

15<sup>th</sup> ICLLCE 2019 Kuala Lumpur 007-025 Desideria Lumongga Dwihadiah

**Overcoming Hooliganism in Indonesia: The Process of Restoring Soccer Image  
through Fandom Education on Social Media**

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**ABSTRACT**

Indonesia has long been known as a country whose population is fond of football. Every village, *kampongs* and cities across regions of Indonesia has a field or open space that can be used to play soccer by its citizens. Every soccer match in the Indonesian league is sure to bring a huge audience and broadcast by various TV and radio channels. Football matches are also a good opportunity for various large companies to sponsor both in the form of funds and various other forms. The government and various parties also provide support for the development of soccer sports in Indonesia. Despite all the support and enthusiasm for soccer in Indonesia, fans show very detrimental behavior to show their fanaticism, by repeatedly inflicted good losses on material losses and even wounded and died in various soccer matches held in recent years. The latest incident was the death of Persija supporters after being beaten and tortured to death in a crowd during a match between Persija Jakarta against Persib Bandung in September 2018. The Indonesian people were very angry and urged the Government through the Department of Youth and Sports to dissolve the football league in Indonesia and even forbade football to be contested and played. The image of football has been very damaged in Indonesia. Many efforts have been made to provide understanding to football fans and football fan groups / clubs, including through the use of social media. Since most football fans in Indonesia are young men between teenagers to adult who are digital natives. This paper will explore the process of recovery on the image of football in Indonesia through social movements in social media in order to raise awareness among football supporters to stop violence against fans and promote supportive climate among football fandom and wanted to see how efforts to overcome violence among football fans, known as Hooliganism in the form of appeals, posters or others. The method of data collection is done by studying literature through searching on various social media related to groups of football fans, especially fans of Persib and Persija and in depth interviews with some Indonesian football observers.

*Keywords:* Hooliganism, football image, fandom, social media

**Introduction**

Indonesia, like Britain, Belgium, the Netherlands and Italy is a country whose inhabitants are known as football lovers. In Indonesia, every football match held by various soccer leagues in the country can certainly be filled with spectators. Football has been known as a popular sport because through this sport various groups of people can gather both as spectators and players regardless of background. Football also does not need expensive equipment and does not have complicated game rules so that it can be played by anyone.

Football lovers in Indonesia itself consists of various age groups ranging from children to adults and even the elderly. Football lovers in Indonesia also come from various social, educational and economic backgrounds. The majority of football fans in the country are men even though not a few women who like this sport too.

The Government of the Republic of Indonesia through the Ministry of Youth and Sports (Kemenpora) and organizations that facilitate football such as the All Indonesian Football Association (PSSI) continues to develop this sport in the country by making various soccer league competitions by age categories such as U16 League, U19, Special U 23 for amateur players and professional league competitions such as the Presidential Cup, the Indonesian League, League 1, League 2, the First Division and the Indonesian Premier League, which are held regularly at different times. Football Games in the country can even be sure to absorb the most viewers every time they are broadcast live via television.

Government support for the development of football in the country also encouraged the community of football fans to further strengthen their support for their favorite football clubs. Football clubs such as Persija Jakarta, Persib Bandung, Persebaya Surabaya, Arema Malang and PSMS Medan become big soccer clubs and have many fans who are very militant in supporting their respective clubs. The fan community of each club is clear proof of the amount of support for soccer clubs. Some of these fan communities are even official fan clubs that have direct access to soccer clubs and get official recognition from supported soccer clubs. Community of football fans with a large number of members in Indonesia include Bonek who is a Persebaya supporter, Viking supporters of Persib, JakMania supporters of Persija, Aremania supporters of Arema Malang who even received the title of best supporters in Indonesia several years ago during the Copa Indonesia and Ligina.

However, support for football in Indonesia is often disrupted by the many violent incidents that occurred between fans during the match. In fact, often these events involve many supporters so that it turns into riots. Riots that occurred between supporters not only caused material losses but often caused casualties both injured and dead. Riots of football supporters known as hooliganism and this term appeared in the plains of England since the 1960s.

Riots between supporters who cause casualties often cause public anger and this has a negative impact on the image of soccer in Indonesia. From data collected by researchers from various sources, fatalities caused by riots between supporters in the period 1995 to 2018 reached 56 people died. The anger of the community towards the world of football in Indonesia reached its peak after the death of Haringga Sirla on September 23, 2018 after the Persib match against Persija at the Gelora Bandung Lautan Api Stadium (GBLA), Bandung. The death of Haringga Sirla became a momentum where all parties were made aware that improvements to the world of football could not be delayed. Improvements include coaching players, soccer clubs, organizing matches and coaching football fans in Indonesia. Coaching to fans is focused through coaching conducted through the existing fan community to prevent the rioting of supporters from reoccurring.

This research will focus on efforts made to foster a community of football fans in overcoming riots through activities carried out by community members themselves through social media such as Facebook and Instagram. The fan communities observed in this study are the three communities that have the largest and most popular members in Indonesia, namely the JakMania, Viking and Bonek communities.

Assumption of this research is related with the content of media which used to quelling the anger between fans which usually fused into a community of fans and will be considered as fandom. And mass media used by fandom nowadays are always related with

the advancement in technology as people known as new media. The platform which will be observed in this research is the social media platform, consist of Facebook and Twitter. The reason behind

Therefore the research question will be, “How is the process of restoring soccer image through educating the fandom on social media in order to overcoming hooliganism?”

### **Purpose of Study**

The research purpose is to observe the use of social media in coaching, educating the fandom of three football fandom communities as they are known by the public in Indonesia as group of supporters who perform destructive behaviors and be the cause of so many riots and clashes between supporters. In this research supporters will be treated as fans and as they are joining football fans club as community, they will be seen as fandom.

### **Literature Review**

#### **Hooliganism**

The term hooliganism used by Van Hiel for the first time around 1960's as quoted by Mondello (2016). He said that hooliganism is “A distinct form of unruly and destructive behavior in which participants are supporters or adherents of one or more football clubs or national teams, and is frequently, although not exclusively, evidenced at or immediately before or after matches”.

Hooliganism is the word comes from hooligans and ism which means principle or values. The definition of hooligans was coined by Van Limbergen in Mondello as “an organized group of supporters of a particular club, who engaged in gang-like brawls with opposition supporter groups around the time of the match. Within the realm of spectator violence at football matches there are two key subdivisions: spontaneous violence, and premeditated and organized violence”.

#### **Fandom**

Littlejohn and Foss (2009) stated that the term Fan comes from the English word “Fanatic”. The term Fan have been using by people to refer to those who admire and idolizing something as early as 19<sup>th</sup> century. Jensen (1992) menyebutkan bahwa fan berhubungan sangat erat dengan dunia selebritas yang dipopulerkan oleh media massa. Pemain bola merupakan selebritas yang dimunculkan oleh media massa lewat berbagai tayangan pertandingan yang disiarkan oleh media massa.

Abercrombie and Longhurst (1998) suggest that audience research, including the study of sport fan, can be categorized into three main paradigms. First, the Behavioral Paradigm which covers much of the psychological theories of audiences and some of the early thinking of sociology in this area. Through this paradigm, the text or event is seen as a stimulus which audiences passively absorb all messages given, therefore the audience often portrayed as passive receiver. Second, the Incorporation/ Resistance Paradigm, in which the audience becomes more active in consuming the message conveyed by the mass media. And the mass media messages are reinterpreted or readjusted, even rejected by audience members. The last paradigm which they mentioned is Spectacle Performance. This paradigm is characterized by the development of contemporary audiences.

Contemporary audiences have several characteristics because in today's era of technology people spend a lot of time in the consumption of media, for private use as well as public. The mass media and our everyday life have become closer than ever since the era of technology with its development on new media. And nowadays we are living in society where more and more of our daily activities becoming something that is performative and need to be shown in media. In the other book (1998: 73) Abercrombie

and Longhurst said that “Life is a constant performance; we are audience and performer at the same time; everybody is an audience all the time. Performance is not a discrete event”.

Sandvoss (2003) said that since Football fandom now crosses age, gender, class and geographic divides, therefore the population of supporters can't be calculated exactly. Moreover, the rise of football as a form of mass leisure thus reflected the dramatic transformations of modern work and leisure. And there are no exact boundaries between spending leisure time and enjoying football with watching football as part of something more serious and involving the overall existence of a person. And the feeling of attachment from the fans who join the community of fandom will be stronger every time fandom join the team during every games.

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