

From Field to Front Office:

Sports Management Now A Booming Career Path in India



Sports Management Is Now A Booming Career Path in India. (IISWBM/Twitter)

India is a country that has more often than not looked at careers in engineering and finance as the norm. But breaking this trend, sports management, which is considered to be an unconventional choice, is slowly but surely changing this perception. The rise of corporate interests in commercial sports leagues and investments has created a new landscape, opening up exciting opportunities for specialised sports management professionals in the country.

This, in turn, has generated a demand for skilled individuals who are capable of managing various operations behind these high-profile leagues. While the field is still relatively young compared to more established industries, it does offer significant growth and career advancement potential.

Entry-level positions in sports management in India typically offer a starting salary between Rs 25,000 and Rs 30,000 per month. With three to five years of experience, professionals can expect their earnings to rise up to Rs 60,000 monthly. These figures reflect the growing recognition of the sports industry.

"The emergence of prominent commercial sports leagues such as the Indian Premier League (IPL) for cricket, the Indian Super League (ISL) for football, the Premier Badminton League (PBL), and the Pro Kabaddi League has been a pivotal factor in this transformation," said Ankan Banerjee, a faculty member at IISWBM Kolkata.

These leagues have also been crucial in establishing grassroots academies and raising the profile of their respective sports.

"Sport is a multi-billion-dollar industry that attracts billions of people either to participate in or to watch sports. The professionalism in sports has made a radical change in the pattern of consumption, production and management of sports events, sports persons and sporting organizations. The application of modern managerial tools and techniques becomes more and more relevant to make these activities viable, feasible and doable."

He also stressed the importance of having professional sports managers in running the sports business. "Today, sports managers are involved in various complex activities, such as strategic planning, managing a large pool of human resources, negotiating with sponsors, dealing with broadcasters, managing community developmental programmes, etc. To run these activities efficiently, sports management professionals should understand how the fundamental concepts of management should be applied to sports," said Banerjee.

So, the future of sports management in India looks bright. The increasing professionalisation of the sports industry, corporate investment, and the growing popularity of various sports are creating a sustained demand for skilled managers in areas such as marketing and sponsorship, athlete management, facility management, sports analytics, and data analysis.

IISWBM Kolkata pioneered this shift, becoming the first institute in India to offer a course in sports management in 2003.

According to Prof. (Dr.) K.M. Agrawal, Director of the Indian Institute of Social Welfare and Business Management (IISWBM), said, "The Sports Management Department of IISWBM is well structured with the most efficient, experienced and erudite faculty members from the field of Sports Management. The department's faculty members are well-versed and committed to providing a complete learning environment to the students to equip them to manage sporting organisations with new ideas that will enable them to meet the complex challenges of the dynamic world of sports."

Dr Agrawal also stressed the importance of continually upgrading the course curriculum according to industry needs, stating, "The curriculum of the course is

periodically updated according to the changing needs of the industry and academia."

As the Indian sports industry matures and expands, the demand for qualified sports management professionals will only grow. This also presents the need for colleges to have a structured curriculum. In India, courses in sports management cost between 1 lakh and 3 lakh, and some courses even cost up to 14 lakh per annum approximately. Many foreign universities also offer world-renowned courses in sports management. Still, the cost of studying abroad is quite high and involves tuition fees, boarding charges, and travelling.

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1. IISWBM Kolkata
2. Indian Institute of Management (IIM), Rohtak
3. National Academy of Sports Management (NASM), Mumbai
4. National Institute of Sports Sciences and Nutrition (NISSN), Kolkata
5. Amity School of Physical Education and Sports Sciences, Noida

5 institutes abroad providing Sports Management Courses

1. The University of Massachusetts Amherst (Isenberg School of Management)
2. Columbia University School of Professional Studies
3. University of Michigan, USA
4. Emlyon Business School, France
5. NYU Tisch Institute for Global Sport, USA

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