

Community Perceptions on Spectator Violence in Football Matches in ZimbabweNkululeko Sibanda^{1*}, Wisdom Moyo²¹Centre for Student Affairs Management, Zimbabwe Open University, Zimbabwe²Department of Development Studies, Zimbabwe Open University, Zimbabwe***Corresponding author**

Nkululeko Sibanda

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Abstract: The study sought to establish the inherent causes of spectator violence in football matches in Zimbabwe. The focus of the study was matches played at Barbourfields stadium involving Highlanders and Dynamos football clubs. The study adopted a qualitative research approach and utilised a case study research design. Interviews focus group discussion, document analysis and observation method was used to collect data. Purposive sampling method was used to select the PSL administrator, the referee, the media personnel and the police officer. Snow balling was used in order to access both Dynamos and Highlanders supporters. The major findings were that some followers of these teams support their teams along ethnic and regional lines. Psychological factors, drugs, the media are some of the causes of spectator violence experienced in football matches. Recommendations were that tight security measures should be instituted at the entrances of the stadium where alcohol and drugs are finding their way into the stadium. Security personnel should not use excessive force on spectators. The clubs should also embark on public awareness campaigns encouraging spectators or supporters to shun violence.

Keywords: football, spectator, ethnicity, violence, psychological, emotions.

INTRODUCTION**Background to the Study**

Football is the most popular sport in the African continent and a source of entertainment for millions of people around the globe [1]. Due to its public and publicised nature, football has been recognised increasingly as a platform in which broader cultural and political meanings are enacted and debated in our society. Throughout the post-independence period, Zimbabwean football has been perceived as a cultural location and venue for the contestation and manipulation of tribal violence and political tension, and thus the interest in the study.

The Brazilian Legend, Pele, has reportedly claimed that football is the world's most beautiful game [2]. However this phrase creates the impression that soccer is an unproblematic game, a game of peace loving people, representing politeness, artistry and goodness. Cronin had a different view about football, in that in its negative mode, soccer can demonstrate weak and disunities the nation, can be the focus of violence, may exclude groups within the nation or project negative images to the outside world [3]. Sport has nothing to do with fair play. It is bound up with hatred, jealousy, boastfulness, disregard for all rules, and sadistic pleasure in witnessing violence. In other words, it is war minus the shooting.

Spectators not only participated in violence, but also racial abuse in stadium environments. This violence witnessed in stadiums has left a trail of destruction that has destroyed infrastructure and caused death, and more so brought untold suffering and injuries to innocent spectators [4]. A contemporary case that can unveil the ugly side of this beautiful game was witnessed in Zimbabwe on the 9th of July 2000, were the national team of Zimbabwe was playing against Bafana Bafana of South Africa in a World cup qualification at the National Sports stadium. In that match 13 people lost their life's leaving both nations with unanswered questions of what could have caused the stampede [5].

Subsequently, the football environment not only mirror social and political hostilities, but has producing them as well. Manyongonise [6] illuminates that football violence is not a new phenomenon as she further suggested that football violence can be fueled by hatred between fans of different teams as well as ethnicity. Although manifestation of football spectator violence in different football clubs within one country may have much in common, football spectator violence is situated in the specific cultural and historical setting of individual football clubs and their wider communities [4]. It is on this background that this study is conceived and situated. This research subscribes to the notion that football violence is a psychological reaction. Football

gurus and authorities have delved on the motivation of crowd behaviour and the group dynamics among supporter gangs, however, this study seeks to establish how tribal difference in Zimbabwe can lead to football violence. This study seeks to examine how psychological elements can be a catalyst to radical rowdy behaviour amongst football fans. This study however, is not a wholesale apology for Highlanders and Dynamos spectators' behaviour.

Statement of the Problem

Zimbabwe football has become a contested culture and institutional platform for tribal violence and political tension. It evokes emotions that bring about anger and excitement. This has left followers, supporters and spectators of this beautiful game. In matches pitting Highlanders FC and Dynamos FC the community of Bulawayo witnessed increased incidents of death, injuries and destruction of infrastructure. However, of notable interest about the two sets of supporters they seem to enjoy each other's company before a football match at Barbourfields stadium. The sets of supporters from the most successful teams within the borders of Zimbabwe embark into the same commuter omnibuses with each supporter donning his favourite teams colour from their respective areas of residence, however on arrival at the stadium Highlanders supporters have their own entrance gates and Dynamos supporters have their own entrance gates and when the match is over these fans go to their respective places in different commuter omnibuses. The environment of Zimbabwean football serves as an aperture through which to reassess the fundamental social and cultural processes within post-independence Zimbabwean society, as well as the way politicians, lawmakers, and grassroots organisations approached them. This study sought to assess the perceptions of the Bulawayo community on spectator violence between Dynamos and Highlanders supporters.

Purpose of the Study

To ascertain the inherent causes of spectator violence in football matches between Highlanders and Dynamos football club fans.

Objectives of the study

- To establish the psychological elements that lead to football violence.
- To identify the how tribal differences contribute to football violence in stadiums.
- To ascertain the degree to which poor officiating results in football violence in stadiums.
- To establish whether political differences can lead to football violence in stadiums.
- To suggest psychotherapeutic interventions to curb the continued incidences of spectator violence.

Research Questions

- Which are the psychological factors that lead to football violence?
- How do tribal differences contribute to football violence in stadiums?
- How does poor officiating result in football violence in stadiums?
- How do political differences lead to football violence in stadiums?
- What are the psychotherapeutic interventions to curb spectator violence?

Delimitations

The study is confined to spectator violence biased to football as a sport. The study is also restricted to football matches between Highlanders and Dynamos Football Clubs in the City of Bulawayo.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This section summarizes the views of other accredited scholars from previous studies on the topic of inquiry to identify knowledge and practice gaps.

Conceptualizing spectator violence

Madzimbamuto in a study to ascertain the causes of spectator violence, defined spectators as consisting of, all groups of people attending a sports event, those who are in the proximity of a stadium and those entering the event [5]. Young defined a spectator as someone who watches something, especially a sporting event [7]. However for purpose of this study the researcher will define spectators as all people that come to watch matches at Barbourfields stadium between Highlanders and Dynamos Football Clubs.

A variety of academic research has sought to describe and explain spectator violence at football matches [4, 8]. Geen perceives spectator violence as any destructive behaviour caused by supporters before, during or after football matches [9]. The destructive behaviour includes violence against persons, damage to property, alcohol and drug offences, breach of the peace, theft and ticket touting. Coakely and Donnelly asserts that spectator violence involves fighting between rival supporters, throwing of missiles to cause injury to rival supporters and football officials [10]. The above definitions intimate that spectator violence tends to manifest itself in different forms, including physical and verbal violence.

According to Grayson physical spectator violence is a direct attack of other persons by use of one's body parts or physical objects, such as fists, head, feet and objects like bottles, knives and logs among others [11]. Physical spectator violence ranges from small scale fist fighting and disturbances to huge riots where fans attack each other with deadly weapons such as bottles, knives, machetes and pistols [4]. Verbal spectator violence includes intimidation and taunts.

Verbal spectator violence therefore imply to the use of words such as shouts, insults and abusive language to the officials, players or other spectators without the use of body parts or physical objects

Zimbabwe's population is diverse, comprising of various ethnic groups that existed since pre-colonial time. These groups include the Shona and the Ndebele. The numerical dominant ethnic group is the Shona speakers and constitutes 80% of the country's population which approximately stands at 14 million, followed by the Ndebele ethnic group that constitutes 16% of the total population [12]. Ncube concluded in his study that the bulk of Shona speakers occupy Harare, Mashonaland provinces, Masvingo and parts of Midlands [13]. The Ndebele speakers mainly occupy, the southern parts of Zimbabwe especially Bulawayo and Matabeleland provinces.

Historians claim that in the pre-colonial time the Ndebele ethnic group had fierce warriors that would attack defenseless Shona speakers and loot their cattle and beautiful women [14]. In the post-independence era the Ndebele speakers claim that the government whose leader is from the Shona ethnic group masterminded the killings of the Ndebele ethnic group due to unfounded claims that were based on political disagreements between PF ZAPU and ZANU PF [15]. Muzondidya and Ndlovu-Gatsheni revealed that Ndebele and Shona relationship have always been on the rock, asserting that indeed ethnic conflicts are common in Zimbabwe [16].

Football has been described as a mock battle between the representatives of two communities. Pannenberg revealed that most successful and widely supported clubs in Africa belong to specific ethnic groups [17]. Njororai [18] noted that in Kenya, the Gor Mahia and AFC Leopards rivalry is both ethnic and cultural, a reality that is mirrored in many other African countries including Egypt (Al-Ahly and Zamalek), Nigeria (Enyimba pitting Kano Pillars), and South Africa (Kazier Chiefs vs Orlando Pirates). In some instances, ethnic and cultural foot-balling tensions have led to spectator violence which has often spilled over to the streets.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The researcher chose to use the qualitative research approach in an endeavor to navigate this research effort. In order to explore and understand how people how view the world, Cresswell posits that qualitative research is the best approach a researcher can use, to discover and understand the individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem [19]. The qualitative approach was appropriate in helping the researcher understand the social phenomenon from the point of view of those who participated in violence and contextualise issues in their various socio-cultural and political background.

Research Design

For this study, a case study research design was adopted. Case study is a broad term used to identify research that is of qualitative nature. A case study is a research design utilized when the researcher wants to fully understand a particular phenomenon that must be explained, described, illustrated, or explored [20]. The case study allows for both the explanation and the time needed to accomplish such exploration.

Population

The population understudy consisted of 240 residential households that are situated in Barbourfields suburbs located in Bulawayo, referees, and administrators from Premier Soccer League (PSL) Southern Region media personnel and police officers.

Sample size

The sample size determined for this study was 24 residents taken from 240 households from Barbourfields suburbs. According to Yin [20], in descriptive research, anything from 10% to 20% of the population in question is representative enough to warrant generalisation of results. 24 respondents out of 240 represent 10%, hence, the sample was representative of the whole population. Twelve supporters, which consisted of six (6) Highlanders spectators and six (6) Dynamos spectators were also used. One referee from Premier Soccer League (PSL) Southern Region, one police officer, one soccer administrator and one media personnel were also part of the sample.

Sampling Technique

The study used three sampling techniques which were purposive sampling technique, snowballing sampling technique and systematic sampling technique. Purposive sampling technique was used to select one referee from Premier Soccer League (PSL) Southern Region, one police officer, one soccer administrator and one media personnel.

Snow balling sampling technique was used in selecting 12 spectators which consisted of 6 Highlanders supporters and 6 Dynamos supporters. The researcher identified one Dynamos Football Club and another one from Highlanders football club and these then recommended the researcher the other supporters whom they knew. Two Focus Group Discussions were conducted the first group consisting of 6 Highlanders supporters and the second group consisting of 6 Dynamos supporters. Systematic sampling technique was used to select 24 respondents from 240 residential households from Barbourfields suburbs entailing that every tenth household the researcher picked a respondent that would be interviewed [21]. The researcher chose to use systematic sampling technique because it allowed the researcher to add a degree of system or process in the study.

Data Collection Instruments

Qualitative researchers relied on four methods for gathering information: participating in the setting, observing directly, interviewing in depth, and analyzing documents and material culture. Data collection instruments used in this study are document analysis, interviews, focus group discussion (FDGs) and observations.

The use of interviews allowed the researcher to probe an interviewee's thoughts, value prejudices, perceptions, views, feelings and perspectives about spectator violence [20]. Interviews permitted the researcher to be able to clarify the questions on areas where the respondent could not understand well. The researcher also adopted participant observation in this research as an instrument tool. A major part of the fieldwork consists of participant observation at football stadium and related spaces. The purpose of the FDGs was to use the social dynamics of the group, with the help of a researcher, to stimulate participants to reveal essential information about people's opinions, beliefs, perceptions and attitudes, in this case opinions, beliefs and perceptions of residents of Barbourfields suburbs was sought by the researcher. Two focus group discussions consisting of six participants in each group guided by a researcher were conducted. Participants in the FDGs were chosen through snowballing which meant following up on introductions by friends. The first Focus group was of Dynamos supporters and the second focus group was to consist Highlanders supporters. Focus group methodology was useful in exploring and examining what people think, how they think, and why they think the way they do about the issues of importance to them without pressuring them into making decisions or reaching a consensus. Document analysis was also used to provide background information prior to conducting interviews.

Data collection Procedure

Permission to interview Premier Soccer League Southern region Administrator and the referee was sought from the Premier Soccer League offices in Bulawayo. The researcher asked for consent from interviewees to record the interviewing process. The researcher made an appointment with group participants and a two Focus group discussions were conducted after consent was sought as relating to venue. Each group was given a date and time to attend. Interviews and focus group discussions were conducted by the researcher in person.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Participants in this research aired out their own perceptions about spectator violence. Throughout the data analysis process, the researcher listened to each participant's response to the research questions and transcribed the results from the digital recordings. The researcher analysed transcriptions several times to capture meanings of the participants' experiences as

they related to the phenomenon. Thematic analysis was used in this research for data analysis.

Thematic analysis was mostly used in qualitative research approach, because it was simple, less time consuming and flexible. The main goal when using this approach was to provide a description and understanding of answers. This helped the researcher move their analysis from a broad reading of the data towards discovering patterns and developing themes. The researcher adopted a deductive thematic analysis. In the approach a structure or a predetermined frame work was used to analyse data. This approach was particularly useful when one has specific research questions that already identify the main themes or categories used to group data.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

Information gathered from individual interviewees with respondents of Barbourfields suburb and focus group discussions with Highlanders and Dynamos spectators revealed that spectator violence is a common feature in Zimbabwe during derby matches. Spectators vent their anger about socio economic and political issues affecting them during these matches. Dynamos is based in Harare, Northern region, with bulk of its supporters being Shona speakers and Highlanders is based in Bulawayo, Southern region with majority of its supporters being Ndebele speakers. Interview with focus group discussion from Highlanders spectators pointed out that, underlying emotions that are bottled up by spectators are to do with historic incidents that happened in 1980s where an estimated 20 000 innocent victims were brutally massacred in an operation code named Gukurahundi. Bulawayo, Matabeleland South, Matabeleland North and parts of Midlands were badly affected by this operation and no official apology was received from the perpetrators. Furthermore Highlanders spectators stated that these regions since independence have been side-lined and marginalised in terms of educational facilities, economic empowerment and the government has taken a deliberate move to build better school facilities and industrial facilities in Harare, Mashonaland West and Mashonaland East.

Focus group discussions with Highlanders spectators indicated that in the last decade Bulawayo has witnessed relocation of companies to Harare and closure of companies, this has resulted in high unemployment and to people's amazement the central government has not intervened, while doing a lot of lip service this has led to stress and frustration. Respondents further pointed out that the problems that are bedeviling Bulawayo and Matabeleland people have created tension and a negative picture about Harare and Mashonaland.

Individual interviews with participants from Barbourfields suburb revealed that due to the above stated problems, when Highlanders and Dynamos FC

clash at Barbourfields stadium supporters those that rally behind Highlanders get emotional due to unresolved issues. Information gathered from respondents further revealed that this results in a siege mentality among the Ndebele who see themselves as victims of Shona dominance leading to the idea of 'us' versus 'them'.

Focus group discussion with Dynamos supporters and Highlanders supporters revealed that, 'the economy of Zimbabwe has been on a free fall since year 2000 and this has left majority of Zimbabweans jobless, so when these two teams meet, football becomes an outlet to vent their frustration. Barbourfields stadium has become a football war zone. Focus group discussions with Dynamos supporters revealed that they sing songs like '*nyika ino yayita maveve, Dynamos ichakunda chete, Mandere ayita maveve Dynamos yatoba kuda*' (*the economy has collapsed, Dynamos will survive, the Ndebeles have become nonsense, Dynamos has defeated them*) Focus group discussion with Highlanders supporters and Dynamos supporters further indicated that when Highlanders and Dynamos football clubs are chasing for the PLS championship league title emotions are usually high and frustration becomes the order of the day.

Focus group discussions conducted with Dynamos supporters gave an example of underlying emotions that pop up in their minds during matches between Highlanders and Dynamos is the historic events that took place during the pre-colonial era are still engraved in their minds. The participants state that Mzilikazi and Lobengula the Kings of the Ndebele clan and their warriors used to raid their forefathers and take away cattle and beautiful women with them as spoils. Focus group discussion with Highlanders supporters revealed that, they get frustrated when the police officers cordon the pitch as if spectators are criminals, bring in dogs with them and also bringing canon tankers heavily armed to displace rowdy elements. This on its own is viewed by the spectators as preparation for a war with defenseless spectators'. Respondents from Barbourfields suburb revealed that, when one reads the print media it would be awash with police threats, stating that they would be out in full force and any attempts by supporters to misbehave will be met with the force it deserves. In some instances the police describe supporters as rowdy thugs bent on tarnishing the image of the beautiful game of soccer and this becomes a frustrating issue to spectators. Information gathered from focus group discussion with Highlanders spectators revealed that majority of police officers that are deployed to Barbourfields stadium are Shona speaking and this brings in flash backs of their experience they endured during the Gukurahundi era, evoking underlying emotions that have not been dealt with.

Focus group discussions with Dynamos supporters revealed that when their team is not playing well and probably Highlanders is leading in terms of score line supporters due to frustration shout '*Huya Taribho, huya Taribho, vamwe makauraya hazvinamhosva pahukama zuva riye richingonyura moyo wangu wadzungaira sara ugarike pahukama makaura, ndimi makakuraya mandere makauraya bosso ndimi makauraya Taribho*' (*come Taribu, come Taribu, come and avenge for the Ndebeles killed you*) Individual interview with the security representative indicated the matches involving big teams like Highlanders and Dynamos football are usually characterised by charged emotions if these teams are meeting on cup games, chasing for the league title and any derby game. The interviewee further pointed out that any decision made by football officials and is viewed as a bias decision or an unfair tackle to one of the players causes frustration in spectators thereby instigating spectator violence.

Information gathered from individual interview with the Premier Soccer League Administrator revealed that, indeed, matches involving Highlanders and Dynamos Football clubs are usually emotionally charged, rivalry dating long back and the other reason being that these are the most successful clubs in Zimbabwe and widely followed and a lot is at stake for spectators. Individual interview with the Referee indicated that, pressure of handling a high profile derby in front of a highly frustrated audience might cause one to make decisions which might not be appreciated by the audience which usually degenerates into violence.

The media personnel indicated that media partly contribute towards the psychological war between these two giants' spectators, for example, the headlines in the newspapers where one reads 'Bosso wallops Dembare'. The media personnel revealed that this incites violence between spectators, where some spectators get stressed or frustrated because of such headlines and carry that frustration to the next match when these teams clash again. The interviewee reminded the researcher that they are in business, the headline has to be captive for the newspaper to sell.

Individual interviews conducted in the community of Barbourfields and focus group discussions from Highlanders supporters indicated that higher levels of frustration and underlying emotions in spectators have caused death and uncontrollable violent clashes between Highlanders and Dynamos football clubs' supporters. Respondents revealed that time and space will possibly not erase the deep seated feelings of Shona injustice amongst the Ndebele. The researcher observed that during matches played at Barbourfields between Highlanders and Dynamos football clubs, spectators rallying behind Highlanders expressed Shonas' injustice in songs.

Information from focus group discussions from Dynamos supporters indicated that there is buildup of tension well before the match starts. Songs are sung that are evoked by underlying emotions. In the process this incites violence amongst supporters. The researcher watched a match that was played between Highlanders and Dynamos football clubs at Barbourfields stadium in the final of the Easy Call Cup and observed that spectators sang obscene and provocative songs against each other before, during and after the match.

Interviews with respondents revealed that in Zimbabwe there are two numerically dominant ethnic groups, namely Shona and Ndebele, respectively. A focus group discussion with Dynamos supporters revealed that, any games pitting these two teams are always ethnically charged and so volatile that most women and men do not attend them. Further information gathered from two focus group discussions and individual interview indicated that, indeed, ethnicity has a hand in fueling spectator violence in stadiums especially when Highlanders football club is playing Dynamos football club. The interviewees pointed out that Highlanders as a team anchored in Ndebele royalty' and culture, provided people in Bulawayo and Matabeleland provinces a platform to express and preserve their ethnic cultural identity. Highlanders' football club was founded in 1926 as Lion Club in Bulawayo by Albert and Rhodes Lobengula, the last king of the Ndebele people's grandchildren. Focus group discussions with Dynamos spectators revealed that Dynamos football club was formed in 1963 in Harare and this coincided with the formation of a political party ZANU. For decades and up to this date, this political party has not been popular in Bulawayo.

Focus group discussions with Dynamos supporters revealed that, these community based soccer clubs therefore can be perceived as effective means of maintaining a voluntary seclusion which keeps the ethnic group together. Respondents noted that soccer matches between the Harare-based Dynamos and Bulawayo-based Highlanders are sometimes used as arenas to front ethnic loyalty. Focus group discussion with Dynamos supporters revealed that during matches involving Dynamos and Highlanders football clubs, some fans openly shout, '*Mandeverere, makauraya vana baba vedu, mombwe dzedu nevasikana vedu vakapambi wanaMzilikazi tovada (Ndebeles you killed our fathers, we want our cattle and ladies who were taken away by Mzilikazi)*'. Such utterances make reference to pre-colonial ethnic conflicts between the Ndebele and the Shona. Some supporters openly shout '*singamaNdebele ngenkani (we are Ndebeles and this cannot be taken away from us)*'.

Individual interviews with the security representative revealed that, before the match starts, both sets of supporters are chanting obscene and provocative songs that have tribal connotations, which

raise tension and it becomes a potential catalyst to spectator violence. The security representative interviewee further pointed out that their duty is to maintain law and order. Information gathered from the PSL Administrator revealed that as an administrative wing of soccer they do not condone any unbecoming behavior in football from players, spectators, officials and any kind of violence that happens in football matches. Football matches played at any stadium should be a place of family entertainment where everyone has a right to support his or her team without prejudice.

Information gathered from the respondents indicated that there are many ways that fuel spectator violence at Barbourfields stadium they cited the seating arrangement in stadiums, the songs that are sang. The two focus group discussions revealed that Highlanders fans at the Soweto stand are not welcoming of non-Ndebele speakers when Highlanders play against a Harare-based football club, particularly Dynamos. The notion that Highlanders is a club for 'authentic' Ndebeles only is reflected in a number of provoking songs sung at the Soweto stand. On these occasions the fans sing, '*Akula Shona elihlal' eSoweto (Shona people are not welcome at Soweto stand)*' or '*Sowake walibon' iShona lihlal' eSoweto? (Have you ever seen a Shona sit at Soweto stand?)*'

Information gathered from focus group discussions with Highlanders supporters revealed that such songs function to exclude members of Shona ethnicity at the 'Highlanders/Ndebele'-only stand. Highlanders FC fans of Shona origin who cannot express themselves in fluent Ndebele may not watch soccer from Soweto stand at Babourfields stadium when Highlanders is playing. Information gathered from focus group discussions with Dynamos supporters also revealed that songs from the Dynamos supporters function to denigrate the Ndebeles. Focus group discussions with the Dynamos supporters point out that Mpilo End stand at Barbourfields stadium is only reserved for Shona speakers. If someone is identified that he or she is an intruder he or she is dealt with severely. Any non-Shona speaking fans, who trespass into this territory, are violently mobbed and ejected.

Individual interviews with respondents revealed that the phenomenon of politics affects the game in a number of ways and with different outcomes; both good and bad. The interviews generally revealed that; on the one hand, political patronage is desirable in so far as it contributes to the development of football institutions through financial and policy support, whereas on the other hand, it is detrimental to the game in so far as it stratifies society along differing political affiliations, ideologies, beliefs, perceptions and expectations. It is the latter which is delineated as the causative for spectator violence.

Participants from individual interviews and focus group discussions with Highlanders and Dynamos supporter revealed that they are other etiologies that may act as catalyst in the genesis of spectator violence in football stadiums. Zimbabwean football teams are known for deploying juju or magic to win matches. Juju men with their paraphernalia are often seen during soccer matches, conducting their rituals purported to weaken, confuse and ultimately vanquish the opposing team. Respondents further pointed out that most footballers believe that superior talent is not natural, and excessive skill by individual players can only be explained through the intervention of supernatural forces, which gives them this force or dexterity.

It also emerged that the media also plays a major role in shaping and molding identity issues amongst fans. The media thrives on conflict and conclusion hence in Zimbabwe the major daily newspapers are concentrated in the two biggest cities, Harare and Bulawayo. Harare as the capital is home to Highlanders bitter rivals and a team which is viewed as a representative of Shona identity, The Herald a newspaper based in the Harare has columnists who have openly declared their support for Dynamos. Focus group discussions with Highlanders supporters further pointed out that in Bulawayo, The Chronicle newspaper is associated with Highlanders; therefore both newspapers thrive by playing on the polarization and rivalry that exists between the two teams and by implication mold perception on identity. Matches between the two teams are described with war metaphors as 'the battle of Zimbabwe' and in terms of discourse analysis brings out connotations of battle between Ndebele and Shona where a winner has to emerge. Focus group discussions with Dynamos supporters revealed that 'instead of the match being nothing more than a game, it is further fueled by the media who, through using war metaphors such as 'battle of Zimbabwe' actually serve to widen the gap between the two dominant ethnic groups. In some instances the media reports that the police are going to out in full force to crush any rowdy behaviours. This on face value it means that supporters are treated as thugs who are out there to cause violence. The other point that emerged during the Dynamos and Highlanders focus group is the euphoria. Some football spectators drink alcohol and smoke marijuana before and during football matches to get excited.

Violence among spectators is really frowned upon at by communities who are at the receiving end. Respondents further pointed out that a hotline should be established to report any aggressive behavior from spectators or those who use excessive foul language and request staff intervention. Respondents questioned the stance taken by the PSL where the club is fined for trouble by some spectators. However they advocated for a change in managing the situation. A spectator who is

found misbehaving should be prepared to face the long arm of law.

Individual interviews and focus group discussions further pointed out that, it is also necessary that the central government address the complex and deep-rooted social issues that underlie much of the violence. These can only be tackled through a range of socio-educational preventive measures directed variously at supporters and affected local residents. Focus group discussions also echoes that while police visibility can work as a deterrent to spectator violence, excessive shows of force can create a militaristic and highly hostile atmosphere. Police in riot gear with face shields and batons are usually not necessary to address officer safety concerns, and can stunt efforts to develop a positive rapport with spectators.

The research revealed that there are ethnic tensions between the Ndebele and Shona groups that manifest during Dynamos/Highlanders FC matches. Football grounds have provided one of the largest public arenas in which ethnicity can be openly expressed. The findings revealed that both Dynamos and Highlanders are seen as political institutions rather than mere football clubs. The political polarization amongst the supporters has fueled tensions amongst them. For some supporters, when these two teams play its more than a game of football it's a political contestation.

CONCLUSIONS

The causes of spectator violence between Dynamos and Highlanders are multi- faceted. The major contributor is ethnicity. Ndebele's and Shona's tribal differences are a factor responsible for inciting spectator violence between Dynamos FC which is located in Harare largely supported by Shona speaking people and Highlanders FC which is located in Bulawayo and has a large following from Ndebele speaking people. That these two teams are supported along regional lines is not far from the truth. It emerged that some use these two football teams as fronts for regionalism. It also came out of the research that technical issues can lead to spectator violence between Highlanders and Dynamos FC spectators. Psychological elements were notably a contributing factor to spectator violence between Highlanders and Dynamos football clubs. Security agents also act as a catalyst to spectator violence at Barbourfields stadium.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Security personnel should adopt spectator centered approaches where the spectators have an input in some of the strategies that are used in the stadium.
- Tighter security measures should be instituted at the entrance gate of the stadium where alcohol and marijuana are finding their way into the stadium.
- To curb loss of lives and some getting serious injuries these clubs should embark on public

awareness campaigns encouraging spectators or supporters to shun violence.

- The respective clubs, ZIFA, PSL and supporters associations need to disseminate information to their respective supporters; this can be done by using psycho educational strategies in the affected community.

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