

Critical Review on Test Match Format of Cricket

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Abstract *This study is a qualitative review of the test match format of Cricket; therefore, different websites and online articles were reviewed critically. The study motivation is to find out the reason(s) for the less viewership and business for the test format. Therefore, this study provides the critical analysis of three different cricket formats: test format, one-day format, and t-twenty format. The scope of this study is; Cricket provides business, entertainment, and promotion to the stakeholders. The audience does not like the test format as compared to the t-twenty and one-day match format because the test format requires more time than the other two formats. Moreover, it will prove helpful for researchers, and beginners, who have a great interest in Cricket.*

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Introduction

This qualitative review is conducted to find out the reasons for the less viewership of test matches. Cricket is a worldwide famous sport (What is cricket/cricket everywhere, 2020) and plays with a bat and ball. It is equally popular and played among both genders, i.e., men and women. The word 'cricket' is derived from "Christine and other Chris" (Cricket Baby Name Day, 2013). It was started in England in 1788 (Evans, 1991) regardless of English origin, 'cricket' is being played in all cultures and societies across the world (Subramaniaswamy, 2018). After football, Cricket is the second largely playing sport in the world. It has a viewership of approximately 2.6 billion people in the world (popularsport/fans, 2016). Annually, different events are held under different banners; (i) ICC World Cup One Day International, (ii) ICC Champions' Trophy, (iii) ICC World Cup T20, and (iv) Test match series. Moreover, Cricket is resembling with baseball in terms of rules and resembles hockey in terms of equipment (Borooh, 2010). In every cricket match, many techniques of statistics are used, i.e., the probability of guessing the victorious or defeated team. However, all formats are being played both

at domestic and international levels. Besides, every ICC ODI World Cup and ICC Champion Trophy were held every four years (Cricket World Cup, 2019). On the other hand, every ICC T-Twenty World Cup is held after two years. But the oldest form of Cricket or test format can play the whole year. However, the venue and date of every match are scheduled and decided before the matches (Burande, 2020).

Currently, this study will provide a critical review of three cricket formats to understand the less viewership and business of the test matches. This review is based on the critical analysis of online websites and articles. The review concludes; there are several reasons, but among them, three are major reasons for the less viewership and business for the test cricket matches; (i) the wastage of time, (ii) the lack of attraction, and (iii) withdrawn test matches. The results are also followed by possible suggestions for the stakeholders. However, the limited authentic literature is available on the formats of Cricket; therefore, this research will be helpful for those people who do not know about Cricket.

Literature Review

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Cricket is a game of bat and ball with three different formats and rules. This section is about

a brief but comprehensive review. Figure 1 is a simple mind map for the cricket match.

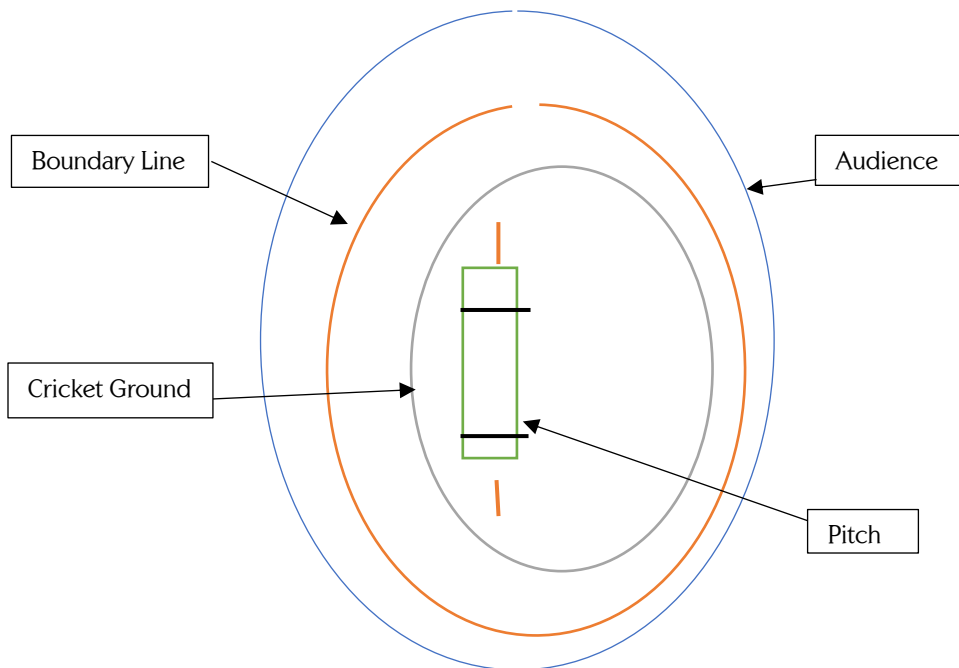


Figure 1: Cricket Mind Map

One Day (OD) Format

After the test match, one day (OD) is the second format for the cricket matches and has two sessions per innings. It is also known as a limited over the match, but it generally consists of 50-50 overs' match for both teams in one inning (MCC the laws of crick felloe-on, n.d.). One session has 50 overs, and all players of the batting team may out before completing 50 overs, while 40-45 minutes are left spare for lunchtime (Explanation of cricket, 2006). The second session starts after the lunch break. The white color ball is used in one day match (Cricket ball, n.d.), but the players of both teams wear colored kits. The one-day format has been introduced to deal with the heavy rain; therefore, it was reduced to 50 overs only (One Day International, n.d.).

People mostly like this format because it saves time by declaring the winning team on the same day. In 1975, the 1st ICC ODI World Cup was held outside England, and 60-60 overs were decided initially (Cricket World Cup, 2020). However, every ICC World Cup and ICC Champions Trophy was regularly held after four years (Champions Trophy History, n.d.).

Australia is the only country that appears seven times in the world cup and was the winning team mostly, i.e., it wins 5 times out of 7. The one-day matches are played mostly in evening or night times which also saves time.

The Duckworth & Lewis method (D/L) applies in one day match. Moreover, the wide ball rule, 1 extra run in favor of batting team and also doing one extra ball bowl by bowling team. Besides, the LED stamp and most common name are wickets. The LED stamp cost is 4.7 million in Pakistani rupees (Cricket LED stumps Bails cost, 2020). Hence, the bowler can spell a maximum of 10 overs that is 20% of bowling over (Over Cricket, n.d.). Therefore, it has three types of fielding power plays; 1st is considered between 1-10 overs and only two fielders outside the 30 yards circle. 2nd power play is between 11-40 overs and four fielders outside 30 yards circles while 3rd power play is between 41-50 overs and five fielders outside the 30 yards circle (Power Play Cricket, n.d.). The batting team takes batting power play after 40 overs of a match (ICC changes powerplay, fielding, free-hit rules in

ODIs, 2015). Hence, no ball gave one extra run to the batting team also gave free delivery in favor of the batsman [\(Sami-ul-Hasan, 2007\)](#) and is also called a free hit. But, in this delivery, if a batsman gets out, he will consider not out, while considering out only in case of running out.

Moreover, there is no concept of strategic time out in one day format. Hence, the ground size is bigger than t-twenty ground but smaller than test cricket ground, and a 30 yards circle is included in a one-day cricket ground. Besides, firework and background song is the basic concepts for entertainment. Moreover, the super over the rule is applied in one day match [\(Windies edge NZ in Twenty20 thriller, 2008\)](#), if both teams achieved the same scores and declared level, then one super over gives to both teams. Super over means 6 balls or deliveries in an over, whose team has won, whose runs or score is maximum for another team score. The audience met the result of the match within a day. This is a win or loses match. Therefore, one team wins, and another faces disappointment by the declaration of the runners-up team, but there is no concept of a drawn match in one day format. Therefore, the follow-on rules not exist in this type because one day format has only one inning.

Twenty-Twenty (T-Twenty)

Twenty-twenty (T-twenty) is the third latest format of cricket and also called the shortest form of cricket or a quick result-oriented format. T-twenty means 20-20 overs match in two sessions. It was introduced in 2003, a match between England and Wales of 20-20 overs [\(Longmore, 2003\)](#). This format was appreciated by people around the globe because it saves more time even than the one-day format. Firstly, it is a game of only three hours to meet the result of a match. Secondly, there is no possibility of a drawn match in this format, or the only condition is to win or lose in three hours. Thirdly, the t-twenty match is usually held in evening or night time which can prove good leisure for cricket lovers. According to the even or night format, the white ball is required for the visibility point of view; however, players of both teams wear colored kits. So, the t-twenty ICC World Cup holds after two years due to its high viewership and fondness. Six ICC T-20 World Cup matches were held between 2007 to 2016, but in 2018, the 7th ICC World Cup was postponed due to the start

of ICC ODI World Cup [\(No ICC World T20 in 2018, next edition in 2020, 2017\)](#), then in 2019, the 7th ICC T-20 has been postponed due to the pandemic situation of Covid-19 spread all over the world [\(Media Release, 2020\)](#).

Duckworth and Lewis's (D/L) method is also applied in t-twenty format but only in one condition when one team is playing all-overs, and the other team plays a few overs of the match. Moreover, the wide ball and no ball have the same rules as compared to one day format. Consequently, the bowler spell is a maximum of four overs in this format. Therefore, the first 6 overs are considered the mandatory power play with only two fielders outside 30 yards [\(The value of the powerplay in T20 cricket, 2016\)](#) but all fielders remain to stay in a circle or outside the circle from 7-20 overs. There are two strategic time-outs in an innings, and the interval remains fixed between 2-3 minutes maximum. However, the ground size is kept smaller as compared to test and one-day grounds. This format is considered rich in entertainment, viewership, and sponsorship [\(Verma, 2019\)](#). Therefore, the super overrule is applied when both the teams make equal scores and declared level or tie up, but there is no concept of a drawn match. Moreover, there is no presence of a follow-on rule in 20-20 format.

Test Format

The test format is the very first and ancient form of cricket. In test format, every team has two chances for batting or two innings in a match. Test format cricket is also called unlimited overs match, therefore considered an oldest or laziest form of cricket. Hence, there is no time limit or time restriction in a test match. It is also considered an older version of a match because Duckworth & Lewis method cannot implement on it [\(Bril, 1984\)](#). A test match consists of five days and three sessions per match, i.e., morning, afternoon, and evening. Therefore, every session is consisting of 30 overs. The morning session will be started before the lunch break; the official lunch timing is forty to forty-five minutes. After lunch, the afternoon session will be started, and the evening session will be started after tea or coffee breaks. The tea time interval will be of 15-20 minutes. The evening session is considered the last session of the day. Every test match is playing in daylight, but sometimes some test match can be scheduled in day and evening

times both. The red color ball is used to play cricket in day timings and white ball for the evening session, but recently pink colored ball has been introduced for day and night equally. The players of both teams wear a white dress in test matches. This dress consists of a t-shirt and trousers [\(why does cricketer wear white clothing, n.d.\)](#).

The test match is a slow format of cricket as only 90 overs can play in one day. Moreover, both teams have the opportunity to play a total of 450 overs. There is no restriction in a test match if each team has played all-overs in five days. Test match is the best source of refreshment for cricket lovers, but sometimes there would appear unexpected results or drawn matches due to some unfavorable conditions and cause disappointment among the viewership [\(Confused about how many overs in an innings?, 2017\)](#). Moreover, an extra-large wide ball is mostly considered one extra run or one extra ball by the bowler, but the normal wide ball is a legal delivery in test format. Hence, the bowler spell can consist of unlimited overs. There is no light facility for stumps and wickets. Besides, there have no rules of batting and fielding power play

in the test-type format of cricket. There are no definite rules for balling in test format, but if there is any balling issue, that will be resolved by giving only 1 extra run in favor of the batting team. Likewise, there is no rule for strategic time out in test cricket [\(New signal of IPL strategic timeout, 2018\)](#) but the test ground size is bigger than the one day or t-twenty ground. Due to the less famous test cricket match, there is a mostly limited crowd, no background songs, dance, or firework [\(Cricket races to save itself from years of declining popularity, 2018\)](#). Therefore, test cricket result has two conditions; firstly, a team can win or lose the match, and secondly, to withdraw the match due to unfavorable conditions. The audience has to wait for the results at least five days before watching the match [\(Mcc the laws of cricket the result, n.d.\)](#). However, the follow-on rule exists in test format, i.e., if a team score is 431 and the second-team score is 200 in the first innings, then the second team is follow-on because of the lower scores than 50% of the first team. The differences among all formats are shared in table 1 for a better understanding.

Table 1. Difference Among Formats of Cricket

S. No	Description	Test Format	One Day Format	T-Twenty Format
1	Held on	No limit	4 years	2 years
2	Ball color	White, Red, or pink	White	White
3	Player kit	White	Colored	Colored
4	Match playing timings	morning	Afternoon & evening	Evening or night
5	Overs in one match	450	100 (i.e., 50-50)	40 (i.e., 20-20)
6	Duckworth & Lewis Method (D/L)	Not applicable	Applicable	Applicable
7	Wide ball rule	Mostly extra-large wide ball considers one extra run or one extra ball by the bowler. But the normal wide ball is legal delivery in test format.	1 extra run in favor of the batting team and also doing one extra ball to the balling team	1 extra run in favor of the batting team and one extra ball to a balling team
8	Stumps & wicket	Without LED light	The LED light in wickets	LED light used in wickets
9	Innings	2 innings	One inning	One inning
10	Bowler spell (overs)	Unlimited overs	10 overs	4 overs
11	Fielding powerplay	Not implemented	three different types	The first 6 overs are a mandatory power play
12	Batting power play	Not applicable	Applicable	Not applicable
13	Follow-on	Applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable

S. No	Description	Test Format	One Day Format	T-Twenty Format
14	Sessions	3 sessions in a day, i.e., morning, afternoon, and evening	2 sessions in a day	2 sessions in a match
15	No ball rule	No ball gave one extra run to the batting team	No ball gave one extra run to the batting team also gave free delivery in favor of the batsman. This is called a free hit. However, in this delivery, if a batsman gets out on a free hit, but only run out is considered out.	No ball gave one extra run to the batting team, also gave free delivery in favor of the batsman. However, in this delivery, if a batsman gets out on a free hit will consider not out, but run out is only considered out in any case.
16	Strategic time out	Not applicable	Not applicable	2 times in one inning
17	Ground size	Large ground,	Medium size ground	Small ground used
18	Fireworks and entertainment (songs and dance)	Not applicable	Applicable in every boundary, wicket, and special occasion	Applicable in every boundary, wicket, and special event
19	Super over	Not applicable	Applicable	Applicable
20	Match withdraw	Applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable
21	Quicker results obtained by match	Slowest	Quick	Quicker than both
22	Required time	5 days	Almost 8 hours	Almost 3 hours

Discussion

There are three formats of cricket, i.e., test matches, one-day matches, and t-twenty matches. The number of overs is the major difference in all cricket formats (Rumford, 2011). Besides, all cricket formats are interlinked with each other (Krishna, 2017). Cricket is a commercial game and needs different things; among them, a few are basic needs, and some are secondary requirements. For example, players, coaches, umpires, bats, balls, round or rectangular ground are primary needs, and audience, media coverage, sponsorship, commentators and cameras, etc., are considered the secondary elements of this game (Venue guidelines of Australian cricket, 2018-2019).

Though cricket is a commercial and business-oriented game sometimes, there is no time management, e.g., an over should consist of six balls, but in actual it may extend due to the no-balls or wide balls. The reason is; each no-ball is credited with an extra ball in an over (that the over, n.d.). Moreover, there is no chance of out except stumps or run-out in the case of wide-ball (cricket-rules-law-42, n.d.). Furthermore, if the bowler touches the stumps or wicket, then also consider a no-ball which also consumes the time

for final decision (MCC no ball call bowlers breaking stumps, 2013-2014). A cricket match starts with a toss held between the captains of both teams, in front of one commentator and one umpire on the ground. But the toss-winning team has the right to choose either batting first or opt for the ball first (the law of cricket, n.d.).

Cricket is an uneconomical game as it reserves human power as well as other resources. There are several reasons to prove cricket an uneconomical game. First of all, each cricket match is held between two teams; and every team consists of eleven players (Cricket Team, n.d.), five umpires, i.e., two in-ground and third on a television screen, and fourth remains reserved for the match in case of any emergency, and the fifth one is match referee (cricket-rules-law-42, n.d.). Consequently, almost fifteen people kept busy on the ground. Eleven players of one team that is bowling or fielding team, two players of batting teams, and two umpires. However, the umpires and commentators belong to the home country, but the host country decides to allow even outsiders to watch the matches (Subramaniaswamy, 2018).

Cricket proves an uneconomical game as things or accessories are required to play. For example, a wooden bat is a compulsory element to play a cricket match. Moreover, the ball in cricket has two types, i.e., hardball or rubber ball. But, in the official format, the hardball is used in three different colors depending upon the format, i.e., white, red, or pink [_\(cricket-rules-law-42, n.d.\)](#), [\(the law of cricket, n.d.\)](#). Hence, compared with other sports, this is the only game where all players and umpires (of both genders) wear full clothes and guards/pads along with other accessories on the ground [_\(Equipment required for Cricket, n.d.\)](#).

Previously, cricket was considered a male dominant or male-oriented game, but this scenario is changed now; hence women teams are still not as good as males. Besides, mostly male commentators and analysts are dominated in the so-called gentle-man game, but the female commentators came in front for commentary and as analysts for the last four to five years [\(Subramaniaswamy, 2018\)](#).

Moreover, cricket is less or more is a sensuous game that arouses emotions among the audience and the players via different things/issues e.g., personality guess of a player, emotional attachment with the player for making and facing outs. However, there are different types of outs, i.e., catch-outs, run-outs, stamp outs, LBW (Leg before Wicket), and bold outs [\(ten ways batsman dismiss in cricket, 2020\)](#). However, there are two types of batsmen, i.e., left-hand side and right-hand side batsmen. On the other hand, there are four types of bowlers; spin, fast, medium-pacer, and swinger, but these are also differentiating according to left hand and right-hand sides [_\(Types of bowlers in cricket, n.d.\)](#). In cricket, both teams have a right to ask review against the umpire's decision. Moreover, modern technology is being used to resolve disputes [_\(umpire decision review system the merits demerits, 2014\)](#).

Cricket is included in those games which cannot play in severe weather conditions (i.e., severe hot weather or rain), any calamity change, or pandemic situation. Therefore, a large amount of money spends on playing cricket in suitable places and climates around the world. Hence, in every format of cricket, if rain starts, the overs can be reduced for both teams; this will be

depending upon the raining time. Secondly, if the rain remains continue and do not stop, the match will be postponed [Durga \(Durga, 2020\)](#). Thirdly, in the current scenario, the pandemic situation has changed the cricket format and destroyed the number of business-related to cricket. In cricket, match-fixing is a big problem, but it can be controlled.

It is true that cricket is uneconomical but is a business-oriented game despite different drawbacks. For example, every cricket ground is sponsored by different companies by displaying the advertisement, brands, and logos. Different company logos and brands are embossed even on players wearing kits and cricket bats [\(betting brands that spend huge on cricket advertising, 2020\)](#). Cricket has the second-largest viewership, therefore, promotes tourism across the countries and also causes cultural transmission across the borders. In other words, we can say that cricket can capture the larger brands and can cause the gross production and income for multiple businesses.

Cricket is beneficial for the audience or community, and there is a bright future for cricket, among other games. Each national or international match gives a promotion facility to different companies or owners. The match organizers or team officials take money from these companies; therefore, we can say that cricket provides sports, entertainment, and money. For example, the host country earns revenue in the form of selling tickets to match. Besides, all over the world, different cricket associations, clubs, academies, and cricket boards train the players and provide them with the facility to play, and ultimately they earn great revenue. Whenever players stay in different hotels of the world, then it proves beneficial for the growth of the hotel industry. If the cricketers do tours of different locations of the host country, it proves helpful for the tourist industry and earns a large turnover.

Conclusion

In my ending remarks, I would like to say, each sport is facing problems, especially in the current pandemic situation. But the benefits of cricket are more than its gaps. Moreover, if cricket is included in Olympics, then its sponsorship and viewership will increase. In the future, cricket may be 'the king' of all games. However, in future

test format may be terminated from the cricket due to its laziest and time-wasting format, then cricket will be the most favorite game of the

world. Moreover, if the time duration will be more reduced for each cricket format, then cricket may be more attractive than soccer.

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