

Cricket: A Uniting Religion In India

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ABSTRACT

As Indians, there are two things we hold dearer than life itself: Bollywood and cricket. Sharukh's passionate comebacks to Dhoni's iconic helicopter shot are irresistible to listeners of every faith. In India, a cricket match is akin to a religious celebration since it is the one event that brings people of all faiths together. Everyone in India, from the youngest to the oldest, plays cricket, and everyone has dreams of playing at the greatest level and of representing India in cricket. Cricket is not India's national sport, but it is a very personal one for millions of Indians. People in India have a deep, abiding passion for the sport of cricket, evidenced by the huge crowds that gather to watch each televised match. India's cricket has undergone a dramatic transformation after its 1983 and 2011 world cup victories. But what was the magic of this game called as cricket has united our very own nation, and why it has never been replaced by any other sport in India.

KEYWORDS: Cricket, Unites, Religion, India, Controversy, Players, Nation.

INTRODUCTION

With each year that goes by, cricket has improved. Originally from England during the Saxon and Norman eras, this game was later brought to the Indian subcontinent by the East India company. Throughout the years, it has evolved to the point that it is now a national sport. Many claim that India's colonial history is the reason cricket got so well-known and well-liked there. With the legendary victory over the west indies in the 1983 world cup, Sachin Tendulkar's heroics over time that earned him the title of "The god of cricket," And India's two world cup-winning campaigns in 2007 and 2011 captained by m.s. Dhoni, all of these mega events contributed to the growth and popularisation of this sport in India, which has now conquered the hearts and minds of all Indians. With the introduction of the IPL, which brings together several overseas cricketers and Indian players, cricket has become a tremendous sight for viewers, not just in India but all around the world. The popularity of this has grown to the point that we sometimes forget that it is just a game and not a religious doctrine that may be formed by blind patriotism.

PURPOSE

Numbers and statics is seen as the greatest rivalries of all time between India and Pakistan, has seen heightened emotions and tensions between two neighbours, It has all been seen that cricket has sometimes led to controversies rather than burning the rage of politics in between them. From criticizing players of their own country to bringing political interference, cricket has witnessed many ups and downs in the modern-day trade. Where, we can say, the indies and India owe much of cricket's enduring popularity to its spread there during colonial times. The administrators of the British empire used it as a badge of racial and social supremacy. They failed to make the game well known to the general public. Cricket represented racial equality between the colonised and the British. When teams of different races were able to compete well in cricket, it was seen as a symbol of social and political progress towards greater inclusion. But, in places like South America that weren't under English colonial rule, the sport never really caught on. Although many of the subcontinent's indigenous and conventional sports get little media attention, cricket's international tournaments and championships are regularly covered by major outlets. In many nations, cricket players are treated as superstars thanks to the widespread coverage they get in the media. Nevertheless, victories on the cricket field are seen as monumental and celebrated with fanfare.

LITERATURE REVIEW

According to a survey by the Indian government, there are 5493224 present cricketers playing all around the country, whether it is in a professional way or playing gully cricket. One in every 3 children plays cricket in India. After the introduction of the IPL, the craze of cricket in people has reached another level. People from different age groups tend to play this sport in a wide number. India is known as the only nation to have won the 60, 50 & 20 overs in the world cups. India is also the first team to be dismissed twice in a single day in a test match.

It would be a venture to say that if we polled a random group of Indians on the street about their feelings for cricket, the vast majority would respond positively. Much of the rest of the world probably has a similar impression of Indians; we're often characterised as being obsessed

with cricket to the point of treating it like a religion and treating our sports players like deities. This is another evidence that cricket is a national obsession in India. Yet when I consider a subject I care deeply about, I make it a point to learn as much as I can about it. In an ideal world, it would be directly involved in it on a weekly basis. If not, then on a daily basis. But, the majority of Indians do not feel this way about cricket.

Most self-proclaimed sports fans don't even make it out to a single game each season to see it in person. The vast majority have zero interest in participating in domestic competitions. To draw a parallel, consider the passion the Brazilians have for the sport of football. In addition to cheering on their favourite players on the world stage, they also attend home games in full force week after week and that too without any failure.

Do Indians really have a strong emotional connection to the sport? Or are we just impulsive and uncommitted?

It would be unfair of me to generalise about everyone's connection with cricket since, we know many of us are really passionate about the sport and follow all the subtleties of it. Yet, the widespread support and interest in the sport throughout the nation is undeniable. From what I've heard, watching the game on television, as most people do, isn't enough for true fans of the sport. It's only when you're on the ground that you can really appreciate the game, whether you're a spectator or a participant. India have the utmost respect for the people who sit through a whole cricket match in stadiums, particularly a domestic match, when the conditions may range from very unpleasant to downright agonising. Most domestic stadiums are open-air, so the sun's rays may be harsh; sitting on stone and concrete slabs for hours on end isn't exactly comfortable; and when one's side loses, it can be tough to muster the motivation to go back the next day. But, this particular group of individuals is quickly becoming extinct. For Indians, cricket is more of a cultural institution than a passion. Outside of hockey, we as a country didn't have much to be proud of in terms of accomplishments in sports. Since gaining our independence, we, as a country, have come to identify with the sport of cricket since it is one of the few in which we did not suffer a humiliating defeat. The downturn in our hockey results after our 1983 world cup victory only served to strengthen this sense of cultural identification with cricket. At this historical period, the common Indian had few options for amusement. First, there was cricket, and then there was Bollywood (Indian cinema). Several others thought cricket would be the better option since it would keep them occupied for a longer period of time, would likely cost about the same as a movie ticket, and would also provide them with a feeling of tradition. I think most Indians nowadays are interested in "Cricket the entertainment," because of the sport's close ties to Bollywood (SRK, Preity Zinta, Etc.) and because of the glitz and glamour associated with cricket players. The fact that these subcultures exist and watch cricket is what permits someone like Mandira Bedi to make comments about the sport that would make cricket purists blush. It is these communities that are propelling the t-20 ahead, since they are only interested in high-octane entertainment that features famous faces and actors. As cricket's popularity on Indian television continues to grow, I worry that the number of cricket fans who appreciate the game for what it is—a sport—is dwindling.

Now that people in large Indian cities like Mumbai and Kolkata have more options when it comes to choosing their preferred form of recreation and sport, we see fewer players coming

through from these big cities into the Indian team, while we see more players coming through from smaller towns into the Indian team, as here cricket still is the favourite pass time.

What will happen to our country's purported eternal love of cricket when rural areas finally have access to things like modern sports and the internet?

Taking an incident which was presented by former cricketer of India, Virender Sehwag, who seemed to show the parts of India which celebrated the win of Pakistan versus India with firecrackers.

Waqar Younis, a former Pakistani international cricketer who sparked a fresh controversy by saying Mohammad Rizwan's moment of offering Namaz in front of Hindus was very special to him on a Pakistani news channel where Shoaib Akhtar was also present, which then was criticized by many Indians and intellectual person as the most disappointing thing which was heard on National television. This shows how cricket has made long strides in involving religious entities in a beautiful sport which shouldn't be done.

Not only by the Pakistan cricketers, but an incident also took place in the Indian first-class segment of cricket when Wasim Jaffer was accused of choosing more Muslim players for the Uttarakhand state team when he was the coach, after that he was terminated from that role. The portrayal of Kabir Khan in the movie CHAK DE INDIA where Sharukh Khan was dubbed as a traitor after losing a hockey match. That's how Indians connect to cricket, that's how they live the game.

METHODOLOGY

Qualitative methods have been followed to execute this research work on the above topic, as we are supposed to study Cricket: A Uniting Religion In India Cricket is considered as the most loved lived and inspirational game, Random Sampling done for the motto of search and history and incidenced of cricket was digged to get the more accurate data related to the topic of research, Along with this, Secondary Data analysis on Online/Offline articles and papers with Content Analysis on selected Featured Stories and cricket trivias has been done to find related contents and outcomes. Based upon the above studies, some case studies have also been carried out to draw the attention towards the passion for this game called as cricket in recent times in comparison to the other sports.

RESULT

India is known for its vast culture and its traditions, India is basically culturally divided and now has four religions, "CRICKET", Cricket has now become a loving game that has feeling, People are attached to cricket and the cricket lovers worship Indian cricketers like a god. MS Dhoni, Sachin Tendulkar, Virendra Sehwag and many more like that. The fourth religion is cricket in India, has been growing rapidly, Every age group has an interest in this game. every place in India cricket is played and not only young, youngsters like to play cricket, Even small children also love to play. We call it as "street cricket" (gully cricket). Teams from Sri Lanka, Pakistan and India, Indies, Australia, have all lifted the world cup of cricket, while their national football, basketball, and baseball squads have won few or no international titles. In these nations, just a small percentage of the population cares about their national sports, but over 80% of the population enjoys watching cricket matches

As a result, supporters are more likely to cheer for visiting teams than they are for their own teams in national sports. During the almost two centuries that England colonized those countries, cricket was first introduced as a sport. People in these nations began playing the game after seeing how popular it was in Britain, and they have continued to do so to this day. The people of the subcontinent demonstrate a striking preference for cricket over other sports. In their eyes, cricket is much more significant than any other sport. Successful athletes inspire others, particularly young people, who may then become fans or even try out for a team themselves. Several renowned cricket players have emerged from the nations of the Subcontinent, inspiring new generations to take up the sport.

This research has been for to know the people about cricket, how much people love this game. Add to that the passion of cricket lovers in India and you will understand why the game is so much more than just a sport. Fans have played a vital role in shaping cricket's identity. They have not only enjoyed the game of cricket, but have also celebrated the accomplishments of cricketers.

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