

Marketing Campaign of Pro Kabaddi League (PKL): Case Study

History Of Kabaddi

Kabaddi is an indigenous game of India. Therefore, Indian player are played better than others country. It is a game that finds its roots in the wide domain of India's history. Kabaddi originated in Tamil Nadu, and its name is derived from the Tamil word "Kai-Pidi," which means to hold hands. It is a popular sport in the southern part of Asia, and is recognized as the state game of several Indian states, as well as the national sport of Bangladesh. The game has been played in various forms with different names. (sportsmatik.com, n.d).

This game is also, known as Hu-Tu-Tu in Western India, Ha-Do-Do in Eastern India & Bangladesh, Chedugudu in Southern India and Kaunbada in Northern India (www.sportsadda.com, 2021).

Kabaddi game has evolved across time periods from the ancient time till the present days with various changes in the rules, format of the game and so on (www.kabaddi.info,n.d).

Kabaddi matches during the ancient time was completely a different sport when compared to the present scenario. During the ancient period it was considered as an activity/sport to develop the battle skills and also, it has been documented that Kabaddi is almost 4000 years old. According to mythology it is beleived that this sport has been mentioned in the Hindu epic "Mahabharata", where Arjuna one amongst the "Pandava's" learnt these skills from his dearest friend Lord Krishna and also, his son Abhimanyu too used Kabaddi strategies and skills to breach the 7-tiered "Chakravyuha" defence during the battle (www.sportsadda.com,2021). Also, in Buddhist literature it is stated that Gautam Buddha used to play Kabaddi for recreation. History also reveals that prince of Yore played this sport to display their strengths and win their brides (Hindustan Times, 2016).

Evolution of Kabaddi as a formal game:

Table 1: Shows the chronological evolution of the game:

Year	Evolution of Kabaddi
1918	First set of rules for Kabaddi in India was introduced

1936	Demonstration of summer Olympics in Berlin
1950	Formation of All India Kabaddi Federation
1980	First ever Asian Kabaddi Championship
1990	Kabaddi included in Asian games
2004	First ever standard style Kabaddi World-Cup
2014	Pro Kabaddi League was launched

(Source: www.sportsadda.com, How the kabaddi match has evolved over the years, December 2020).

The recognition of Kabaddi as a sport came in the early 20th century. The first set of rules and regulations for Kabaddi as an Indigenous sport was established in 1918, even before it was declared as the national sport of India. In 1923, an All-India Kabaddi tournament was conducted in Baroda, and since then, many national-level tournaments have been held in various countries (www.sportsadda.com, 2020).

Although Kabaddi was not included as an official sport, a 35-member team from Hanuman Vyayam Prasarak Mandal, an educational institute from Amaravati, was invited to demonstrate the sport in Berlin. In 1950, the All India Kabaddi Federation was established, and the first national tournament for men and women was held in 1955 in Chennai and Kolkata, respectively. Kabaddi was showcased in the inaugural Asian Games in 1951 (www.sportsadda.com, 2020).

The Amateur Kabaddi Federation of India (AKFI) was established in 1972 to promote the sport in neighboring countries. In 1980, the first Asian Kabaddi Championship was held, and India emerged as the first champion after defeating Bangladesh in the final. Kabaddi was included as a demonstration sport in the 1982 Asian Games, and in 1990, it became an official sport. India has dominated in the Asian Games, winning all but one of the eight finals since 1990. Iran ended India's winning streak in the 2018 final. The sport made its debut in the Standard Style of Kabaddi World Cup in 2004, which India hosted in Mumbai, with 12 teams competing. The Indian Kabaddi team emerged victorious after winning all their matches, defeating Iran in the final with a score of 56-28.



Figure 1: Showing the 2016 Kabbadi World cup

Source: Twitter / @ProKabaddi

India has hosted all three Kabaddi World Cups so far, and in each of these events, India defeated Iran to win the championship. The 2016 Kabaddi World Cup was especially significant as it marked the first time a women's world cup was held. However, the sport did not experience significant growth until 2014. In 2008, the Indian sports industry underwent a revolution with the advent of the Indian Premier League (IPL) - the first season of which was a breakthrough for cricket in the country. Although not necessarily needed in a nation obsessed with cricket, the IPL opened up opportunities for other sports to gain traction, improve infrastructure, and generate revenue.

Journey of Kabaddi sport from Rural Pastime to Primetime Television Sport through Pro Kabaddi League (PKL):

Following the success of IPL, many other sports leagues emerged, including the highly successful Pro Kabaddi league that launched in 2014. This ground-breaking initiative was introduced by Mashal Sports Pvt. Ltd and later taken up by Star India Pvt. Ltd. Since its inception, the league has transformed Kabaddi with innovative rules and audience engagement, making it a thrilling sport for players and fans alike. Pro Kabaddi has elevated the sport's standards and status by bringing a rural pastime to primetime television across the country.

There were concerns about the potential success of the Pro Kabaddi League, as many leagues were attempting to replicate the IPL's business model and success. Additionally, unlike cricket, there were relatively few well-known Kabaddi players. However, it was also acknowledged

that Kabaddi had a widespread grassroots following, which could attract both rural and metropolitan viewers, making it an attractive target for advertisers if the league gained popularity. (www.medium.com, 2016)

During the first season of the Pro Kabaddi League, eight teams competed for the title. Since then, the league has grown significantly, with over 350 million viewers tuning in to watch past seasons. The league's outreach has had a significant impact, with players from various backgrounds and cities emerging as a result. The league has also provided young players with more support and training, offering them a platform to pursue a professional career. The concept of a Kabaddi league was first discussed in 2010 when Deoraj Chaturvedi, an official from the Asian Kabaddi Federation, met commentator Charu Sharma at the Asian Games in Guangzhou, China, where Sharma was covering the kabaddi event (Bhagavatula, 2021).

Despite kabaddi being a significant sport for the Indian government since winning gold in the 2006 Asian Games, it had not received much public attention. In 2011 or 2012, Deoraj Chaturvedi, an official from the Asian Kabaddi Federation, approached commentator Charu Sharma with the idea for a kabaddi league. They met in Jaipur, and Sharma suggested the Mahindra Group as potential investors. Chaturvedi then spoke to Janardhan Singh Gehlot, the president of the Indian Kabaddi Federation, who gave his approval for the league to proceed. (Bhagavatula, 2021)



Figure 2: Pro Kabbadi League teams of India

Source: www.prokabaddi.com

Chaturvedi and Sharma, who were working with Mashal Sports, faced opposition from many when they began designing and conceptualizing the league. The CEO of the IKF said that several people had preconceived notions that kabaddi was only played in villages and that it

was unreasonable to believe that people outside of those areas would be interested in watching the sport. Chaturvedi and Sharma continued working on their idea for the kabaddi league and conducted surveys at national-level events. The responses they received confirmed their early observations that the sport could attract a stadium audience. However, finding a broadcaster was crucial to the success of the league. They approached several sports channels, but it was only after much convincing that Star agreed to come on board, despite initial concerns about the sport's ability to fill stadiums. (www.prokabaddi.com, n.d.)

Chaturvedi highlights the importance of generating revenue for the success of the kabaddi league, and therefore, the decision was made to charge for stadium tickets instead of offering free entry. However, the prices were kept affordable to make it accessible to a wider audience. To keep expenses under control, the league adopted a caravan format where matches were hosted in clusters within a city, rather than having teams and television crews travel around the country, as seen in the IPL. This approach allowed the league to cut costs by a significant amount compared to a scattered league format.



Infographic showing the growth of Pro Kabaddi League growth in five seasons

Source: www.sportskeeda.com

After Chaturvedi and Sharma laid the groundwork for the PKL, Star took charge and focused on promoting the sport to urban audiences. Despite the perception of kabaddi as a rural sport, Star invested in marketing and production, hiring experts in contact sports and launching a multi-faceted promotional campaign. The campaign included a teaser in early 2014, which showcased the physical aspects of kabaddi without revealing the name of the sport.

To attract a wider urban audience, Star India Pvt. Ltd. made a considerable marketing effort to present kabaddi as a modern and exciting sport. They produced short, animated ads to explain the game's rules and created air-conditioned venues with laser shows and music to enhance the stadium-going experience. The multi-camera broadcast system also made TV audiences feel like they were part of the action. To further boost the sport's appeal, the players were given a "makeover," such as haircuts and tattoos, to give the sport a more contemporary and edgier feel. The league also received the endorsement of the Bollywood film industry, which was crucial to the league's success in India. (Ghosh et.al, 2018)

The PKL utilized Bollywood's influence to their advantage by leveraging celebrity endorsements through barter deals. The league attracted famous Bollywood actors such as Amitabh Bachchan, Aamir Khan, Shahrukh Khan, Salman Khan, and Abhishek Bachchan, and even used the league for film promotions. The red carpet was also utilized to attract attention to the league.

The success of the first season of PKL led Star to further strengthen their marketing efforts for season two. They wanted to associate kabaddi with positive qualities like youthfulness, courage, action, and coolness. To achieve this, they coined the term "Le Panga", which means "go pick a fight" colloquially, to encourage audiences to take on challenges despite the odds.

In addition to the Le Panga campaign, the broadcaster also focused on regional endorsements to increase the league's popularity. Celebrities like Kannada superstar Yash and Rana Daggubati from the Telugu film industry were brought in as regional ambassadors. The channel also created individual spots on players like Anup, Rakesh Kumar, Rahul Chaudhari, and Manjeet Chhillar to introduce them to audiences who knew little about them before. These efforts helped to raise the profile of the league and its players. The marketing team of PKL at Star adopted several strategies to promote the league to various segments of the audience. They created ads that parodied popular TV shows, movies, and news programs, utilized a famous cartoon character to target children, and featured female players from the Women's Kabaddi

Challenge in an ad promoting various career options to attract female viewers. The team seemed to be committed to reaching out to a wide range of viewers to make the league a success. (www.medium.com, 2016)

Marketing Lessons from Pro Kabaddi League - Getting the 4 Ps right:

From a native Indian pastime to a glamorous high-octane televised spectacle, from a dusty mud ground to a made-for-TV, graphic-laden mat, from schoolchildren breathlessly chanting the name of the game to A-list movie stars cheering from the front rows, the game of kabaddi has made quite a leap, all in a span of three seasons. The success of a product is often dependent on four key factors: Product, Place, Price, and Promotion. and the Pro Kabaddi League managed to excel in all of them. Here's how they did it:

Sports Product: A product is anything that satisfies a need or wish and is acquired to do so. In relation to sports two important concepts have implications for sports marketing. The first is the core product, defined as the actual game, over which the sport marketer has no control. The second concept is the importance of product extensions to the overall marketing effort. It is here that the marketer can ensure that acceptable levels of quality are achieved. (Lucian, 2013)

Product – Before the inception of the Pro Kabaddi League (PKL), Kabaddi was considered a sport played mostly by rural people and pehelwans in dusty arenas, with little significance in urban India in the 21st century. However, the PKL introduced Kabaddi in a completely new format. Instead of mud, synthetic floors were used, and the rules of the game were modified to improve the viewer experience. The innovative broadcasting of the league with multiple cameras, slow-motion replays, and commentary in both Hindi and English, along with newly defined game statistics such as the number of successful raids, greatly enhanced the viewership experience. These factors combined to offer the viewers an experience that was genuinely "new and improved." (www.nicheiima.wordpress.com, 2014)



Source: nicheiima.wordpress.com, 2014

According to a BARC India report, in 2016, non-cricket programming contributed to 20% of the audience for live matches. Out of the six shows that were aired, which included Pro Kabaddi League (PKL), Indian Super League (ISL), Rio Olympics 2016, Kabaddi World Cup 2016, Premier Badminton League (PBL), and Hockey India League (HIL), PKL had the highest share of normalized impressions, accounting for 61%, followed by ISL with 16%. The remaining sports had significantly lower viewership, with PBL and HIL having negligible impressions. (bestmediainfo.com,2017)

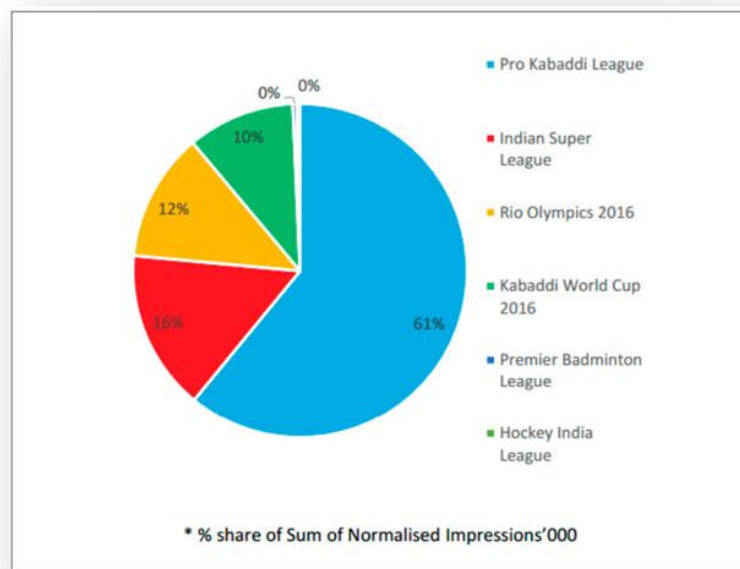


Figure 3: Showing the PKL % share of Live matches

Source: (bestmediainfo.com,2017)

Although the Premier Badminton League (PBL) and Hockey India League (HIL) had lower viewership compared to other sports leagues, they had a considerable impact in terms of audience engagement, as indicated by the ratio of impressions to reach. This shows that the content was sticky, meaning it kept viewers engaged and created a high interaction space for target advertisers.

Kabaddi stands out among other sports in terms of its superiority, as it has the best impressions and reach, with the Pro Kabaddi League leading followed by the Kabaddi World Cup 2016. In comparison, the Indian Super League has the lowest reach among all properties but has a high level of stickiness among its audience. The sport of kabaddi is more popular among younger age groups, particularly those between 4-14 years and 15-30 years. However, different regions in India may have varying levels of reception towards these sports leagues, as the country is diverse and consumer preferences change frequently. (bestmediainfo.com,2017)

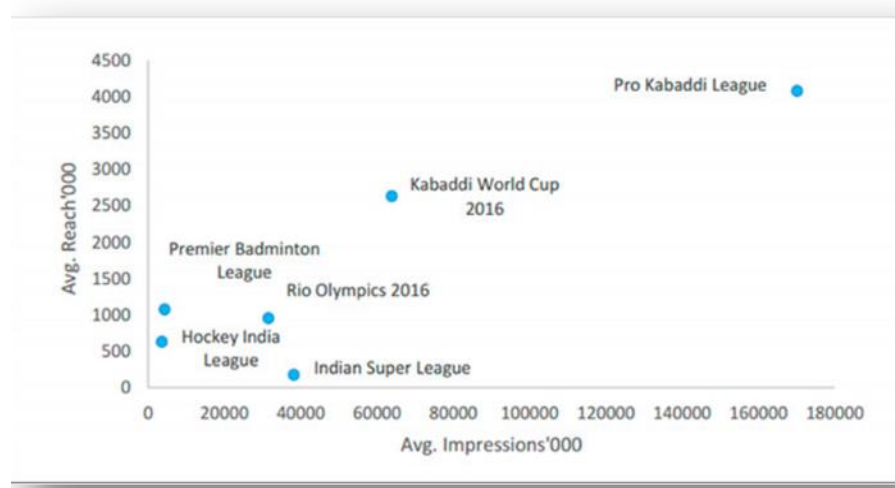


Figure: Showing the ratio of impressions

Source: (bestmediainfo.com,2017)

Sports Place: Place is the process of getting the sport product to the consumer. It is also called distribution: distributing the sport product to the consumer. The sport marketer will analyse the types of distribution methods available and select those that will deliver the product to the right place. Right place refers to the location of the sport product (stadium, arena), the point of origin for distributing the product, (Ticket sales counter and method-online or offline sale) the geographical location of the target markets and other channels that are important to consider

regarding whether target audiences may access the product. To ensure the favourable effect of the physical location of the product following factors must be kept in mind:

- Sports facility must be easily accessible.
- Have attractive physical appearance.
- Have a pleasant, convenient and functional environment.
- Have safe and pleasant surroundings. (Lucian, 2013)

Place – Since people had certain preconceived ideas about kabaddi, it was crucial for the PKL to introduce the new version of kabaddi to the audience. It was important to create a large-scale "trial" of PKL as a form of entertainment. To achieve this, it was launched on various channels of STAR India. In addition to STAR Sports, it was also aired on channels such as STAR Gold and STAR Utsav, which are family entertainment channels. This approach allowed PKL to reach out to audiences who do not usually consume sports as a form of entertainment. (www.nicheiima.wordpress.com, 2014)

Sports Pricing: The Price of a product represents what a consumer relinquishes in exchange for a sporting good or service. A price should also reflect the value of a product. The challenge for the sports marketer is to determine the right price for the consumer. Sports pricing is critical and complex to the success of the marketing plan. Sport marketers must determine how consumers perceive the value of the product compared with all competing products and use that information to set an appropriate price. Additionally, they should seek to offer consumers a satisfying experience with perceived benefits that surpass the personal and financial costs that consumers incur. (Lucian, 2013)

Price – When it comes to consuming entertainment products on television, there are no direct costs involved. However, viewers do perceive certain costs, such as the time they need to invest in watching a match. In this regard, kabaddi has an advantage over cricket, as the duration of a kabaddi match is much shorter. This means that viewers do not need to spend as much time watching a single match, thereby reducing the perceived cost associated with watching kabaddi. (www.nicheiima.wordpress.com, 2014)

The extensive marketing efforts by Star India proved to be highly successful. Both rural and urban areas saw a significant increase in viewership for the league. Ajith Kumar, a player for

Jaipur Pink Panthers, mentioned that his entire village in Tamil Nadu would switch from TV serials to Pro Kabaddi matches when the league was being aired. The league has managed to capture the interest of different age groups and genders. Although kabaddi has traditionally been a male-dominated sport, more women are now showing an interest in the game. The national women's kabaddi team has won two gold medals and a silver medal in the last three Asian Games.

Pro Kabaddi is the second most popular sports league in India after IPL, followed by other leagues like Indian Super League (football) and Premier Badminton League. The league gained significant viewership during its first season in 2014, with 435 million people tuning in to watch the 37-day event, compared to IPL's 552 million viewers in the same year. Pro Kabaddi also has the highest number of participating teams (12) among all the sporting leagues in India.

The success of Pro Kabaddi on television can be attributed to the fact that the matches are relatively short, lasting less than an hour from the toss to the presentation. This is much shorter than a typical T20 cricket match. Additionally, the matches are scheduled in the late evening, making it a convenient time for families to watch together.

The statement "Cricket is the religion of India" is not an exaggeration and has been proven many times before, as reiterated in the Think newsletter 'Rise of Indian Sports Leagues' for BARC India. However, the encouraging news is that other sports are also gaining popularity in terms of viewership. (bestmediainfo.com, 2017)

Sports Promotion: Promotion means raising awareness. It is a process of making people aware of something. In sport marketing the word promotion covers a range of interrelated activities. All of these activities are designed to attract attention, stimulate the interest and awareness of consumers and encourage them to purchase a sport product. The elements of sports promotion include advertising, sponsorship, public relations, licensing, personal contact, incentives and atmospherics. Atmospherics utilizes the design of visual communications in an environment, such as lighting. Colours, music, to entice the sport consumer's perceptual and emotional responses to purchase the sport product or service. (Lucian, 2013)

Promotion – The Indian market responds positively to celebrity endorsements. Bringing in popular celebrities such as Amitabh Bachchan, Sachin Tendulkar, Aamir Khan, Shah Rukh Khan, Aishwarya Rai, and Abhishek Bachchan generated interest among Indian consumers, which led to product trials. The quality of the product took care of repurchasing (www.nicheiima.wordpress.com, 2014).

At the inception of the league in 2014, each of the eight teams participating in the Pro Kabaddi League was required to pay a total of \$250,000. Although this business model was effective, it had limitations in terms of reaching urban audiences. In 2015, Star Sports acquired a 74% stake in the league's parent company, Mashal Sports, and renamed it "Mashal Sports Pvt. Ltd Star-India" (Sudevan, 2022).

When the Star Sports' sponsorship deal with the Pro Kabaddi League ended, a bidding war began for the sponsorship rights for Season 5. Vivo Electronics Corporation, a Chinese mobile phone maker, eventually won the bid with a record-breaking Rs 300 crore contract. This marked the end of a five-year partnership with Star Sports that had been successful in making the league one of the most successful non-cricket leagues in India. However, the sponsorship deal with Vivo was also surrounded by controversy on social media (Moudgal, 2018).

The Pro Kabaddi League has experienced a significant increase in its value over the years. In 2014, the highest bid for a player during the auction was Rs 12.8 lakh, while in 2022, it reached Rs 2.26 crore for Pawan Kumar Sehrawat by Tamil Thalaivas. This shows the growth of the league in terms of player valuation. In addition, the media rights value of the league has also increased considerably, with Star India purchasing the rights till 2025 for Rs 905 crore. However, some team owners felt that the league could have generated a higher broadcast revenue and were not satisfied with the auction process. Another point worth noting is that the total prize money in season four (Rs 2 crore) was less than what Pawan received during the auction this year. (bestmediainfo.com, 2017)



Source: <http://www.thehansindia.com>

The study then focused on Pro Kabaddi League and analyzed the advertising spending on the league. It was found that seven out of the 13 categories analyzed for the study had a significant presence in the league. (bestmediainfo.com, 2017)

Although female viewership makes up a significant proportion of the PKL audience, with a contribution of approximately 44%, the representation of female-specific sectors such as personal care, personal hygiene, and household products in the advertising is not proportional. These sectors only account for 15% of the total duration of ads. On the other hand, male-focused categories such as durables, banking/finance/investment, auto, fuel/petroleum products, and alcoholic drinks make up 35% of the total ad duration. (bestmediainfo.com, 2017)

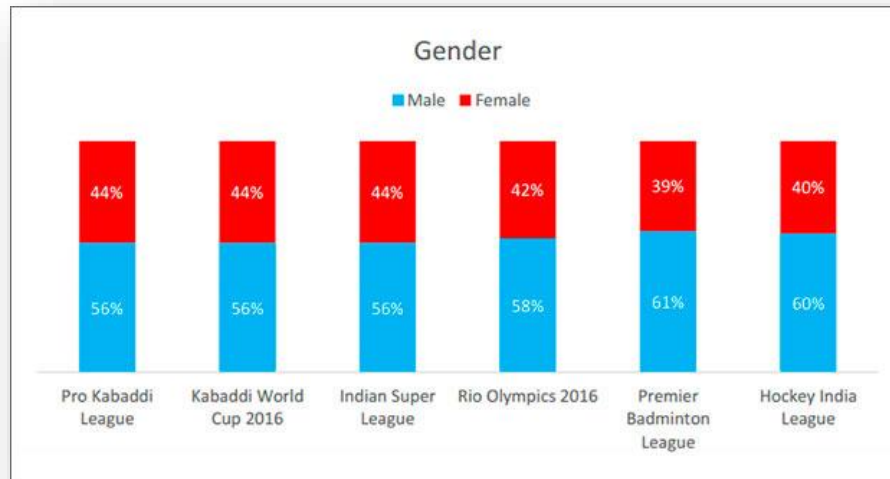
b. Ad sector preferences

Ad Sector	Pro Kabaddi League	Indian Super League
Personal Care/Personal Hygiene	14%	7%
Telecom Products	13%	1%
Telecom/Internet Service Providers	13%	3%
Durables	13%	0%
Food & Beverages	12%	8%
Services	12%	24%
Banking/Finance/Investment	11%	7%
Auto	5%	34%
Fuel/Petroleum Products	4%	0%
Alcoholic Drinks	2%	6%
Household Products	1%	0%
Miscellaneous	0%	0%
Personal Healthcare	0%	0%
Education	0%	11%

* % share of Duration (seconds)

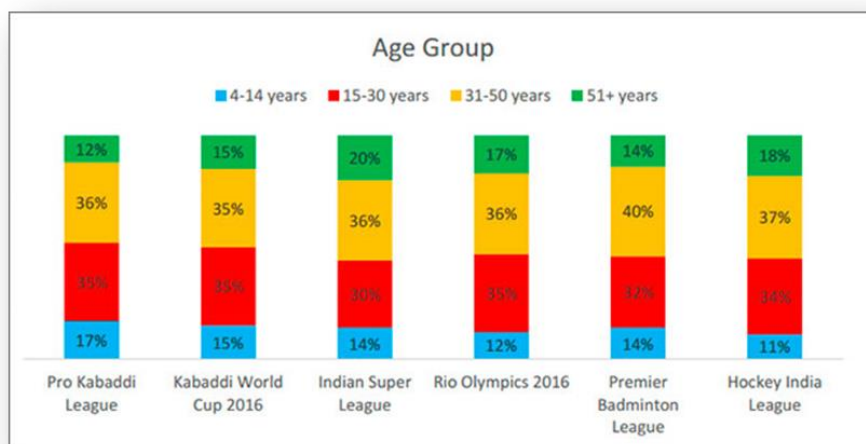
Source: (bestmediainfo.com, 2017)

Viewership Demographics:



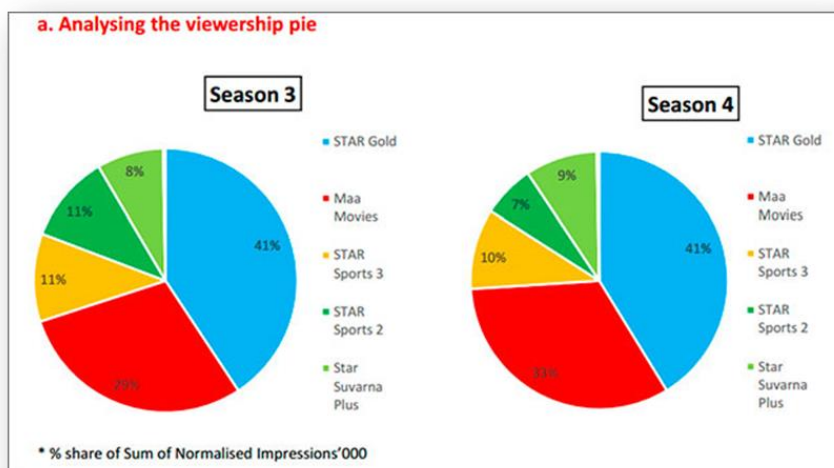
Source: (bestmediainfo.com, 2017)

Viewers from lower NCCS (National Consumer Classification System) and female viewers have displayed relatively higher interest in watching Pro Kabaddi League (PKL), Indian Super League (ISL) and Kabaddi World Cup 2016. In contrast, Rio Olympics 2016, Premier Badminton League (PBL) and Hockey India League (HIL) have a higher contribution from NCCS A viewers. (bestmediainfo.com, 2017)



Source: (bestmediainfo.com, 2017)

The PKL has a higher viewership contribution from the youth compared to the ISL, but it lacks representation from youth-centric categories like education. Therefore, the PKL offers significant opportunities for targeting female and youth audiences. (bestmediainfo.com, 2017)



Source: (bestmediainfo.com, 2017)

Seasons 3 and 4 of the PKL were simulcast on multiple channels, including Star Gold, Star Sports 2, Star Sports 3 Maa Movies, and Star Suvarna Plus. Interestingly, around 80% of the viewership for each season came from telecasts on movie channels, and this percentage has been increasing. For instance, 78% of the viewership for season 3 came from movie channels, while for season 4, it increased to-83%. (bestmediainfo.com, 2017)

Market	Pro Kabaddi League	Kabaddi World Cup 2016	Indian Super League	Rio Olympics 2016	Premier Badminton League	Hockey India League
AP / Telangana	32%	39%	1%	10%	10%	9%
Assam / North East / Sikkim	1%	1%	17%	8%	17%	9%
Bihar	1%	0%	0%	1%	1%	1%
Chhattisgarh	2%	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%
Delhi	2%	2%	1%	4%	5%	3%
Guj / D&D / DNH	2%	3%	1%	4%	3%	4%
Jharkhand	0%	0%	1%	1%	1%	3%
Karnataka	12%	15%	1%	6%	11%	8%
Kerala	5%	5%	30%	8%	3%	4%
Madhya Pradesh	2%	1%	1%	5%	9%	4%
Mah / Goa	24%	15%	5%	12%	13%	13%
Odisha	1%	1%	1%	3%	4%	7%
Pun / Har / Cha / HP / J&K	7%	7%	2%	11%	7%	13%
Rajasthan	3%	2%	1%	5%	1%	2%
TN/Pondicherry	1%	2%	7%	7%	7%	9%
UP/Uttarakhand	3%	3%	1%	10%	4%	5%
West Bengal	2%	1%	28%	5%	5%	5%

* % share of Sum of Normalised Impressions'000

Source: (bestmediainfo.com, 2017)

The highest viewership for Kabaddi was observed in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, with approximately 32% of viewers tuning in for PKL and 39% for the Kabaddi World Cup. The Maharashtra/Goa market generated the second-highest viewership, which could be attributed to the success of Team U Mumbai in the third season of the Pro Kabaddi League, where they finished second. The data suggests that a strong performance by the local team has a positive impact on the viewership in that particular market, in addition to the overall interest in the sport. (bestmediainfo.com, 2017)

Factors behind popularity of PKL from the perspective of 4 P’s:

White Paper Findings	Factors Behind Growing Popularity of PKL
Fan Acceptability of League	Kabaddi as a sport didn’t enjoy huge native fan base to start with High decibel marketing campaign ensured relevance & media push-built hype to ensure viewer interest Top notch game quality, best-in-the world talent pool & crisp program packaging made the league ‘likable’ amongst the audience
Choice of Sports	Choosing Kabaddi as the sport was a bold decision to start with considering player popularity being low in the country Having said that, Indian Kabaddi contingent has been immensely successful at the global stage over the years ensuring early survival of the league
Game Format & Scheduling	Instead of aping the successful home-away format of IPL, PKL went for a caravan format keeping the league short and crisp ensuring the league getting over before the initial hype died down.
Players	Being an indigenous sport, although the players aren’t well known names amongst the audience; the quality of talent pool participating in PKL has been the best in the world
Design of The League	In the first season, the right holders managed to keep the expenses from central as well as team perspective under check beautifully making the league commercially viable and ensuring deep pockets for the team to spend on players. This in turn ensured level playing field between the eight teams making the league competitive right till the end & exhilarating for the audience
Team Location	City based franchise enable association with fans of that particular region resulting in captive fan base
Fan Experience	Kabaddi as a sport doesn’t demand major infrastructure making it easy to host the matches in equipped auditoriums/multipurpose stadiums. This makes the on-ground fan experience memorable Sleek on-air production & packaging with informative commentary in regional languages helps build greater audience connect Live streaming on HOTSTAR will add to the on the go audience
League Federation Relationship	Pro Kabaddi League is a privately owned league & controlled & run by the league and the franchise owners bringing in accountability & professionalism. However, the league is sanctioned by international and

	national sports federation allowing the best talent in the world to participate.
Celebrity Involvement	High profile celebrity owners ensuring stickiness to the sport. Celebrity owners to cash on their existing audience to build initial loyalty. Broadcaster capitalized on marquee sports properties by introducing Salman

Source: GroupM ESP (Entertainment & Sports Partnerships) -IIM Ahmedabad Report 2015

www.paulwriter.com

The Bandwagon Effects of PKL:

Bandwagon effect: Sports consumption as entertainment has a bandwagon effect, where more people viewing a sport lead to increased discussions about the event within the community. This enhances the consumer experience even further. Therefore, it is important for sports broadcasters to gain a critical mass of viewers to increase the reach of the sport.

Pro Kabaddi League was able to capture the attention of this critical mass by:

- Involving celebrities
- Capturing prime airtime on multiple Star Channels
- After reaching the influencers in the community, word-of-mouth played a crucial role in helping to increase its reach substantially.

Conclusion

Although the Pro Kabaddi League has achieved remarkable viewership numbers, the league is still young and has room for improvement. The organizers are still exploring different rules, formats, and schedules, while also working on increasing public interest in the sport. They understand the importance of adapting to new technologies, such as for refereeing, to improve the game further. Anupam hopes that the league's success will translate into medals for India in the Asian Games and other international events, but acknowledges that there is still a long way to go.

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