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Websites of I-League Clubs: A Webometric Analysis

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Abstract: *The present study focuses on the webometric analysis of the I-League club websites of India. Analysing the websites of the Indian football clubs it has been found that in WIF calculation NFC holds the rank one position with SWIF of 0.7222, while MBAC and CBFCG hold the 2nd and 3rd positions respectively with SWIFs of 0.6973 and 0.6363. According to Internal-link Web Impact Factor (IWIF) the previous three clubs hold the 1st, 2nd and 3rd ranks with IWIFs of 0.6315 (MBAC), 0.5000 (CBFCG) and 0.3888 (NFC) respectively. In case of External-link Web Impact Factor (EWIF) CCFC holds the rank one position with EWIF of 0.6000. NFC and EBFC hold the 2nd and 3rd positions with EWIFs of 0.3333 and 0.1568 respectively. The website of NFC having domain authority of 53 ranks highest while in the case of page authority, the website of AFC ranks first with page authority score of 57. Website of MPFC has the heaviest page size of 10.4 MB and website of AFC takes the maximum time of loading the webpage i.e. 12.62 seconds which is not a desirable thing. East Bengal Football Club (EBFC) holds the best global rank with 1,242,038 and it has the best Indian rank also i.e. 176,547.*

Keywords: *I-League, Web impact factor, WIF, Search engine optimization, SEO, Popularity rank*

Introduction

Indian soccer mania gets its cogent reflection in the I-League which is the men's top football league in India. The league is officially known as the Hero I-League due to sponsorship reasons. It currently sits at the top spot in the Indian national football system, running parallel to the newer franchise based tournament known as Indian Super League. The I-League league is contested by 11 teams and runs from Mid-October to March with the teams playing 20 matches each. Starting its journey in 2007 as the successor to the National Football League (NFL) the league was launched as India's first ever professional football league and with the main objective of creating the player pool for India's national team. Players from around the globe can also participate in this league on behalf of any team after signing the contract for that respective team for a particular season or seasons. Since the inception of the I-League, a total of

seven clubs have been crowned champions. Dempo have won the most titles in league history, being crowned champions three times. Churchill Brothers and former I-League side Bengaluru have won the league twice (I-League, n.d.). The teams with their web presence in this 21st century have gone closer to their followers. Each team's information regarding squads, latest news, fixtures, points table, results, sponsors, broadcasters, statistics, messages from fans, gallery, social network connectivity and the like are available over the Internet through their websites. In this web dominated era these websites have become their main window of communication to the larger fan community existing all over the country as well as abroad. Therefore, to judge the merit of a website is highly important and webometric study is the probable way out. With the aim of judging the merits of the websites of the I-League teams the present webometric study has been undertaken.

Literature Review

Sarkar, Pal and Kar (2018) in their study had emphasized on the government tourism websites in India. They examined global SEO ranking with various scores and popularity ranking of the tourism websites in India. Traffic score, speed score, page size and load time of the websites had been reflected in the study to reveal the quality of the websites. For visualizing the network topology of the websites, SocSciBot4 web crawler and Pajek software had been used. Onyancha's (2007) study investigated "the web presence and performance of academic libraries drawn from six countries in eastern and southern Africa (i.e. three each from eastern and southern Africa). Using link and content analyses, the study evaluated the libraries' websites in order to: examine the location of the libraries' websites in the university website; measure each library's link performance in terms of web page, directory, domain and site out-links and in-links; examine each library's performance in terms of the provision of essential online services (e.g. web-catalogues, web forms, web search engines, etc.); map the libraries' inter-linkages with each other; and to find out the most targeted web-sites/pages." Jhamb and Ruhela (2017) in their study had focused on webometrically analysis (mainly the web link structure analysis which analyses the domain and page authority, internal links, external links, link equities, established links, and three types of web impact factors namely simple, internal and external) of the websites of seven public libraries administered by the Ministry of Culture, Government of India. The website of Central Secretariat library is having the highest simple as well as external web impact factor (115.8) and hence the best web presence among all. Seeing the knowledge gap in the webometric analysis of Indian sports websites this present study has been conducted.

Objectives

The present study deals with the following objectives:

- To calculate three types of web impact factors (Simple WIF, Internal link WIF, External link WIF).
- To rank the club websites on the basis of these three types of web impact factors.

- To exhibit the domain extension percentage of the websites.
- To calculate the domain authority and page authority of the websites.
- To represent the page size and load time of the websites.
- To calculate the SEO Score and Speed Score of the websites
- To find out the Indian and global popularity ranking of the websites.

Methodology

An observation method has been used to conduct this research. Data have been collected from the websites of the 11 selected Football Clubs (who participated in I-League, 2018-19) in India. Data have been collected during 25 to 27 May, 2019. For calculating three types of WIFs (simple, self-link and external link WIF) first the number of links has been counted from a link analyser tool named CleverStat (<http://cleverstat.com/link-analyzer>). For calculating the number of webpages of a particular website “**site:domain name**” syntax has been used (Sarkar and Pal, 2018). On the basis of these the formula of calculating WIF as introduced by Ingwersen (1998) i.e. the ratio of the number of links to a site, to the number of webpages at the site, has been used. This can be stated thus:

A = Total number of webpages to a particular site

B = Total Number of Inlinks to a given site

C = Total Number of External links to a given site

D = Total number of links (External + Internal) to a site

Therefore, WIF (Simple) = D/A ; WIF (Internal) = B/A , and WIF (External) = C/A .

In this study online SEO report generation tool, Neil Patel’s SEO Analyzer (<https://neilpatel.com/seo-analyzer/>) has also been used to analyse and compare India’s Football Club websites on various parameters like backlinks, page size, load time, SEO score and speed score. SEOREVIEWTOOLS.com (<https://www.seoreviewtools.com/seo-checker/>) has been used for finding Domain and Page Authority of the websites. For finding out the Indian and global popularity ranking of the selected websites Alexa (<https://www.alexa.com/siteinfo>) tool has been used.

Scope of the Study

The websites of 10 Football Clubs in India have been considered for this webometric analysis. The table 1 represents the brief details of those football clubs with their websites' domain extensions.

Table 1: List of Selected Indian Football Club Websites

SL No	Name of Football Club	URL	Abbvr.	State	Year of Establishment	Domain Extn.
1	Aizawl Football Club	http://aizawafc.com/	AFC	Mizoram	1984	.com
2	Chennai City Football Club	http://chennaicityfc.com/	CCFC	Tamil-Nadu	1946	.com
3	Churchill Brothers Football Club Goa	http://churchillbrothersfcgoa.in/	CBFCG	Goa	1988	.in
4	East Bengal Football Club	https://www.eastbengalfootballclub.com/	EBFC	West Bengal	1920	.com
5	Gokulam Kerala Football Club	http://gokulamkerala.fc.com/	GKFC	Kerala	2017	.com
6	Minerva Punjab Football Club	http://minervapunjab.fc.com/	MPFC	Haryana	2005	.com
7	Mohun Bagan Athletic Club	https://themohunbaganac.com/	MBAC	West Bengal	1889	.com
8	NEROCA Football Club	http://nerocaimphalfc.com/	NFC	Manipur	1965	.com
9	Real Kashmir Football Club	https://www.realkashmirfc.com/	RKFC	Jammu and Kashmir	2016	.com
10	Shillong Lajong Football Club	http://www.shillonglajong.com/	SLFC	Meghalaya	1983	.com

Data Analysis and Findings

✓ *Calculation of Web Impact Factors (WIF)*

Table 2 illustrates three types of WIF distribution of the selected Indian Football Club websites with their webpage and link details.

Table 2: WIFs of Selected Indian Football Club Websites

Name of the Football Clubs	Number of Web Pages and Links				3 Types of Web Impact Factors		
	Total No. of Webpage (A)	Total No. of Inlinks (B)	Total No. of External Links (C)	Total No. of Links (D)	Simple WIF (D/A)	Internal - link WIF (B/A)	External -link WIF (C/A)
AFC	506	103	13	116	0.2292	0.2035	0.0256
CCFC	5	0	3	3	0.6000	0	0.6000
CBFCG	22	11	3	14	0.6363	0.5000	0.1363
EBFC	204	23	32	55	0.2696	0.1127	0.1568
GKFC	325	51	7	58	0.1784	0.1569	0.0215
MPFC	1230	19	4	23	0.0186	0.0154	0.0032
MBAC	76	48	5	53	0.6973	0.6315	0.0657
NFC	18	7	6	13	0.7222	0.3888	0.3333
RKFC	124	45	8	53	0.4274	0.3629	0.0645
SLFC	2420	24	4	28	0.0115	0.0099	0.0016

Table 2 clearly denotes that according to the Simple Web Impact Factor (SWIF) ranking NFC holds the rank one position with SWIF of 0.7222, while MBAC and CBFCG hold the 2nd and 3rd positions respectively with SWIFs of 0.6973 and 0.6363. According to Internal –link Web Impact Factor (IWIF) the previous three clubs hold the 1st, 2nd and 3rd ranks with IWIFs of 0.6315 (MBAC), 0.5000 (CBFCG) and 0.3888 (NFC) respectively. In case of External-link Web Impact Factor (EWIF) CCFC holds the rank one position with EWIF of 0.6000. NFC and EBFC hold the 2nd and 3rd positions with EWIFs of 0.3333 and 0.1568 respectively.

✓ *Distribution of Domain Name Extensions*

Domain name is a very important issue for any website. A domain suffix or ‘top-level domain (TLD) is intended to define the type of website and it impacts on webpage visibility and SEO score. From the above table (Table-1) and the following figure (Figure-1) it can be concluded that except one (1) website i.e. Churchill Brothers Football Club Goa remaining other websites have .com domain extension. So, .com percentage is 90.91% and .in percentage is 9.09%.

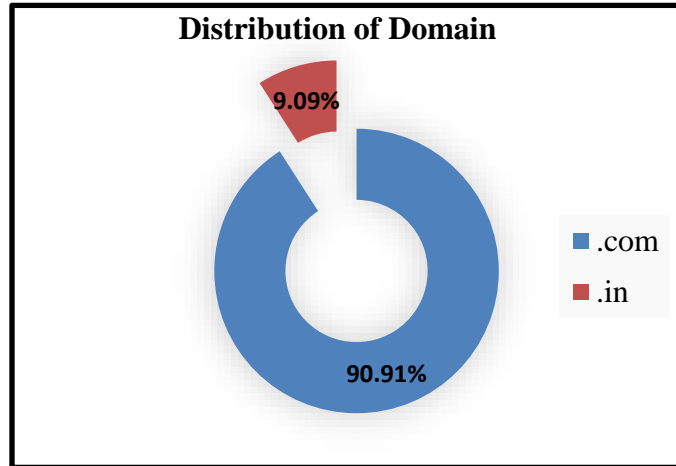


Figure 1: Distribution of Domain Extensions

✓ *Domain and Page Authority*

Page Authority (PA) is a score that predicts how well a specific page will rank on search engine result pages (SERP). Page Authority scores range from 1 to 100, with higher scores corresponding to a greater ability to rank. Whereas Page Authority measures the predictive ranking strength of a single page, Domain Authority measures the strength of entire domains or subdomains (Page authority, n.d.). Domain Authority (DA) is a search engine ranking score that predicts how well a website will rank on search engine result pages (SERPs). A Domain Authority score ranges from 1 to 100, with higher scores corresponding to a greater ability to rank (Domain authority, n.d.). These were developed by Moz, a software as a service (SaaS) company based in USA.

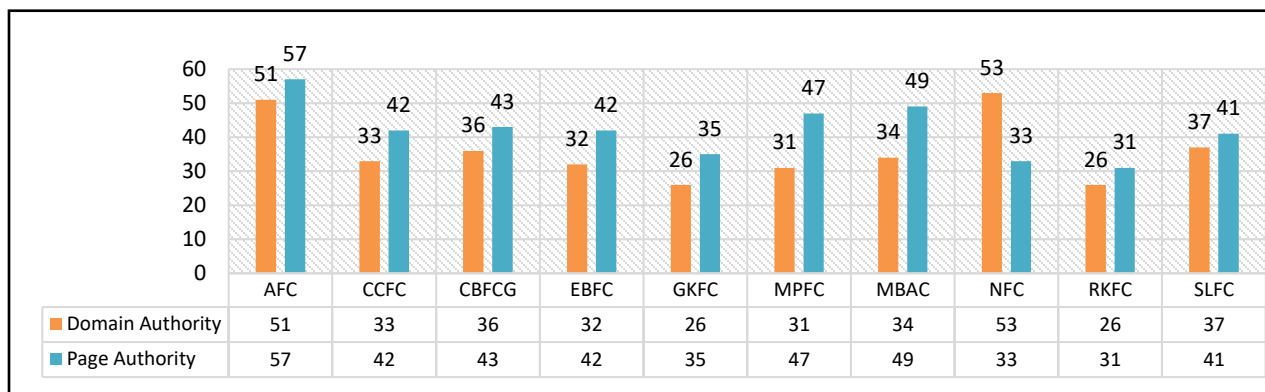


Figure-2: Distribution of Domain and Page Authority

It is seen from the figure 2 that the website of NFC having domain authority of 53 ranks highest while that of GKFC and RKFC ranks jointly lowest by obtaining 26 out of a total of 100 points. In the case of page authority, the website of AFC ranks first with page authority score of 57 followed by the MBAC having score of 49. Again the least score (31) is obtained by the RKFC in page authority.

✓ *Results from SEO Analyzer*

Table 3 depicts page size and load time of the Indian Football club websites. In the figure 3 the Speed Score and SEO Score of the websites have been depicted. Website of MPFC has the heaviest page size of 10.4 MB and website of AFC takes the maximum time of loading the webpage i.e. 12.62 seconds which is not a desirable thing. From the SEO score it has been found that CCFC has the highest SEO score i.e. 92 and AFC has maximum speed score of 78 among all the other teams.

Table 3: Page Size, Load Time and Back Links of the Websites

Football Club	Page Size	Load Time
AFC	1.5 MB	12.62 Sec
CCFC	551.8 KB	2.42 Sec
CBFCG	3.1 MB	6.17 Sec
EBFC	1.4 MB	2.63 Sec
GKFC	5.8 MB	6.04 Sec
MPFC	10.4 MB	4.65Sec
MBAC	6.0 MB	11.88 Sec
NFC	5.8 MB	3.42 Sec
RKFC	3.6 MB	9.83 Sec
SLFC	3.0 MB	2.79 Sec

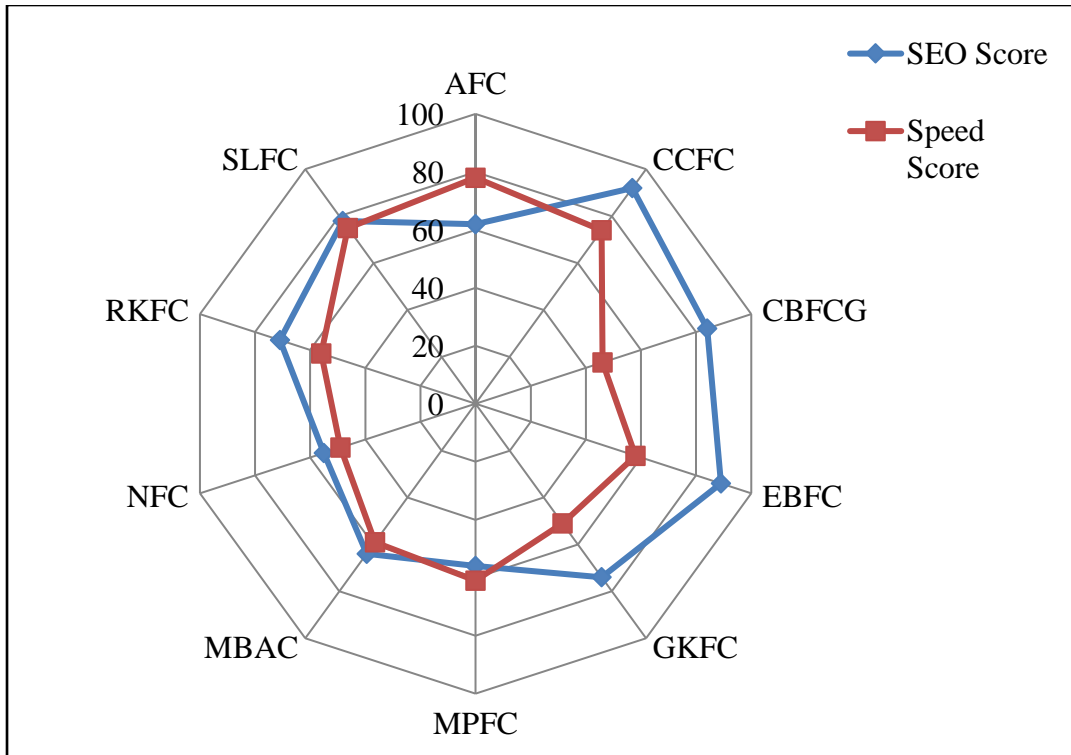


Figure-3: SEO Analysis Scores

✓ *Popularity Rank of Websites*

Website popularity ranking is another important indicator which helps to better promotion of a website. Ranking of a website is based on a combined measure of page views and unique site users. Popularity ranking of selected Indian Football club websites is portrayed through table 4.

Table 4: Popularity Ranking of the Websites

Football club	Global Rank	Ranking in India
AFC	17,852,163	---
CCFC	7,376,434	---
CBFCG	10,450,490	---
EBFC	1,242,038	176,547
GKFC	6,489,410	---
MPFC	5,845,806	---
MBAC	2,238,857	205,879
NFC	17,631,186	---
RKFC	17,168,916	---
SLFC	8,010,538	---

The above table clearly points out that among the websites EBFC i.e. East Bengal Football Club holds the best global rank with 1,242,038 and it has the best Indian rank also i.e. 176,547. This Football Club is followed by MBAC i.e. Mohun Bagan Athletic Club in the global ranking i.e. 2,238,857. MBAC holds the 2nd best Indian rank i.e. 205,879. It can be said that the two oldest clubs of Kolkata, West Bengal with largest fan followers are really very popular in India as well as other parts of the world than other football clubs of India. Alexa does not provide Indian ranking of many other sites.

Conclusion

Analysing the websites of the Indian football clubs it has been found that in WIF calculation NFC holds the rank one position with SWIF of 0.7222, while MBAC and CBFCG hold the 2nd and 3rd positions respectively with SWIFs of 0.6973 and 0.6363. According to Internal-link Web Impact Factor (IWIF) the previous three clubs hold the 1st, 2nd and 3rd ranks with IWIFs of 0.6315 (MBAC), 0.5000 (CBFCG) and 0.3888 (NFC) respectively. In case of External-link Web Impact Factor (EWIF) CCFC holds the rank one position with EWIF of 0.6000. NFC and EBFC hold the 2nd and 3rd positions with EWIFs of 0.3333 and 0.1568 respectively. The website of NFC having domain authority of 53 ranks highest while in the case of page authority, the website of AFC ranks first with page authority score of 57. Website of MPFC has the heaviest page size of 10.4 MB and website of AFC takes the maximum time of loading the webpage i.e. 12.62 seconds which is not a desirable thing. East Bengal Football Club (EBFC) holds the best global rank with 1,242,038 and it has the best Indian rank also i.e. 176,547.

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