities, meaning, and views of itself. Studies are beginning to

⁸⁶⁸ Ze Hong, The Cultural Evolution of Games of Chance, 35 Hum. Nat. 89 (2024), <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12110-024-09471-9>.

reveal Indian society's latent preoccupation with gambling. To explore how and why Indian society may be changing in terms of its gambling preoccupations, this chapter aims to locate the role and influence of newspaper and magazine reports, columns, features, and special lifestyle reports on the construction of Indian gambling culture.

A brief overview of Indian gambling

Historical evidence indicates that gambling has been in India since antiquity. It has evolved into a wide variety of forms over time due to modernization, religious convictions, and cultural customs. Here's a summary of the important phases in the history of gaming in India:

1. Ancient Period

Allusions in Mythology: There are references to gambling in ancient Indian scriptures, most notably in the Mahabharata, when the Pandavas are brought low by a dice game. This illustrates how gambling was both common and important to early Indian civilization. **Chaupar and Pachisi Dice Games:** During the Vedic era, dice games were quite popular. They were played not just for entertainment purposes but also frequently for large stakes, such as kingdoms and money. Chaupar was a popular board game that was even enjoyed by royalty. It was akin to modern-day Ludo.

2. Medieval Period

With the advent of card games during the Mughal Empire, gambling took on new forms. The nobles and royal courts gambled as a kind of entertainment, with cards and dice growing as essential elements of royal pleasures. Traditional card games, such as Teen Patti, a version on poker, and Rummy, gained increasing traction. They were often associated with celebrations and festivals such as Diwali, when some people consider gambling to be auspicious.

3. Colonial Period

Throughout British colonial history, significant legal and social changes were brought about. Despite their dislike of gambling, the British enacted several regulations that eventually resulted in the Public Gambling Act of 1867, which allowed horse racing wagering since it was regarded as a "game of skill" rather than a random event but prohibited the operation of casinos. During the colonial era, horse racing, which is still a significant form of gambling in India, also saw growth in popularity.

4. Post Independence and Modern Era

After India gained independence, gambling laws remained largely based on the Public Gambling Act of 1867, with minor modifications by individual states. Many states-imposed restrictions, but certain forms like horse racing and lotteries were allowed under regulated conditions. Since rummy is regarded by Indian law as a skill game, it is permitted to play for real money. However, most state laws still tightly regulate, if not outright forbid, chance-based games like Teen Patti and poker. Cricket betting became a major illicit gambling activity in the 20th century, especially during major cricket contests such as the Indian Premier League (IPL). Because cricket is so popular in India, there is still a lot of betting on the game even though it is illegal.

5. 21st-century Digital and Online Gambling

The advent of the internet and cellphones has drastically altered gambling in India. There's been a sharp rise in the quantity of online gaming sites that offer fantasy sports apps like Dream11 in addition to card games like Rummy and Poker.

These platforms contend that because they provide games of skill, they are able to operate lawfully in some areas. Online betting and fantasy sports have grown significantly, particularly during big sporting events like the Indian Premier League. This has led to debates about the need for more specific legislation as it becomes harder to draw boundaries between

skill-based games and gambling. State governments have passed their own gambling laws; some have outlawed internet gambling completely, while others have welcomed it as a potential source of income. India's gambling industry has developed historically, which highlights the nation's close-knit social and cultural links and changing legal landscape. Despite persistent regulatory challenges, gambling has always been a mainstay of Indian entertainment, from classic card and dice games to modern digital platforms.

Rise of modern gambling forms, particularly online gambling and fantasy sports.

The rapid development of online gambling sites and fantasy sports have contributed to the widespread acceptance of modern gambling in India through altering the gaming environment. Digital technologies and the growing popularity of smartphones have made gambling easier to access to millions of Indians within the last ten years.

The availability of online gambling has increased due to the wide range of platforms that provide a selection of games to suit a wide range of interests. Once limited to live environments, classic card games like rummy and poker have made a comeback online, where players can now play from the comfort of their homes. Because it is categorized as a game of skill rather than a game of chance, online rummy, for example, has been legal in several states. Due to this legal distinction, internet platforms now have the ability to operate in a regulated environment and draw large user bases. Although the legality of poker is still up for dispute in some areas, it has become more and more popular, attracting both casual gamers and serious players to online tournaments and cash games.

In particular, fantasy sports have become one of the main forces behind India's contemporary gambling culture. With the help of websites like Dream11, My11Circle, and MPL, sports fans can now wager on their favourite teams and win

real money by creating virtual teams modelled after real athletes. The popularity of fantasy sports has skyrocketed, particularly during big cricket tournaments like the Indian Premier League (IPL), where millions of users bet money on the performances of the players they have picked. These platforms contend that they offer a skill-based game that necessitates an understanding of player statistics, strategy, and the sport, all of which have allowed them to lawfully operate throughout the majority of the nation.

The intense love of cricket in India is directly related to the popularity of fantasy sports. By capitalizing on the passion for the sport, fantasy platforms have increased user interaction and engagement. The potential for significant monetary rewards has rendered fantasy sports especially alluring to younger demographics. The growing popularity of fantasy sports platforms has also been aided by their aggressive marketing initiatives, which are frequently supported by famous people and cricket players.

But there are also worries about the growth of fantasy sports and online gambling. Opponents contend that these platforms can encourage addictive behaviors, particularly among young people, by obfuscating the distinction between skill-based gaming and gambling. These platforms' simplicity of use and the temptation of rapid financial gain have raised questions about the potential effects on society, including increasing gambling addiction, mental health problems, and financial losses. The legal status of internet gambling is also still unclear due to differing state rules, which has prompted calls for a more unified regulatory framework throughout India.

The rise in fantasy sports and internet gambling is also a reflection of the shifting views of society regarding gambling. Gambling was once frowned upon, but in recent years, it has gained more acceptance, in part because of the legitimacy that fantasy sports have given it and the growing presence of gambling ads

during important athletic events. This change has sparked conversations about safe gaming procedures and the requirement for more robust consumer safeguards to avert possible damage.⁸⁶⁹

An Overview of Indian Gambling Laws

India's gaming regulation framework has its roots in historical and cultural circumstances. Understanding the guiding ideas and legislation that have shaped the nation's gambling laws is crucial to understanding the current regulatory landscape.

The 1867 Public Gambling Act: The Public gaming Act of 1867 is the main piece of legislation governing gaming in India. This colonial-era regulation, which placed limitations and fines on gambling, was intended to reduce the amount of gaming that occurred. The Act gives states the power to create and implement their own gaming laws.

Different State Approaches: One unique aspect of the Indian regulatory system is that each state is free to choose how they want to handle gaming. This has led to a patchwork of laws, with some jurisdictions choosing a more liberal stance while others have chosen a severe prohibition. When analysing the legal environment around internet gambling, it is critical to recognize this variability.

Changing Approaches to Regulation

There are now more chances and challenges for gambling regulation in the digital age. The expansion of online gaming platforms across national borders has forced authorities to modify their regulatory strategies. The evolution of gambling laws in India is examined in this subsection.

State-Specific Regulations' Emergence: Numerous governments have implemented lottery laws and other state-specific measures in reaction to the expansion of internet gambling. These laws frequently represent the unique political, cultural, and economic

dynamics present in each state. The regulatory environment is becoming more complex due to the rise of state-specific strategies.

Proposal for All-encompassing Federal Regulations: Concurrently, there has been an increasing need for all-encompassing federal regulations to tackle the intricacies presented by virtual gaming. The lack of consistent federal regulations has sparked discussions about the necessity of a centralized regulatory structure.⁸⁷⁰

Important Laws pertaining to Online Gambling

Comprehending the essential legal rules pertinent to the digital era is vital for effectively navigating the regulatory terrain of online gaming. The legal components that are related to internet gambling are broken down in this subsection.

The Information Technology Act of 2000: Online gaming in India is affected by the Information Technology Act of 2000. Because it deals with matters like the legality of online agreements and transactions, it is pertinent to the management and control of online gaming platforms.

In the Digital Age, the Public Gambling Act: The Public Gambling Act of 1867 presents difficulties when it comes to internet gambling because it was created in a time very different from the current digital environment. Questions about jurisdiction, enforcement, and the applicability of penalties are raised by interpretations of this act in relation to online platforms.

The perception of media depictions normalizing gambling

There's rising alarm over the media's normalization of gambling nowadays. In the last 10 years, gambling has gained more visibility in media, including social media, sports broadcasts, television shows, and movies, where it is frequently presented as a glamorous and thrilling pastime. This continuous exposure

⁸⁶⁹ Megha Aggarwal, *India's Online Gambling Industry Is a Lottery*, The Diplomat (Aug. 1, 2024), <https://thediplomat.com/2024/08/indias-online-gambling-industry-is-a-lottery/>

⁸⁷⁰ Matthew Buchanan, *The Legal Implications of Online Gambling Across Different States*, GamblingSite.com (June 28, 2024), <https://www.gamblingsite.com/blog/online-gambling-across-different-states/>

has the potential to skew people's perceptions of gambling, especially in the case of younger and more susceptible audiences. For example, betting advertising are now a standard element of sports broadcasts. While games are in progress, viewers are urged to wager, and odds and incentives are always visible. The perception that gambling is a necessary component of enjoying sports is normalized by this constant exposure. Furthermore, popular television programs and motion pictures frequently minimize the hazards and unfavorable effects of gambling while promoting it as a quick way to get rich or as an exhilarating, high-stakes adventure.

Social media influencers and celebrities that either promote gambling apps or gamble themselves as part of their content further intensify this trend. This may give the impression that gambling is a desirable and socially acceptable pastime. The distinction between gambling and entertainment is becoming increasingly hazy due to the popularity of online gaming and the usage of "loot boxes," which mimic gambling mechanisms.

There's a chance that as gambling becomes increasingly prevalent in entertainment and media, people will grow numb to its risks. The possibility for addiction, mental health effects, and financial concerns associated with gambling may be underestimated by viewers. Furthermore, real-life effects of problem gambling, such as debt, strained relationships, and mental health difficulties, are rarely reflected in media portrayals.

How is gambling in India portrayed in the media?

Indian media's portrayal of gambling has evolved over time to reflect both the nation's traditional beliefs and the growing influence of modern entertainment and technology. In the past, gambling has been a contentious cultural issue that is frequently linked to ethical issues and regulatory limitations. But as online gaming and betting sites proliferate and media

attention grows, societal attitudes are progressively shifting.

In Bollywood, gambling is frequently portrayed in a glamorous or exciting way, with pivotal story elements being sequences involving high-stakes card games or betting. Films like *Teen Patti* and *Jannat* have portrayed gambling as a thrilling, high-risk pastime, but some of them have also emphasized the more sinister effects of addiction and monetary loss. In spite of these representations, the excitement and attraction of sudden riches are frequently highlighted, which may gently sway viewers' opinions on gambling.

The enormous growth of fantasy sports and online sports betting has also had an impact on the quickly changing media landscape. Ads for betting applications or fantasy cricket are now commonly shown on television and digital networks, especially during major sporting events like the Indian Premier League (IPL). These advertising generally stress on the enjoyment and potential benefits, making gambling appear like a type of entertainment or skill-based activity. They hardly ever discuss the dangers of addiction or unstable finances that accompany gambling, though.

The way that gambling is portrayed in the Indian news media is still a little unclear. While conventional types of gambling, such as local lotteries or illicit betting, are often perceived negatively due to their affiliation with criminal activity, online gambling and fantasy sports are depicted in a more neutral or even favorable light. Mixed perceptions may result from this contradictory representation, particularly among younger viewers that consume digital information more frequently.

Social Media Marketing's Effect on Internet Gambling

It is imperative to evaluate the wider effects of social media marketing on online gambling activities in the Indian industry, in addition to compliance. The goal of this analysis is to comprehend how these marketing initiatives

affect the beliefs, behaviors, and behavior of users.

User Acquisition and Conversion: The case studies are examined closely to look for proof of the marketing efforts' effects on user acquisition and conversion rates. The efficiency of these ads in drawing in and keeping users is examined.

User Attitudes and Behaviors: To determine the degree to which social media promotions have influenced user attitudes and behaviors regarding online gambling, quantitative data and user feedback are taken into account. This investigation investigates whether these marketing initiatives have directly led to a noticeable rise in online gambling participation.

Possibility of Gambling-Related Damage: The impact study also looks for proof that certain advertisements have a negative impact on gambling-related damage or addiction. The effectiveness of the campaigns' responsible gambling initiatives in reducing potential harm is evaluated.

An in-depth grasp of the actual relationships between social media marketing and online gambling in the Indian context is made possible by the case study analysis. This section provides important insights into the effectiveness and ramifications of marketing methods in the online gambling sector by looking at particular campaigns, their adherence to rules, and their impact on user behavior.

What part do movies, TV series, digital platforms, and ads play in shaping the culture of gambling?

The gambling industry's rapid growth has been greatly influenced by advertisements, TV shows, films, and online platforms, especially in the digital age. These media channels are crucial in normalizing and glamorizing gambling in addition to increasing its acceptance, as this promotes a worldwide gambling culture.

Commercials: Encouraging Energy and Availability

Advertising is one of the key factors driving the gaming industry's growth. Gambling advertisements may be seen everywhere, whether they are on online betting platforms, traditional lotteries, or casinos. Advertisements typically highlight the exhilaration of winning and present gambling as an easy and enjoyable way to make quick cash. These commercials sometimes include celebrities or athletes, which increases their popularity and gives them social validity. Moreover, advertising for gambling often downplays the risks, emphasizing the potential benefits instead, and neglects to alert consumers to the psychological and financial consequences of gambling addiction. Bonuses, promotions, and user-friendly mobile apps are all used to lure people into gambling without fully understanding the risks involved, particularly young adults.

Movies and TV Series: Glorifying the Gambling Lifestyle

Popular media plays a significant role in shaping the public's perception of gambling, especially films and television shows. Hollywood blockbusters like Casino Royale, Ocean's Eleven, and The Gambler have taken high stakes gaming to a new level of sophistication, elegance, and intrigue. For dramatic effect, these portrayals often emphasize the skill, guile, and thrill of the situation while downplaying or exaggerating the darker sides of addiction and financial ruin.

While some films attempt to portray the dangers of gambling addiction, the allure of fast-paced action, large payouts, and lavish lifestyles usually overpowers these depictions. This conveys the sense that gambling is not so much a risky past time as it is a unique and thrilling activity.

Digital Platforms: Increasing Access and Making Gambling More Common

The increasing ubiquity of digital platforms has reinforced the cultural acceptance of gambling. With so many betting apps, fantasy sports, and online gambling options available, anyone with

a smartphone may now gamble more easily than before. Social media platforms have contributed to this trend as well, since digital content creators and influencers often promote gambling websites or include content about gambling.

Furthermore, online games—especially those with "loot boxes" and in-game purchases—have introduced younger audiences to gambling-like concepts. These algorithms imitate the excitement of chance and reward, making it harder for younger users to discern between gaming and life. Digital platforms also employ targeted advertising and algorithms to ensure that the right audiences, particularly those who are more likely to become addicted, see gambling promos. Frequent exposure to gambling content normalizes it and makes it easier for people to engage in it even though they are fully aware of the risks.

The Impact of Sports Sponsorships

The integration of gambling into popular culture has been greatly influenced by sponsorships, especially in the sports world. Betting businesses often fund elite sports leagues, teams, and athletes. During live sports broadcasts, odds and betting information are often displayed, encouraging viewers to gamble as part of the sporting experience. Now that gambling has been incorporated into sports entertainment, betting is more commonly acknowledged as a typical part of being a fan. The integration of gambling into the sports sector has increased its visibility and appeal to a broader audience, particularly youth. This lends credence to the notion that gambling is an essential part of enjoying sports, despite the risks involved.

Analysis of narrative techniques used in online gambling ads

Online gambling advertisements are designed to captivate viewers quickly, often using a range of narrative techniques that appeal to

emotions, desires, and psychological triggers. These ads employ storytelling to create a compelling experience that entices potential gamblers by highlighting excitement, potential rewards, and accessibility, while often downplaying the risks.

1. The Illusion of Control and Skill

Many online gambling ads emphasize the idea that players can "control" their outcomes through skill or strategy. Fantasy sports betting, poker, and other games of skill are often promoted as challenges that require intelligence, planning, and expertise. By framing gambling as a skill-based activity, these ads make it seem less risky and more appealing, especially to younger, competitive audiences who feel confident in their abilities.

2. Aspirational Storytelling

Another common technique is aspirational storytelling, where gambling is portrayed as a way to achieve instant wealth, success, or a better lifestyle. Ads often show people winning large sums of money, surrounded by luxury, celebrating with friends, or living an aspirational life. This taps into viewers' desires for financial freedom, status, and excitement. The narratives make it seem like gambling could be a fast track to a dream lifestyle, even though the odds are against it.

3. Emotion-Driven Appeal

Many gambling ads use emotion-driven narratives to create excitement, suspense, and fun. By showcasing thrilling moments of betting, such as last-minute sports wins or jackpot celebrations, these ads evoke strong emotional reactions. They position gambling as an exhilarating, high-energy experience that offers a break from the monotony of daily life. This emotional appeal is often combined with messages of social connection, with ads showing groups of friends enjoying the experience together.

4. Social Validation and Celebrity Endorsements

Celebrity endorsements and social validation are powerful techniques used in gambling ads. Celebrities or influencers are often shown engaging in betting or endorsing gambling platforms, giving a sense of credibility and glamour to the activity. By associating gambling with famous personalities, ads suggest that gambling is not only acceptable but also aspirational and trendy. This creates a social narrative where gambling becomes normalized and even desirable in mainstream culture.

5. Limited Time Offers and Urgency

A key narrative technique in online gambling ads is creating a sense of urgency through limited-time offers, bonuses, and promotions. Ads frequently feature countdowns, exclusive deals, or "first-time offers" that encourage viewers to act quickly to avoid missing out. This taps into the fear of missing out (FOMO) and compels potential users to make impulsive decisions, often without fully considering the risks involved.

Case studies: IPL and the explosion of fantasy sports promotions.

The Indian Premier League (IPL) has not only transformed the world of cricket but also catalysed a revolution in the realm of sports promotions, particularly in the fantasy sports industry. Over the past decade, fantasy sports platforms like Dream11, My11Circle, and others have leveraged the IPL's massive popularity to create a booming ecosystem of online betting-like experiences that attract millions of users. The rise of fantasy sports promotions during the IPL serves as a powerful case study in how sports marketing, digital platforms, and evolving consumer behaviour have intertwined to normalize and popularize a form of online gambling.

The IPL as a Platform for Fantasy Sports

The IPL, launched in 2008, rapidly grew to become one of the world's most-watched

cricket tournaments, with millions tuning in for its fast-paced matches and star-studded line-ups. Its wide fan base, the exciting format, and the entertainment-driven nature of the league have made it a lucrative platform for advertisers and marketers across industries. However, it is the fantasy sports industry that has particularly thrived during the IPL, as fans are drawn to engage with the game in a more interactive and immersive manner.

Fantasy sports allow users to create virtual teams composed of real-life players who compete in ongoing matches, with points awarded based on the players' actual performances. Users compete for rewards, including cash prizes, based on their team's success. The IPL's short, intense matches, star appeal, and unpredictable outcomes are ideally suited for this kind of engagement, making it a prime driver of fantasy sports participation.⁸⁷¹

The Explosion of Fantasy Sports Promotions

Fantasy sports platforms have exploded in popularity, thanks largely to aggressive marketing campaigns during the IPL. Companies like Dream11, which became the IPL's title sponsor in 2020, have invested heavily in advertisements across television, digital platforms, and social media to position themselves as integral to the IPL experience. During live broadcasts, promotions for fantasy sports platforms are frequent, encouraging fans to create teams, join contests, and bet on their favorite players' performances.

The Role of Celebrity Endorsements

Celebrity endorsements have played a significant role in the fantasy sports boom during the IPL. Recognizable cricketers like MS Dhoni, Virat Kohli, and others are often the faces of these campaigns, lending credibility and appeal to the platforms. For instance, Dream11's association with major cricket stars, as well as

⁸⁷¹ CredAble, *IPL to Drive a Surge in Revenue for Fantasy Gaming Platforms*, CredAble Insights (Mar. 2023), <https://credable.in/insights-by-credable/business-insights/how-ipls-growing-popularity-has-transformed-indian-cricket-economics/>

its IPL sponsorship, has helped establish fantasy sports as a legitimate and mainstream activity in the minds of fans.

The use of well-known cricket personalities not only brings in hardcore fans but also taps into a broader audience who view these players as trustworthy figures. This type of social validation has been instrumental in fantasy sports platforms gaining widespread acceptance, with people viewing these apps as an extension of the cricket-watching experience rather than a form of gambling.

User Engagement and Psychological Appeal

Fantasy sports, especially during the IPL, capitalize on the emotional and psychological connection that fans have with the game. Users are not just passive viewers; they are active participants who feel a sense of involvement by "managing" teams and predicting outcomes. This form of engagement is deeply satisfying, especially for cricket enthusiasts who enjoy the challenge of strategy and player selection. The platforms create a gamified experience, where skill, knowledge, and chance all come together, which helps users justify their involvement as a test of expertise rather than a gamble.

Moreover, the sense of competition and camaraderie—often between friends, family, and larger communities—creates a powerful incentive to participate. The chance to win rewards, from small prizes to large cash payouts, adds a layer of excitement to the IPL experience, reinforcing user engagement with both the sport and the fantasy platforms.

Regulatory and Ethical Concerns

Despite its growing popularity, fantasy sports promotions have raised several regulatory and ethical concerns, especially in a country like India, where gambling is tightly regulated and often illegal. The question of whether fantasy sports constitute gambling or a skill-based activity has been a matter of intense debate. Proponents argue that fantasy sports require deep knowledge of the game, player statistics, and performance trends, making it more a

game of skill than luck. This distinction has been critical in allowing platforms like Dream11 to operate legally in most Indian states.

However, the thin line between skill and chance has prompted concerns about gambling addiction, especially among younger audiences. The heavy advertising, cash rewards, and frequent promotions during the IPL can create an addictive cycle for some users, leading them to spend increasing amounts of time and money on these platforms. The sense of urgency, often created by time-sensitive promotions or in-app notifications, can lead to impulsive betting-like behavior, where users chase losses or try to increase their winnings.

The Socio-Economic Impact of Fantasy Sports During the IPL

The rise of fantasy sports during the IPL has had significant socio-economic implications. On the one hand, these platforms have created a booming industry, with significant job creation in technology, marketing, and sports analytics. Fantasy sports have also increased viewership for the IPL, as fans remain more engaged in matches when they have a vested interest in player performance.

On the other hand, the socio-economic impact on users, particularly those from lower-income groups, can be concerning. The lure of quick money through fantasy sports can lead to compulsive participation, with some users investing money they cannot afford to lose. This has raised questions about the social responsibility of fantasy sports platforms and their role in protecting vulnerable populations from the dangers of gambling addiction.

The Future of Fantasy Sports Promotions

The case of the IPL and fantasy sports promotions highlights the intricate relationship between sports marketing, digital platforms, and consumer behavior. As the fantasy sports industry continues to grow, especially in conjunction with major sporting events like the IPL, there will be increasing scrutiny on its role in promoting responsible gaming practices. While

fantasy sports offer an exciting, interactive experience for fans, the broader implications of its rise—especially the potential for gambling-related harms—cannot be ignored.

Going forward, the challenge for fantasy sports platforms will be to strike a balance between growth and responsibility. This may include stronger self-regulation, clearer advertising about the risks involved, and more stringent measures to prevent problem gambling. The IPL, as a flagship sporting event, will likely remain a key driver of fantasy sports growth, but its association with gambling-like activities also presents ethical and regulatory challenges that will need to be addressed to protect the long-term integrity of both the sport and its fans.

Conclusion

The media has played a crucial role in shaping and accelerating the emergence of a gambling culture in India. Through various forms of storytelling in advertisements, television shows, films, and digital platforms, gambling has been increasingly normalized and integrated into everyday life. Media narratives have not only influenced public perceptions of gambling but also actively encouraged its growth by glamorizing it, associating it with celebrity endorsements, and embedding it within popular forms of entertainment, particularly sports.

One of the key drivers of this shift has been the portrayal of gambling as an exciting, skill-based activity that offers potential financial rewards. This is evident in the explosion of fantasy sports platforms during major sporting events like the Indian Premier League (IPL), where betting-like behavior is framed as an extension of the fan experience. By positioning gambling as an interactive, engaging, and socially accepted pastime, media narratives have blurred the lines between entertainment and gambling, making it more accessible to a broad audience, particularly young adults.

The influence of media has also led to the integration of gambling with celebrity culture, where endorsements from well-known figures in

sports and entertainment lend credibility and appeal to gambling platforms. This has helped legitimize the practice, making it appear trendy and aspirational, while often downplaying the risks of addiction, financial losses, and social consequences. The pervasiveness of gambling advertisements and promotions in digital media has further reinforced its acceptance, ensuring that it reaches a wide audience, often with minimal warnings about potential harms.

However, the rise of media-driven gambling culture in India also presents significant challenges. As gambling becomes more mainstream, concerns about its social and ethical implications grow. While gambling platforms and media outlets promote the thrill and excitement of participation, they rarely address the dangers of problem gambling, which can lead to serious financial, mental health, and social issues. This highlights the need for a more balanced media narrative that emphasizes responsible gambling and raises awareness about the risks associated with compulsive behavior.

In conclusion, the media's role in fostering a gambling culture in India is undeniable. Its narratives have transformed public attitudes toward gambling, making it a normalized part of modern entertainment. As the gambling industry continues to expand, especially through digital platforms, it is essential to consider the broader social impact of these narratives. Responsible media representation, coupled with stricter regulatory frameworks, will be necessary to ensure that the growth of gambling culture does not come at the cost of individual well-being or societal stability.

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