

Spectator Violence in Football Matches in Bulawayo Metropolitan Province

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DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2023.70962>

Received: 16 August 2023; Revised: 11 September 2023; Accepted: 15 September 2023; Published: 03 October 2023

ABSTRACT

Spectator violence is a phenomenon that has been associated with professional football in Europe. Issues of hooliganism, tribal tendencies and insecurity have found their place in African football. This paper interrogates issues of spectator violence in football in Bulawayo Metropolitan Province. The paper is grounded on frustration-aggression theory (Miller & Dollard, 1939) in trying to determine the causes, nature and impact of violence in sports. A descriptive qualitative approach was adopted in which interviews were conducted to collect views, attitudes and opinions of the spectators, players, referees, and football clubs' management. Document analysis augmented findings from interview schedules. Expert purposive sampling technique recruited thirty participants comprising of referees, managers, coaches, players, and spectators to establish causes of spectator violence in football. Participants were voluntarily selected and protected as they were assured of their anonymity and confidentiality. Findings from interviews and document analysis point out that spectator violence seems to be influenced by hooliganism, escapism, tribalism, and frustration in football among other issues. Seventy percent (70%) of the participants also indicated that matches are a representation of historical and ethnic conflicts between tribal groups, hence these tendencies trigger violence in form of hooliganism. On the other hand, 85 % of football managers pointed out that songs and chants in the stadia by football spectators trigger violence. There were 65% of the spectators who pointed to unfair calls by referees as an indicator of football violence. Similarly, 86% of the referees indicated that frustration and escapism by spectators promotes football violence when spectators try to settle scores and vent their anger through sports. Based on the findings, the study recommends that football should be taken as an industry where outreach programmes are held to educate the football players, spectators, managers, referees, and the nation at large. Conduct of the different personalities at matches should be imparted at grassroots level through schools, clubs, and media.

Keywords: spectator, violence, football, aggression, frustration

INTRODUCTION

Violence in sport is a common feature, it has happened in the past and continues to happen. Whenever teams compete, rules and regulations governing that sport should be applied diligently. However, misinterpretations of rules might lead to spectator dissatisfaction resulting in violence. Spectator violence is an act of expressing an anomaly in the way the competition is run. Spectator violence can come in different forms, hooliganism, aggressive tendencies, and abusive language with the aim of inflicting pain or injury to another player, fan, coach, or game officials (Cajella et al., 2022; Currie, 2000 in Duggal, 2016). Interestingly, the actions displayed by spectators are not within the parameters of sport. Football as a sport discipline is not spared from spectator violence.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Football is the most loved and watched sports by all, young, old, males and females. The game of football; is one of the sporting activities with the greatest number of participants and spectators worldwide. Spaij

(2014) alludes to football as popularly called soccer with a traditional connotation as it is connected to culturally norms and beliefs. Üstünel ve Alkurt (2015) posits that football has largest number of fans worldwide. Supportively, Pedzisai et al. (2019) view football as a beautiful game that is watched by millions of people. Chaotic scenes, violence and hooliganism are some of the incidences that characterises football matches worldwide and Zimbabwe included. Conversely, despite the negative consequences which spectators may bring, including violence, they are an important part of football (Calleja et al., 2022). To add on, Calleja, et al. (2022) enunciate that without the spectators, the football environment is dull, the chanting, team encouragement, banners, crowd in the stadium enlightens the atmosphere of the game. The stadia are not friendly without spectators and thus, there are an important part of football. In Zimbabwe, the stadiums are not safe for women, children, and minority ethnicity groups (Pedzisai et al., 2019) as spectator violence is now a common feature. Mlambo (2018) observed that Dynamos and Highlanders are the two teams in Zimbabwe that are strongly supported, and their matches usually experience disturbances. Chaos, mayhem, hooliganism, and violence are some of the scenes noted every time Highlanders host Dynamos in the city of Kings, Bulawayo (Mlambo, 2018; Matshazi, 2017; Phiri, 2014). The rival teams are known for trying to outplay each other and win at all costs every time they clash (Mlambo, 2018; Matshazi, 2017). Arguably, once one team is defeated, their supporters have failed to accept the outcome and, in such instances, violence erupts as was the case in a match played in 2014 in which Highlanders lost (Matshazi, 2017; Phiri, 2014)

A similar scenario happened in the Bob 89 Super Cup, Highlanders lost to Dynamos (2-1) (Phiri, 2014). The latter reports that Highlander's supporters rioted, and police had to use tear gas to control hooliganism, nine arrests were made, and, in the process, a 14-year-old boy sustained injuries while all forms of violent behaviour occurred, such as smashing car windscreens. Sibanda is quoted in Phiri (2014)

'Football hooliganism by unruly violent and destructive overzealous supporters of both teams Highlanders and Dynamos fans should never be tolerated or condoned by any sensible able-minded human being.'

Surprisingly, all matches that played in Bulawayo against Highlanders with any other team do not end amicably, this however, brings a question whether there is a problem with Highlander's supporters. A case is on record where supporters clashed when Highlanders played Platinum FC in the Castle Challenge Cup in 2020, Highlanders was beaten 2-0 by Platinum FC (Sport Report, 2020). According to Sport Report (2020)

'There were chaotic scenes in Bulawayo, Saturday (14 March 2020) as an irate section of Highlanders fans ran amok, attacking rival fans and clashing with police on the pitch' Arguably, Kariati (2017) contends that 'the drama that took centre stage at Barbour fields was nothing new but another episode of familiar story whose actors continue to write a new ugly chapter every football season'. Subsequently, when Highlanders and Dynamos clash elements of tribalism are prevalent and sentiments such as '*Ndebele's have started again*' surface and they are thugs and could have all died during the Gukurahundi era (Matshazi, 2017; Mandizvidza, 2012). Seemingly, Ndebele speakers are associated with Highlanders while Shonas' support Dynamos (Sibanda & Moyo, 2018). There is a possibility that violence in football matches played in Bulawayo is a perennial problem whose root causes are not dealt with but only surface when such behaviour prevails (Mlambo, 2018; Matshazi, 2017). The latter sees the challenge as not given the attention it deserves thus 'ostrich mentality.'

Spectator violence has been in existence in sport, the Greeks and Romans had such altercation during chariot races when fans clashed (Goublatt, 2014). In football, hooliganism has been prevalent in European countries such as Germany, Holland, Italy, Belgium, and United Kingdom, thus termed '*British disease*' (Zorba et al., 2017). Spaaij (2014) opines that spectator violence in football is associated with football hooliganism. Hooliganism is behaviour that is exhibited by spectators who attend football matches with the intention of becoming involved in violence acts with rival supporters (Rookwood, 2009; 2014). As stated by Madensen & Eck (2008, p.45) cited in Calleja, Muscat & Decelis (2022), the six most common forms of

spectator aggression are attributed to; verbal actions (yelling taunts or obscenities), gestures (threatening others or obscene motions), 'missile' throwing (throwing material such as food, drinks, bricks, bottles, broken seats, cell phones on random or intended targets), swarming (rushing the field or stage, and trying to crash the gates to gain entry, or rushing the exit – both of which may result in injury or death from trampling), property destruction (inflicting damage to sound systems, tearing up the playing field, burning the venue or property), and physical actions – spitting, kicking, shoving, fist-fights, stabbings and shootings. In the same vein, Phiri, (2014) identified forms of hooliganism as throwing missiles and fireworks into the pitch, vandalism, pushing, kicking, clashing with members of the opposition or police officers, attacking the referee, using offensive language or words when addressing someone. Hooliganism is, therefore, a form of spectator violence. On the other hand, spectator violence is seen as deviant behaviour that is characterised by aggressive tendencies which can be verbal or physical. Aggressive tendencies are behaviours caused by hostile attitudes such as anger, fear, and frustration with the aim of protecting oneself from danger (Nair, 2014; Koc, 2011). The frustration-aggression theory by Miller & Dollard (1939) postulate that if an individual's effort to reach a goal is blocked; aggressive tendencies induced, triggers violence with the intention to destroy or injure the person who has caused the frustration. Frustration and aggression are displayed when a goal suffers interference (Zorba et al., 2017). Supportively, Foucault (1998) sees aggression and frustration emanating from the withdrawal of power and knowledge from a certain group of people. The latter further reiterates that knowledge is power, without power, anger and frustration are triggered resulting in aggression. Furthermore, Dollard & Miller (1939) observe that aggression is not an inborn behaviour but driven by frustration. In the same vein, a study conducted in Turkey revealed that aggression and hooliganism are associated with the less educated people who are unemployed, and the majority are males in the age range 15-50 (Zorba et al., 2017; Spaaij, 2014). The incidences of spectator violence at Barbour fields stadium in Bulawayo could be a reaction in which football becomes the outlet in which to vent anger (Sibanda & Moyo, 2018; Currie, 2000 in Duggal, 2016; Abdal-Haqq, 1989).

Aim of the study

The study aims at analysing causes of spectator violence in football, specifically matches that are played in Bulawayo against Highlanders Football Club.

Research questions

- To ascertain the nature of spectator violence in football matches
- To establish the main causes of spectator violence in football matches
- To assess the impact of spectator violence in football matches

Frustration-aggression theory

There are several theories used to explain violence in sport. The frustration-aggression theory by Dollard & Miller (1939) is one of the theories that relates closely to spectator violence in sport. This study is grounded on the frustration- aggression theory as it has been used for over fifty years to explain violence and aggressive behaviours in sport making it relevant to this study (Rahmati & Momtaz, 2013). The latter further add that most social psychologist and sociologists suggested that we should look for frustration-aggression theory to understand incidences of aggression in sport. The frustration-aggression theory postulate that if an individual's efforts to reach a goal is blocked, an aggressive drive is induced, which in turn triggers a behaviour to injure, destroy the person or object that has caused frustration (Dollard & Miller, 1939). The instinct theory by Freud on the other hand, state that people are born with an innate feeling of aggression, engaging in violence becomes naturally, failure which could result in other forms of relieving frustration (Kalat,2011). Sport, therefore, becomes a socially suitable way of discharging the frustration that has built up (Currie, 2000 cited in Duggal, 2016). The expression of aggression is likely to reduce the desire for it.

According to the theory, frustration –aggression is a condition that is displayed when a goal suffers interference (Dollard & Miller, 1939). The latter further expand to say that frustration events block the individual's purposeful behaviour, threatens his /her self-esteem, and deprive the individual the opportunity to satisfy and achieve important and immediate goals. In the same vein, Myers (1996) contends that frustration grows when the motive to achieve intended goals is strong and about to be fulfilled then blocked at once. Moreover, people might have developed considerable expectations from that goal. Sibanda and Moyo (2018) opine that in sport, there are several incidences that could trigger frustration among players and supporters. Notably, all incidences that occur in the field of play and stadia included, are a result of frustration leading to aggression (Sibanda & Moyo, 2018). Supportively, aggression never occurs without frustration (Wiggins et al., 1994).

There are two critical aspects about the frustration-aggression theory, one aggression is a measure and fundamental reaction to frustration. Secondly, according to the theory, aggression is not inborn but a learned behaviour. The psychological theory holds that aggression is attributed to the socialization process that has taken place as well as how players and spectators perceive it (Jamieson & Orr, 2009). Furthermore, frustration and aggression are perceived to be universal, the theory is clear that frustration causes aggression and aggression always result from frustration (Dollard & Miller, 1939). It would seem therefore, that frustration leads to aggression (Myers, 1993). There are a few studies done to show the relationship between frustration and aggression. The studies contributed extensively to the verification of the theory (Rahmati & Momtaz, 2013; Berkowitz, 1998) which ushered sublimation and displacement as some of the concepts that could counter the frustration- aggression that has been triggered (Dollard & Miller, 1939; Berkowitz, 1998; Myers, 1993). Frustrated people are easily angered and could attack anything that comes on their way. However, when the cause of the frustration is beyond one's capability there is a tendency to redirect the anger, thus displacement approach comes into play. Displacement is defined as the redirection of frustration to a new target that is not the source, and the target could be new, safer, and socially accepted (Myers, 1993; Berkowitz, 1998). In the same vein, the Freudian theory termed the process sublimation, which is the transformation of unwanted impulse into something less harmful (Kalat, 2011).

METHODOLOGY

A descriptive qualitative approach was used in which face to face interviews collected data. Kim et al. (2017) postulate that qualitative descriptive research generates data that describe the 'who, what, and where of events or experiences'. Interview questions were designed to solicit information about spectator violence in football amongst spectators, players, accredited referees, and team managers. The questions on the interview addressed issues on perpetrators, forms, causes and impact of spectator violence. An interview guide based on a thorough review of the relevant literature was designed from frustration and aggression theory by Dollard & Miller (1939), Sibanda and Moyo (2018) and Dube (2020). Validation of the interview schedule questions was done by two National University of Science and Technology (NUST) research department experts prior to piloting it. This was done to assess how well an instrument measures what it is intended to do (Haradhan, 2017). Individual interviews in which a one-on-one section were conducted. All participants answered the same interview questions regardless of separate roles. Moreover, probing technique was used get more information and understanding on participants' views and perceptions on the causes of spectator violence in football. Furthermore, the study employed document analysis in which eight newspaper articles were reviewed. Bowen (2009) model of document analysis was adopted and adapted for this study. Document analysis was done to refine and assist producing questions for the interview schedule. The research reviewed and analysed newspaper articles from Chronicle, Newsday, Herald, the Patriotic sport columns, and sport news reports from Radio Nehanda articles. The articles assessed issues of causes, forms, perpetrators, and effects of violence in matches played in Bulawayo. Document analysis is often used as a means of triangulation in the studies that have a similar phenomenon and encourages trustworthiness of findings (Bowen, 2009; Denzin, 1970). In this case it was done to augment data collected through interviews schedules. Articles were searched from January 2014 to December 2022 reports on violence matches in Bulawayo.

Population

The population for the study was drawn from coaches, players, spectators, administrators, and referees in Bulawayo Metropolitan Province. Purposive sampling technique was used to come up with a sample of coaches, referees and sport clubs' managers and administrators from clubs that play soccer in Bulawayo. The techniques enabled the researcher to collect rich information from informed respondents (Stratton, 2021). A sample that included three referees, three managers, four coaches, ten players and ten spectators was used. Moreover, purposive sampling has an advantage of getting valuable research outcomes from a smaller sample which the researcher predetermines before the study (Bowen, 2009). The subjects were selected based on a degree of homogeneity in their knowledge of the characteristics associated with the area under study and usually called expert purposive sampling (Stockemer, 2019).

DATA ANALYSIS

A deductive thematic approach analysed collected data. The approach allowed for similar responses to be grouped together thereby making it possible for easy explanations to be generated from specific research questions that identified main themes or categories (Sibanda & Moyo, 2018; Braun & Clarke, 2012). To add on, thematic analysis shows patterns in the data that are of importance or interest to the research (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017). Document analysis of articles that covered matches played in Bulawayo was also done. The documents provided background information prior to conducting interviews and helped to refine ideas, further analysis and observations done (Bowen, 2009).

FINDINGS

Participants' responses on spectator violence were captured manually during the interviewing process, over and above that, the researcher continually referred to written notes. In response to the question: *'What is your opinion about violence in football?'*, a variety of perspectives were expressed, and different responses emerged from participants. Coaches responded in the following manner:

'Violence takes away the beauty of the game', another added to say that *'violence kills the spirit of fair play, officials become biased and influence results in fear of hooliganism'*. The other coach revealed that *'violence is a gross act of uncivilized members of society influenced by negative peer pressure, violence drives away potential talent as they see football associated with danger and not a leisure sport.'* On the other hand, management when asked the same question, this is what came out of the interview *'Violence drives away sponsors, reduces level of competition as spectators influences performance of players, less revenue generation as few people would not come to watch the game'*.

However, spectators had their own opinions when asked the same question. This was what one of them said, *'violence is normal and associated with crowd and happens across the country'*. Another spectator had this to say, *'violence is there where there is violence and also, hometown's decision would be the order of the day.'* On the other hand, this was what emerged from referees *'Violence has no place in football be it players, coaches and administrators, violence is bad, sport is unifying agent. A good example are the five rings of the Olympic joined together making us one.'*

Overall, these results indicate that participants do not condone violence. The same sentiments were expressed by Sibanda (Phiri, 2014). A common view amongst participants was that of violence kills the spirit of the football in a variety of ways. Football is meant to be enjoyed by all; however, it would seem that spectator violence has instilled fear amongst fans.

Several issues were identified on the question of who the perpetrators of violence in football are. All participants point at hooligans, spectators, players, police, referees, coaches match officials, media, fans, drug addicts and uneducated people who do not understand the essence of sport. One referee put it this way *'any one can be a perpetrator'*. The results of this study suggest that perpetrators of violence in football might be anyone attending the match. As mentioned in literature review fans, spectators and

hooligans have been reported to be behind unruly behaviour resulting in violence (Phiri, 2014; Spaaij, 2014; Zorba et al, 2017; Sport Report, 2020). There is a strong possibility that there are individuals whose objective in sport is to engage in violence instances all the time.

This question required respondents to give information on the causes of violence in football matches that are played in Bulawayo stadia. Almost, all the referees cited the following as major causes of violence. One referee said, 'lack of understanding and interpretation of the rules of the game and failure to accept defeat by supporters of the losing team.' Another when asked revealed that 'bias and inept officiating, pressure from coach and supporters, crude tackles, and indecorous behaviour.' The other commented that violence is a result of tribalism amongst players, supporters, and coaches. On the other hand, management answered in this manner 'spectators who want to win at all costs, media and journalist, the hyper they put in the match build up at times creates unnecessary tension amongst spectators, headlines such as, Battle of Zimbabwe, Battle of the south and north, A blood and thunder encounter expected'. Meanwhile, another reiterated 'causative vary from unruly elements within the crowd to bad umpiring, poor policing and inciteful behaviour by coaches' Coaches had their own reasons that they put forward as causes. When asked the same question one coach revealed that 'wrong decision by match officials, wrong team philosophy, offensive gestures by opposing team and fans, media headlines prior to the game for example war at Barbourfields, tribal or regional clashes, clash of the Titans, battle of giants. On the other hand, spectators responded to the question in this manner 'strong fan base, frustration and tribalism' Another added 'violence is there, where there is violence, poor officiating, the way player celebrate can be provocative at times.

In their accounts of events surrounding the causes of violence in football participants highlighted varied reasons that affect the game. A common view amongst the participants were that of poor officiating, tribalism, and media headlines prior to the game. The above findings are in line with what (Sibanda & Moyo, 2018; Currie, 2000; Myers, 1996; Mandizvidza, 2012) found. It would seem that unfair calls by umpires might trigger elements of violence to spectators, players and match officials coupled with celebrations that go along with the decision taken leading to frustration. Phiri (2014) observed that most incidences of violence are a result of frustration. A similar establishment was reported by Myers (1996) where anger in people might be a source of violence if they are aggressive cues within the vicinity.

The question on matches that always experience violence disturbances in Bulawayo stadia had mixed reactions from participants. Some participants argued that they had no statistics regarding that while others cited matches that involve big teams such as Highlanders, Dynamos, FC Platinum, Caps United, Chicken Inn, and Shabanie Mine FC. While the minority were not sure of the matches the majority seem to indicate that any match played against Highlanders or in Bulawayo end violently. The findings of this study may suggest that violent behaviour is a perennial problem in matches that are played in Bulawayo stadia. Kariati (2017) had a similar scenario as the above finding in which violence seems to be normal, not new and surprising when Highlanders is playing. The psychology theory attributes that behaviour to the way players and spectators are socialised (Jamieson & Orr, 2009) that is likely to be the teams' philosophies. Sibanda and Moyo (2018) allude to tribal tendencies where such altercations as Ndebele and Shonas come in. Together these results provide an insight into challenges that the country has in terms of tribal differences of which without addressing them might escalate to something beyond what has been recorded. Mlambo (2018) and Matshazi (2017) see the problem given an 'ostrich mentality'. Seemingly, there is a widely held view that without power people are disgruntled and sport becomes the only outlet to vent anger (Sibanda & Moyo, 2018; Phiri, 2014; Goublatt, 2014; Foucault, 1998).

Question five sought to find out the songs and chants prevalent during matches in the stadia. Most of the participants who responded to this question felt that war, derogatory, insulting tribal and political, vulgar, denigrating, and inverted songs are the norm in the stadium. It would appear songs and chants that are common in the field of play always target the opponent with a likelihood of provoking anger and inflicting pain. The findings are in line with what Guzura and Ndimande (2015) established. Suggestively, the songs and chants are likely to trigger some frustration, and anger might result. This anger is then channelled elsewhere and displayed in a form of displacement to counter frustration -aggression (Myers, 1993;

Berkowitz,1998).

In response to the question on mitigation measures of violence in football this is what some interviewees had to say: ‘*use of competent officials, use Visual Assisted Refereeing (VAR), ban violent spectators from the stadia, security should always face the crowd and not the field of play, hefty fines to the offending team, allow the team to play in empty stadia as a way of punishment*’. One team manager suggested workshops to all stakeholders, educate spectators on the rules and regulations governing football and hefty penalties to teams and individuals involved. The other responses included learning to tolerate each other and accept the outcome of the match. Another coach suggested measures that are likely to improve football matches,

‘Incentivising teams with disciplined spectators, increasing security personnel, education programmes to be done in and out of the stadia, ban alcohol and drug abuse, encourage constructive media coverage and use of video evidence’.

One spectator said, ‘*check dangerous weapons from spectators*’ while the other one reiterated “*teach people to separate sport from politics*” Several measures were suggested by participants ranging from use of videos, constructive media coverage and awareness workshops in and outside the stadia to sensitise stakeholders on the value of sport. Conversely, two discrete statements emerged from this study which are likely to have a bearing on football violence. Firstly, learn to tolerate each other, and secondly separate sport from politics. Taken together these statements may suggest that there is an association between tolerating each and separating sport from politics as the two might be the sources of violence in football. The findings of this study are in line with what Mandizvidza (2012) and Matshazi (2017) alluded to. It would seem intolerance and politics infiltrate the field of play and thus, need for a change of mindset about football and not use it to settle scores as is the case in this study. A friendly environment might prevail during matches at Barbour fields stadium in Bulawayo if stakeholders are conscientised on the need for oneness regardless of origin and ethnicity.

Lastly, the question on the impact of violence had mixed responses from participants depending on their roles. Management raised issues of loss of potential sponsorship, infrastructure damages and attendance affecting revenue generation. Spectators were worried about injuries and death of fans because of violence. One spectator raised the issue of affecting innocent people as the violence may spill over to nearby locations. Phiri (2014) and Editorial comment (2014) had a similar establishment. Referees raised the issue of their safety during the process.

Document analysis

Documents selected	Data analysed
What a shocker: PSL suspends games over violence. May 2022	Game played between Highlanders and Dynamos. Fans protested and invaded field of play leading to abandonment of the match at different interval
The day Dynamos went fishing. Chronicle, July 2022	Nets were torn. A game between Dynamos and Chicken Inn.
Football Hooliganism https://www.politics.co.uk/reference/football-hooliganism/07June2022	History of football hooliganism
End violence https://www.thepatriot.co.zw/sport/end-violence-in-football/13 October 2022	Highlanders’ vs FC Platinum Analysis of nature and mitigation measures
Hooliganism has no place in football. August 2014	Dynamos played Highlanders a match that ended with a fatal incident where a fan was stabbed to death, cars had window smashed. Violence spilled over to nearby locations
Madness at Barbourfields: sports news By Nehanda Radio May 15, 2017	Highlanders played Dynamos. Violence was started by fans and coach also joined the mayhem. Missiles were thrown injuring one assistant referee

Violence at Barbourfields NewsDay. 2015	Harare city played Highlanders. Violence erupted from fans. Teams to face disciplinary action.
Hlongwane slams violence. Herald, 2015	Chicken Inn played Caps United. Hooliganism and altercation from players were recorded. The scenario was a blow to the sponsor's brand

Source: (Adapted from Bowen, 2009)

A thorough review of documents was done to have a better understanding of the topic under study. The articles were taken from Chronicle, Newsday, Herald, the Patriotic sport columns, and sport news reports, Radio Nehanda articles. Documents analysed provided background information on the nature of spectator violence in football particularly matches played in Bulawayo. Additionally, ideas in the documents helped in producing interview questions and more so guiding on which areas to probe further. Bowen (2009) accentuates that contextual richness is achieved through document analysis. In this study, there is a likelihood to assume that matches played against teams in Bulawayo end violently and sometimes fatally with loss of both lives and property. The ideas that prevailed might help coming up with measures that could help level the playing ground of football matches in Bulawayo. It would seem there are issues in which football becomes the outlet in expressing anger and frustration. As highlighted in the frustration-aggression theory, there is no frustration without anger and moreover, aggression never occurs without frustration (Kalat, 2011; Sibanda & Moyo, 2018; Wiggins et al, 1994; Miller & Dollard, 1939). Also noted in the document are consistent findings that tally with interview schedule responses making data trustworthy (Bowen, 2009).

CONCLUSION

The study established several issues associated with violence in football matches played in Bulawayo. The data gathered implies that the behaviour of the spectators is not consistent, but changes according to the circumstances on the field of play and the outcome of matches played matter most. The study has shown that violence in football especially matches played in Bulawayo is more than hooliganism, but escapism in which the anger and frustration is transferred into sport. The implication of this might be that there are a number of issues that affect individuals which are not addressed and the only way to express them is to venture in hooliganism, destruction of property and other forms of violence to relieve anger and frustration. There is a likelihood of losing potential sponsors and talented players if the problem is not addressed. One possible implication of this, is that of the province lagging in sport and infrastructure development and eventually not contribute athletes to national team competitions. The study has also highlighted issues of tolerating each other regardless of origin and ethnicity and separating sport from politics. Conclusively, these findings have a significant implication for understanding how to deal with violence in football particularly with Bulawayo teams and spectators. Clubs that have not done thorough education are likely to suffer from revenue generation, bans and penalties their teams continually experience. Similarly, sport as an industry is likely to be affected while athletes are disadvantaged from displaying their talent during national, regional, and international tournaments.

LIMITATIONS

Although the study has successfully proven that violence has no place in football, it has certain limitations in terms of population and sampling technique used in the study. Firstly, expert purposive sampling was used to recruit participants. The pre-determined sample size prior to data collection and knowledge participants had, might have influenced findings. Secondly, the study was confined to matches played in Bulawayo only and did not include other cities. The findings, therefore, might not be generalised to matches that are played in other towns and cities with different teams other than ones mentioned in the study.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The researcher makes the following recommendations to the Bulawayo community and its stakeholders. Firstly, stakeholders to seriously consider the impact of football violence and find permanent measures to deal with the problem. Secondly, an intensive outreach programmes should be conducted in schools and other grassroots sports activities to weed out elements that lag the province behind while promoting sport industry as well. Thirdly, to club managers of teams in Bulawayo, violence if not addressed is likely to promote digital satellite television viewing. There is need therefore, to conscientise spectators and all stakeholders on the importance of support and motivational aspects from the fans in the stadia. Lastly, to community leaders, bread and butter issues should be addressed as they surface whenever there is a gathering and sport is one a good example.

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Source: the standard. newsday.co.zw (May 14, 2017)



violent scenes from Barbour fields Stadium in Bulawayo

<https://nehandaradio.com/2017/05/15/madness-at-barbour-fields/>



Highlanders and Dynamos were on Thursday fined over the violence that rocked their match at Barbour fields Stadium on May 15