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# Introduction

This report is about the project planning for the data analysis and predictive modelling of European soccer matches database. The main objective of this project is to analyze data to find out interesting facts about this game results and players by understanding the characteristics of players. This analysis will be done by acquiring the dataset from Kaggle and coding in R studio software.

## Background and Context of the Problem

Soccer is the most popular and prevalent sport worldwide. According to a recent A.T. The global sports events market (includes all ticketing, marketing and media revenues) for all sports was worth €45 billion in 2009. Soccer remains king as always with global worth of €20 billion every year. Particularly in Europe, it is €16 billion which is almost half of the market. Moreover, this game is the most widely covered and viewed event in the world with the total of 28.8 billion viewers. So, soccer is greatest source of money making in entertainment industry.

On the flip side, According to Sportradar director Darren Small, the worldwide betting industry for sports is worth about $700 billion to $1 trillion every year for both legal and illegal betting markets. The interesting factor is that almost 70 percent is contributed from soccer betting. Therefore, many data- analysis companies are making lots of money by predicting the results of matches and performance of players by analysing the data which is collected from matches. It can be expected that this market will continue to rise to trillions in next years which will make the betting industry major part of data companies.

* 1. Motivation and research gap

A lot of data acquired regarding the matches. Available data can be used to perform different type of analysis tasks. However, to make the sense of using the data is to find out the facts to answer the question **why (i.e.** understanding the behavior and characteristics of players by analyzing the factors behind actions) instead of **what (**who will win or loss)**.** Because by understanding the factors of performance of players in manner of technical, physical and tactical strengths and weakness can help to reach the correct prediction about the results of matches and performance of teams and players.Moreover, by tracking the past performance over the time period of players can be used to analyze the trends of performance of players. This information can be stored and sell on demand according to time period, player, match, speed etc. Also, this analysis are displayed graphically to track the performance of team or player over the certain time period.

* **How this project helps to solve this problem:** As above discussed s always very hard to predict the soccer match results and it is not obvious like best team always win or team with top/best players is a best team. So, this project will use the dataset from kaggle platform which is about about more than 25,000 matches, 10,000+ players from 11 European Countries with their lead championship from seasons 2008 to 2016.

I will use this dataset to answer the following research questions:

* Understand the characteristics of players to find the strengths and weaknesses of players.
* Track the performance of players over time and understand the trends pf performance.
* Analyze and find the factors affects match results.
* Predict the results of matches.
  1. Significance of problem
* By understanding the characteristics of players will help the football clubs and scouting to identify strengths and weaknesses of their teams and opposite teams so that they can use these insights to improve the training level and increase the awareness of team against opposition to prepare them for next challenges.
* By identifying the weaknesses of players, Coaches can implement new fitness training programme to improve the performance of players.
* Deep comparisons of different players characteristics and abilities can be useful for clubs to make decision of choosing players and development or selection of teams and players.
* The trend of performance by tracking the performance of particular players can give idea about the future performance of that player.
* Moreover, many professional betting agencies are making a lot of money by predicting match results. So, it means betting odds are calculated to increase the profits and minimize their risks (wrong predictions). So, by analysing the factors which affects the results of matches, teams and players performance can be used to predict the results of matches and performance of team and players in which betting industries are highly interested in.
  1. Aim and objective of project

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Task | Priority |
| Literature review to understand the problem and identify the gap | Must have |
| Data analysis to answer the research questions | Must have |
| Report writing | Must have |
| Initial prediction model to predict the results of matches and performance of team and players | Could have |

* 1. Stakeholders:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Stakeholder** | **Role** |
| Student | Driving force behind project responsible for development of project. |
| Supervisor | Give right directions and Suggestions for successful development of project |
| Project Coordinator | Determines project progress |

* 1. Outcome of project

The tangible results of this data analysis project will be as listed below:

* **Data analysis report:** This data analysis report gives the detailed theory about the outcomes derived from the projects which includes analysis and visualisations done in R studio.
* **R markdown file:** Analysis and visualisations are done by programming in R Studio software. The R markdown file includes all the source coding with all visualisations and analysis.

The outcome of this project can be used by football clubs, scouting, coaches and betting agencies to determine the players performance, to improve training techniques, to find trends of performance of players over the certain time period and to predict the results of matches.

1. Project methodology

The project development approach includes following 8 steps to execute this project:

**Step 1:** First of all, there is need to do literature review to address the research gap which helps to create the research questions of interest. The research questions are selected by considering the available resources and time. For example, the prediction models can be developed by team of two or more and may require more than 13 weeks time period to develop and test successfully. So, research questions are finalised by discussing the problem with project supervisor.

**Step 2:** The next stage is to select the appropriate dataset which is used for data analysis and visualisations in order to answer the questions and to gain the insights from it. The dataset should be relevant and accurate enough to answer the research questions accurately and effectively.

**Step 3:** The dataset for this project is acquired from the public platform “Kaggle” which is popular for data analysis competitions where data is uploaded by some researchers or business people. This dataset is in form of CSV files. There are total 8 tables about the European soccer matches.

**Step 4:** Data cleaning is a very crucial step for data analysis project as it is very important to derive accurate and reliable results. Here, data is cleaned by removing unwanted data. By identification missing or incomplete data points which can be handled by removal or filling the missing data points. The noisy data or error prone data can be handled by using techniques like binning, normalisation etc.

**Step 5:** The next step is data exploration where various methods are explored for developing hypothesis, plotting patterns and clustering etc. in this step interesting patters can be derived by analysis and visualisation of dataset.

**Step 6:** In this step, Statistical prediction and modelling of the data is done in R studio to produce the outcome to understand the characteristics of players and uncover the factors and trends of match results. Here, initial prediction model can be developed to predict the results of matches by using various methods like regression, clustering and pattern matching.

**Step 7 and 8:** Finally, the outputs and observations from Analysis with R markdown file is interpreted as written report to explain and communicate the results and answer the targeted questions.

1. Project management approach

This project will be managed by DSDM approach (Dynamic Systems Development Method). This approach supports the iterative and incremental development by keeping the time, quality and cost fixed but features are variable for optimal and flexible solution which helps to control the risk. Moreover, an active communication and involvement of stakeholders through out the development period to give feedback and review the deliverable. I have selected this approach because of following reasons:

* Delivery on time: This project is needed to complete on time to meet the academic requirements. So, timeboxing will allow me to deliver on time.
* Never compromise quality: By applying this approach ensures the quality which can be achieved by MOSCOWS rule and regular meetings with supervisors and project coordinates to get regular feedbacks through reviewing the deliverables which leads to deliver expected results and quality.
* Build incrementally from firm foundations: This approach will support the concept of developing the firm foundation for this project before committing to any significant development. It will advocates understanding the scope problem first which is required to be solved with proposal od solution with not deep details so that the project becomes complex by overdetailed plan.
  1. MoSCoW Prioritization for Scope:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Prioritization | deliverable |
| Must have (60%) | * data analysis and visualization to understand the characteristics of players * track the performance of players over time period to figure out trends * report writing |
| Should have (20%) | * Uncover the factors which affects the results of matches and performance of teams and players |
| Could have (20%) | * Initial prediction of model to predict the results of matches and performance of teams and players |

* 1. Time frame

1. Communication plan
2. Risk management
3. Ethics

There was no need of ethical clearance for this project.

Reference

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Appendix B: Recommended Template to obtain supervisor sign-off

I, ………………………………………………………………………*<name of supervisor>,* confirm that I have gone through the project plan made by Harmandeep Kaur Bhullar <*student name>* holding student ID number: N9784098 the project titled: “European Soccer Database: A Data Analysis Project” for IFN701 *<unit code>*

I confirm that I have been consulted in deriving this project proposal and that I approve of the suggested scope and tasks described in this project plan and that I am satisfied with the identified risk mitigation and communication plans articulated here

-------------------------------------------------- --------------------Supervisor signature Date