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Heterogeneous structure of Northeast India and its contribution in Indian Super League

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Abstract: Soccer is one of the most popular sports currently played in the world. It is a challenging game that requires power, speed, agility, balance, stability, flexibility and sufficient endurance of players. Most of the countries which are registering on FIFA (A Governing body of Soccer) has their own different league which are associated with developing various skill and to maintain the fitness and skill ability of players. ***Materials and methods.*** For achieving the purpose of the study, secondary survey was employed into two dimensions i.e., Infrastructural based data & Number of Players playing in ISL from NE. The Indian Super League comprise of 11 teams from the different states of India. The total number of players registered in ISL are 330 players and the number of players playing in the ISL from the North Eastern State of India are 80. Composite Infrastructural Index (CII) were used to normalize the infrastructural data. Correlation was used to find the relationship between infrastructural facilities provide in the state and the number of players producing by the states. ***Results and discussion.*** India being the second most populated country habitat of diversified ethnic groups and the cultural difference influence the communities to have its own sports culture. Apart from that infrastructure and facilities of games and sports is also differ. The culture of the states, providing facilities and societal background has playing a key role in producing players from the states. As per content analysis concern apart from infrastructure football culture of Northeast India also play an important role in more contribution in ISL. Budget of Government is an influential factor in development football. ***Conclusion.*** In India, sports and games are budgetary subject of concurrent list where both the State and Central Government are responsible for developed the sports infrastructure. In 2001, Government of India adopted National Sports Policy to effective implementation of the policy in 2016, the Government of India combined three existing schemes the Rajiv Gandhi Khel Abhiyan, the Urban Sports Infrastructure Scheme and the National Sports Talent Search System into the Khelo India scheme. Which might improve the sports infrastructure in India as well as franchise football league like ISL will also committed to improve the football infrastructure in India.
Keywords: synthetic indicator, composite infrastructure index, football.

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Introduction

Soccer is one of the most popular sports currently played in the world. It is a challenging game that requires power, speed, agility, balance, stability, flexibility and sufficient endurance of players ((Dragijsky et al., 2017; Svensson and Drust, 2005). Most of the countries which are registering on FIFA (A Governing body of Soccer) has their own different league which are associated with developing various skill and to maintain the fitness and skill ability of players. EPL (English Premiere League), La-Liga (Spanish League), Serie A (Italian League), Bundesliga (Germany League) are some famous and well-known league in the world (Ekstrand, 2008). Many players from different country are playing in different club by using a foreign transfer policy (Coate et al., 2020).

Since early nineteenth century football is a very popular games in India. In 1888, Britishers were introduces Durand Cup by observing the popularity of the games among Indians which is reported as oldest tournament in Asia (Mergulhao, 2014). India has rich culture of football (Bhattacharya, 2012; Ray, 2006) During 1935, All India Football Federation was established (Majumder, 2002). The AIFF was the founding members of the Asian Football Confederation (AFC), the overseer of football in Asia. In 1948 FIFA gave the affiliation to AIFF (Bandyopadhyay, 2008). AIFF started a national football leauge in 1996 with 12 professional football team (Mondal et al., 2022). Before that in India few state level football leagues and selected national level tournaments like Durand Cup, Rovers Cup, and IFA Shield. The National Football League (NFL)

was started to promote professionalism in Indian football (Chakraborty, 2012). To enhance more professionalism AIFF introduced another football league called I-League which was also not able to create more professionalism in Indian football (Dhar, 2015). To improve and promote the game of football in India AIFF signed a 15-year agreement with International Management Group-Reliance Industries Ltd as commercial partner of AIFF (Press Trust of India, 2010). With this agreement International Management Group-Reliance Industries Ltd got the right to organized franchise football league by replacing the I-League as the top division in India (Sarkar, 2012). Consequently, the Indian Super League (ISL) was launched in 2014, initially with eight teams with the aim of growing the sport of football in India and increasing its exposure in the country (Mondal et al., 2022; Salati, 2014). Gradually The Indian Super League (ISL) become top tier professional football league in Indian football system (Press Trust of India, 2019). During its first three seasons, the competition operated without official recognition from the Asian Football Confederation (AFC), the governing body for the sport in Asia (Weinberg, 2012). However, before the 2017–18 season, the league expanded to ten teams, expanded its schedule to six months, and earned recognition from the AFC. At present ISL comprises 11 clubs namely ATK Mohun Bagan (22°34'44.88"N and 88°21'54.14"E), FC Goa (15°32'8.78"N and 73°49'25.14"E), Bengaluru FC (12°58'12.75"N and 77°35'32.63"E), Chennaiyin FC (13° 5'17.77"N and 80°13'26.21"E), Jamshedpur FC (22°47'58.39"N and 86°10'21.12"E), Hyderabad FC (17°20'6.01"N and 78°37'12.77"E), Kerala Bluster (9°59'50.50"N and 76°18'2.94"E), Mumbai City FC (19° 4'56.10"N and 72°52'52.27"E), North East United FC (26° 6'56.43"N and 91°45'36.41"E), Orissa FC (20°17'16.60"N and 85°49'25.74"E) and SC East Bengal (22°34'37.88"N and 88°20'51.27"E). According Bhaichung Bhutia, former Indian footballer the football infrastructure in the country has improved after the inception of the Indian Super League (ISL) (ANI, 2020). Due to infrastructural development many players from foreign and different states of India are contributing in ISL. It has been observed that about 50 per cent of Indian players participating in the tournament are the belong from Northeastern region of India. North-eastern states of India including eight states namely Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Tripura and Sikkim covering a total of 2,62,179 sq. km geographical area (Fig. 1). This region is located in between 20° North to 29°30' North latitudes and 89°46' East to 97°30' East longitudes. The great Himalayan mountains and Patkai hill range draw natural boundary in the north and east respectively but southern and western boundaries of the region are more political than natural (Sundaram, 2001). Geo-environmentally, northeastern states are conglomerated territory of different climatic realms (Bhattacharya, 2019). North-eastern states of India, especially in the valley region shows, to a large extent, the character of the tropical climate. In Northeast India, June to September heavy to very heavy monsoonal rainfall has been taken place. This region broadly experiences three seasons like summer, monsoon and winter. There is a significant climatic difference between the valleys and the hilly region (Dikshit and Dikshit, 2014). Topographical characteristics are one of the determining factors of infrastructural development of Northeast India (Roy and Mitra, 2016). Geographically, apart from the Brahmaputra, Barak and Imphal valleys some flatlands are in between the hills of Meghalaya and Tripura, the remaining two-thirds of the area is hilly terrain interspersed with valleys and plains; the altitude varies from almost sea-level to over 7,000 meters above the Mean Sea Level (MSL). In this region football is most popular game but all eight northeastern states do not have equal football infrastructure.

In this heterogeneous infrastructural atmosphere, we would like to analyses the comparative contribution of soccer players among the northeastern state of India in Indian Supper League (ISL) and find out the role supportive football infrastructure in heteromorphic contribution of Northeastern Player of India.

Materials and methods

For achieving the purpose of the study, secondary survey was employed into two dimensions i.e., Infrastructural based data & Number of Players playing in ISL from NE. The Indian Super League comprise of 11 teams from the different states of India. The total number of players registered in ISL are 330 players and the number of players playing in the ISL from the North Eastern State of India are 80. These data were collected from the official website of Indian Super League. For the infrastructural data the researcher has visited official website of AIFF where he has collected the total numbers of players registered in AIFF from the North Eastern State of India, total number of Academy, total number of courses offered, total number of clubs, total number of standard grounds were collected respectively.

The synthetic indicators were used to classified the number of players according to their representative states (Jarocka and Glinska, 2017). This indicator is a linear order of several variables, which are standardised by its arithmetic mean and standard deviation using following formula.

For the infrastructural analysis, Composite Infrastructural Index (CII) were used to normalize the infrastructural data. Correlation was used to find

the relationship between infrastructural facilities provide in the state and the number of players producing by the states.

Results and discussion

Maximum football teams are belonging from coastal region of India except northeast united.

Football is very much popular in coastal region of India. Sport and game culture is also very high on the Northeast India which comprises with eight states namely, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Tripura and Sikkim (Roy and Mitra, 2016). Basu reported in 2021, Mizoram and Manipur alone constitute more than 25 per cent of the total Indian players in ISL. As per Census of India 2011, Northeast constitutes only about 3.7 per cent of the total population where the youth are well-known for their inclination towards sports specially football. It is predicted that in near future football of India will be dominated by Northeast India (Joseph, 2017). Due to unique geographical structure like altitudes, climate, physiography and socio-cultural life of Northeast India, football culture varying one state to another. Another important factor behind the increasing endowment of football in the Northeast is the lack of cricket fanaticism and Bollywood (Indian Film Industry) as a result football has always been the heart and soul of Northeast India (Kapparath and Ugra, 2017). It has been observed that two Northern states namely Assam and Tripura are playing in Ranji Trophy (domestic first-class cricket championship) from where 8.75 per cent player contributing in ISL.

It has been observed that about Manipur alone contribute 39 (48.75%) and Mizoram contributes 24 (30%) players in ISL from Northeast India. Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland and Tripura do contribute any players in ISL (Table 1). Assam (8.75%), Sikkim (7.5%) and Meghalaya (5%) contributing less than 10 per cent players in ISL. In terms of contribution in ISL among the Northeastern states Manipur stood the first position followed by Mizoram and Assam, respectively. It has been observed that all the teams of ISL used to hired at least 3 players from Northeast India. Maximum 12 (15%) players playing in Odisha FC followed by SC East Bengal and Mumbai City FC. Both the team have 10 players from Northeast region. In an average every team have about 7 players who comes from Northeast India. The result depicts that every team felts the demand of Northeastern players as a result contribution rate of Northeast is higher in ISL. But due to diversified factors the level of contribution is not same among the Northeastern state. To classify the contribution of Northeastern state in ISL synthetic indicator has been used.

It has been observed that about 37.5 per cent states namely Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland and Tripura fall under very poor category in terms of contribution in ISL (Table 2). Assam, Meghalaya and Sikkim categorized as poor contributing group. Good contribution in ISL comes from Mizoram (Table 2). As per synthetic indicator concern about 12.5 per cent states fall under very good category (Fig. 2).

There is a manifolded reasons behind heteromorphic contribution of Northeast India in ISL. One of the important factors is football infrastructure of Northeast. It has been found the football infrastructure varies one state to another. The data of infrastructure were collected from the official websites of AIFF on six parameters i.e., no. of football academy, total no. of standard ground, approved club, total registered players, coaches, coaching courses for each state of North East.

In term of number of football academy Manipur stood the first position followed by Assam and Meghalaya. But Assam hold the first position in total no. of standard ground then Manipur and Meghalaya. Maximum register football players found in Manipur (6499) where Assam stood the second position with 2064 players. 55 per cent register football players are belongs from Manipur. Position of Mizoram is third among the Northeastern states in terms of registered football players. But interestingly Manipur does not have any coaching courses whereas Mizoram (9), Assam (8) and Sikkim (8) have highest numbers of coaching courses. Infrastructure varies parameter to parameter, to eradicate these issues and produce a uniform infrastructure index. Composed the all six parameters by adopting Composite Infrastructural Index (CII).

CII has been adopted to combined the infrastructural variables. It has been observed that Manipur is offering the number of quality infrastructure as compare with the other state of North-east, whereas Assam also having good numbers of total number of grounds, professional coaches and academy as compare with other state of North-East (Table 3). To know the status and relationship between the infrastructural facilities and the no of players contributes in ISL, CII method has been calibrated.

The following Map allocate the various state and level of production in ISL from different states of North Eastern India. As the above table no. 2 classified the category of states, the different color allocates the different categorical status of each and every state of north-eastern India.

Explain the Composite Infrastructure Index (CII) of football facilities in Northeast India. The data of infrastructure were collected from the official websites of AIFF on six Parameters namely, Football Academy, Total No. of Standard Ground, Approved Club, Total Registered Players, Coaches, Coaching Courses for each state of North East.

To tabulate the rank order researcher, calculate composite infrastructural index. As stated in the table, Manipur is offering the number of quality infrastructure as compare with the other state of North-east, whereas Assam also having good numbers of Total number of Ground, professional coaches and Academy as compare with other state of North-East. Researcher compares the CI Index with the no of players contribution per state, to know the status and relationship between the infrastructural facilities and the no of players contribution.

It has been observed that there is a significant strong positive correlation (r=0.769, corresponding p-value is <0.05). The predictive model address that if CII value is increased number of players will increase. But the residual value represents heteroscedasticity issues that means apart from infrastructural factors there are many others factors that also influence the contribution process of Northeastern players in ISL (Fig. 3)

India being the second most populated country habitat of diversified ethnic groups and the cultural difference influence the communities to have its own sports culture. Apart from that infrastructure and facilities of games and sports is also differ. The culture of the states, providing facilities and societal background has playing a key role in producing players from the states. As per content analysis concern apart from infrastructure football culture of Northeast India also play an important role in more contribution in ISL (Ugra, 2019). Budget of Government is an influential factor in development football (Rattanapian et al., 2018). Anthropological measurement and related fitness are a significant factor in football (Singh, 2013). The players of Northeastern India have anthropological measurement and related fitness is different for others players of India. Because of ethnic structure and geographical framework of Northeast India. Altitude provides a significant advantage for high altitude players like Northeast when playing football at both low and high altitudes (McSharry, 2007). Infrastructural facilities along those factors cumulatively contributes in more participation of footballers in ISL.

Conclusion

Infrastructure is the primary support system to developed sports and games in any states or region. Football is an universally popular game of world. But due to lack of infrastructural support all the countries or region contributes equally. India is not an exception. From the data of 2022 ISL it has been depicts that more infrastructural support induces more contribution from in ISL. Northeast India have comparative better position in contribution in ISL but due to heteromorphic characteristics of the states diversified contribution has been reported. To promote more contribution from northeast in ISL required more infrastructural support like ground infrastructure, trained and certified coaches, football organizations, football academy, supportive accommodation facilities to the players. In India, sports and games are budgetary subject of concurrent list where both the State and Central Government are responsible for developed the sports infrastructure. In 2001, Government of India adopted National Sports Policy to effective implementation of the policy in 2016, the Government of India combined three existing schemes the Rajiv Gandhi Khel Abhiyan, the Urban Sports Infrastructure Scheme and the National Sports Talent Search System into the Khelo India scheme. Which might improve the sports infrastructure in India as well as franchise football league like ISL will also committed to improve the football infrastructure in India. Slowly and gradually that football infrastructure produces more quality footballers from India.

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