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Fostering National Identity Through Civic Disposition and Unity in Diversity: A Strategic Model for Football Supporters of Pss Sleman and Psim Yogyakarta

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Abstract

This study aims to develop a strategic model based on Civic Disposition and Unity in Diversity to strengthen national identity among football supporters, with a particular focus on the rivalry between PSS Sleman and PSIM Yogyakarta. Using a qualitative approach with Constructivist Grounded Theory, data were collected through semi-structured interviews and participant observation involving 15 informants, including supporter leaders, club officials, academics, and security authorities. Through rigorous coding and thematic analysis, the study identified five key strategies: educational interventions, symbolic cultural actions, formal mediation, positive media engagement, and mass mobilization. These strategies demonstrated how supporter rivalries, traditionally sources of division and conflict, can be redirected toward constructive expressions of national solidarity. The findings extend Civic Disposition theory into informal supporter contexts, operationalize Unity in Diversity through grassroots action, and enrich applications of Social Identity and Multicultural Citizenship theories within sports sociology. The study concludes that football supporter communities represent a vital yet underutilized platform for fostering civic virtues and national cohesion. Practical implications for supporter organizations, football clubs, and local governments are discussed, highlighting the importance of sustained, participatory efforts to cultivate civic culture within Indonesia's vibrant football landscape. Future research directions include longitudinal studies and comparative analyses across different regions.

Keywords: Civic Disposition, Unity in Diversity, National Identity, PSS Sleman, PSIM Yogyakarta.

Introduction

Football holds a strategic position in fostering national unity and identity in Indonesia. Governed by Government Regulation No. 16 of 2007 on the Administration of Sports, football is intended to advance national unity through orderly and fair competition. However, in practice, the positive values envisioned by the regulation have yet to be fully realized. Persistent issues such as supporter conflicts, identity-based provocations, excessive fanaticism, hate speech on social media, and physical violence continue to challenge the spirit of unity within Indonesian football.

Indonesian football enjoys a long-standing tradition of passionate fandom, particularly across Java Island. Since the 1994 merger of the amateur Perserikatan and semi-professional Galatama leagues into Liga Indonesia, the domestic competition has evolved, culminating in the current Liga 1 structure. This passion is reflected in stadium attendance records, particularly for major

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clubs like Persija Jakarta, Persib Bandung, and PSS Sleman. However, geographic imbalances persist, with a concentration of clubs in Java, highlighting infrastructural and media attention disparities that reinforce local identities at the expense of broader national cohesion.

Supporter rivalries have become a deeply entrenched social phenomenon, extending beyond the stadium into the broader socio-cultural and historical fabric of Indonesian society (Donofrio, 2024; Nurgiansah et al., 2024; Roro et al., 2023). The intense rivalry between PSS Sleman supporters (Brigata Curva Sud) and PSIM Yogyakarta supporters (Brajamusti) exemplifies how local identities are fiercely contested through football. Physical clashes, verbal provocations, and symbolic confrontations reflect a broader fragmentation of national identity, fueled by historical rivalries, regionalism, and cultural pride.

Despite sporadic initiatives aimed at reconciliation, such as post-Kanjuruhan tragedy peace meetings, the enduring tension suggests that a more systematic and preventive approach is necessary. Previous studies (Katz et al., 2020; Setiawan & Anisa, 2023; Waluyo & Kharisma, 2023) have largely focused on describing the conflict dynamics without offering concrete strategies grounded in citizenship education or preventive civic engagement frameworks.

International experiences, particularly in England and Italy, offer instructive models for managing supporter conflict. Community-based and educational approaches, such as Football Banning Orders (FBOs) in England and multi-stakeholder collaborations in Italy, have proven effective in mitigating supporter violence through proactive community engagement and education.

Against this backdrop, this study aims to develop a strategic model based on Civic Disposition and Unity in Diversity to strengthen national identity among football supporters, particularly focusing on the rivalry between PSS Sleman and PSIM Yogyakarta. This approach seeks not merely to reduce destructive rivalries but to foster national solidarity amidst local diversity. The novelty of this study lies in its integration of civic education theories, nationalism, and fan behavior studies into a contextual and actionable framework for conflict resolution in Indonesian football supporter communities.

Theoretical Background

Civic Disposition and Citizenship Education

Civic disposition refers to the set of values, attitudes, and habits essential for responsible citizenship within a democratic society. It encompasses traits such as tolerance, respect for the rule of law, willingness to engage in dialogue, commitment to public service, respect for diversity, and loyalty to the nation. Unlike civic knowledge, which emphasizes understanding political systems, or civic skills, which focus on the ability to participate, civic disposition concerns the internalization of ethical and democratic values that shape behavior across diverse social contexts (Ubaedillah, 2018).

In the framework of citizenship education, civic disposition is recognized as a fundamental pillar alongside civic knowledge and civic skills. Citizenship education aims not only to inform individuals about their rights and responsibilities but also to foster the emotional and ethical qualities necessary for sustaining a democratic society. These include fairness, responsibility, compassion, patriotism, and social trust. Through systematic educational programs, civic disposition can be cultivated from a young age, preparing individuals to become active and ethical participants in both formal political processes and everyday social interactions.

(Zharovska, 2022).

In the context of football supporter communities, the development of civic disposition is particularly crucial. Supporter groups, as vibrant social entities, often operate with intense emotions linked to local identity, loyalty, and competition (Jiang & Bairner, 2024). Without a foundation of civic values, these emotions can easily escalate into destructive behaviors such as violence, discrimination, and intolerance, phenomena frequently observed in supporter conflicts. Strengthening civic disposition among football supporters thus becomes an essential strategy to channel their loyalty and passion into constructive forms of engagement that reinforce unity and national solidarity.

Civic disposition in supporter communities involves promoting values such as sportsmanship, respect for rivals, acceptance of match outcomes, and prioritization of national identity over parochial allegiances. Citizenship education interventions tailored to supporter contexts can instill a sense of shared belonging, encouraging supporters to view diversity not as a source of division but as a strength that enhances collective identity. Moreover, by embedding national symbols, narratives of unity, and democratic values within supporter culture, civic disposition can transform football fandom into a powerful vehicle for social cohesion.

Unity in Diversity in the Context of National Identity

Unity in Diversity emphasizes that societal diversity, across ethnic, religious, and cultural lines, should be regarded as a strength rather than a source of division. In the Indonesian context, this principle is encapsulated by the national motto *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* ("Unity in Diversity"), which reflects the nation's commitment to fostering harmony within its pluralistic society (Abdulkarim et al., 2020). Rooted in the philosophical foundation of Pancasila, Unity in Diversity demands not merely passive tolerance but active respect and appreciation of differences as integral to national identity.

Contemporary interpretations of pluralism advocate for an egalitarian social structure that ensures equal recognition for all groups, replacing traditional hierarchical models (Jegalus et al., 2024). Pancasila operationalizes this principle by integrating religious, humanitarian, democratic, and social justice values into a coherent national ideology (Muqsih et al., 2022). However, in the era of globalization and digitalization, Unity in Diversity faces significant challenges, including the spread of hate speech, rising intolerance, and erosion of local cultural values due to external ideological influences.

Education emerges as a critical medium to reinforce Unity in Diversity, promoting tolerance, solidarity, and intergroup cooperation, particularly among younger generations (Abdulkarim et al., 2020). Citizenship education that embeds these values can equip individuals to navigate differences constructively and strengthen national cohesion. In the context of football supporter communities, especially amidst intense rivalries such as between PSS Sleman and PSIM Yogyakarta, applying Unity in Diversity principles is vital. Cultivating respect for diversity within these groups offers a pathway to transform local rivalries into platforms for national solidarity, thereby reinforcing the broader agenda of strengthening Indonesian national identity.

Social Identity Theory and Football Supporters' Rivalry

Social Identity Theory, developed by Henri Tajfel and John Turner as written in (Islam, 2014), provides a comprehensive framework for understanding how individuals define themselves based on their membership in social groups. This theory posits that social identity, a key

component of self-concept derived from group membership, strongly influences behaviors toward ingroups and outgroups. In the context of national identity, Social Identity Theory is particularly relevant for analyzing how individuals develop and sustain a sense of belonging to the nation through social interactions, internalization of shared values, and differentiation from external groups.

The theory outlines three core processes: social categorization, social identification, and social comparison (“Social Identity Theory,” 2024). Social categorization involves classifying oneself and others into distinct groups based on characteristics such as ethnicity, religion, or nationality. Social identification occurs when individuals internalize group membership as part of their personal identity. Finally, social comparison entails evaluating one’s group relative to others to enhance self-esteem, often resulting in ingroup favoritism and outgroup bias. Through these mechanisms, individuals build a sense of collective belonging that not only informs their self-concept but also motivates solidarity and, in some cases, intergroup competition.

Applied to national identity, these processes explain how citizens internalize collective symbols, traditions, and historical narratives while reinforcing a shared sense of belonging distinct from other nations ((Triandafyllidou, 1998). Differentiation from external groups strengthens internal cohesion, making social identity a powerful driver of national solidarity. However, when localized identities dominate over broader national affiliation, it can lead to social fragmentation and conflict.

In the context of football supporter communities, such as the rivalry between PSS Sleman and PSIM Yogyakarta, Social Identity Theory provides critical insights. Intense loyalty to local clubs fosters strong ingroup identities, while rival supporters are perceived as outgroups, often leading to hostility and conflict both inside and outside the stadium. Understanding these dynamics is essential for developing interventions that can redirect supporter loyalty towards broader concepts of unity and national identity. By leveraging shared civic values and national symbols within football culture, it is possible to transform localized rivalries into opportunities for fostering solidarity, thus strengthening the national identity among diverse social groups.

Multicultural Citizenship and the Recognition of Local Identities

The theory of *multicultural citizenship*, developed by Will Kymlicka, offers a critical framework for understanding the relationship between the state, citizens, and minority groups within pluralistic societies. Kymlicka argues that justice in liberal democracies requires not only the formal recognition of individual rights but also the protection of cultural identities, especially for national minorities and distinct ethno-cultural communities (Gianni, 2023). In this view, individuals can only exercise true freedom when the cultural frameworks that give meaning to their lives are preserved and supported.

Central to multicultural citizenship is the notion of *group-differentiated rights*, which provides special protections for minority groups to safeguard their languages, education systems, and territorial rights. Kymlicka distinguishes between national minorities, groups historically rooted in a region, and immigrant communities, arguing that national minorities warrant stronger autonomy protections due to their foundational ties to the political community (Elrick & Hébert, 2024). Another critical distinction lies between *external protections*, where the state shields minorities from external domination, and *internal restrictions*, which the state must prevent to avoid human rights violations within minority groups themselves (Faist, 2013).

While multicultural citizenship advances the recognition of cultural diversity, it faces challenges

such as the risk of depoliticizing citizens by overemphasizing cultural rights at the expense of active democratic participation (Boucher et al., 2023). Consequently, contemporary scholarship emphasizes balancing cultural protection with political inclusion to avoid reinforcing exclusion or isolation.

Multicultural citizenship continues to be applied in multiethnic contexts globally, such as Nigeria and Kurdistan, where it serves as a framework for promoting justice and preventing discrimination (Elrick & Hébert, 2024; Faist, 2013). In the context of football supporter communities, particularly in culturally diverse settings like Yogyakarta, applying multicultural citizenship principles can help recognize local identities while reinforcing national unity. This approach ensures that fostering diversity strengthens, rather than fragments, the broader national fabric.

Methodology

This study adopted a qualitative research design utilizing Constructivist Grounded Theory as proposed by Charmaz (2017). Constructivist Grounded Theory is particularly appropriate for investigating complex and evolving social phenomena where theoretical constructs are built inductively from participants' experiences. Through this approach, the study sought to develop a conceptual model explaining how civic disposition and unity in diversity are fostered within football supporter communities.

Fifteen participants were purposively selected to ensure rich and relevant data. The sample comprised active supporters, supporter group coordinators, club officials, law enforcement personnel, and academic experts in sports sociology and civic education. This diverse range of informants provided a broad perspective on the dynamics of supporter rivalry, identity formation, and the development of civic values within the context of Indonesian football culture.

Data collection involved two primary techniques. Semi-structured interviews were conducted to explore participants' perceptions, experiences, and attitudes regarding supporter rivalry, civic engagement, and national identity. The interviews allowed for flexibility while maintaining a focus on key thematic areas relevant to the research objectives. Additionally, participant observation was carried out during football matches and supporter gatherings. This method enabled the researcher to capture behavioral patterns, rituals, and social interactions in their natural environments, thereby enriching the depth of data and contextual understanding.

Data analysis followed the systematic procedures of Constructivist Grounded Theory. In the open coding phase, initial codes were generated by closely examining the raw data. These codes were then grouped during the axial coding phase to establish connections between categories, revealing patterns and relationships. Finally, selective coding was employed to integrate the core categories into a coherent theoretical framework that explained the processes underpinning civic disposition development and national identity reinforcement among supporter communities.

To ensure the trustworthiness of the findings, multiple validation strategies were employed. Triangulation was achieved by cross-referencing data from interviews and observational field notes to enhance credibility. Member checking was also conducted by inviting selected participants to review and provide feedback on the preliminary interpretations, ensuring that the findings accurately reflected their perspectives and experiences. These strategies contributed to the overall reliability, credibility, and authenticity of the study.

Results

Strengthening Civic Disposition Through Education

Developing civic disposition among football supporters requires early and continuous intervention through structured educational programs. The "Arema Goes to School" initiative, for example, serves as an effective model, demonstrating that sport-based civic education delivered directly to young audiences can instill values of discipline, tolerance, and non-violence. Implementing a similar outreach program specifically targeting young supporters of PSS Sleman and PSIM Yogyakarta would cultivate a foundation of sportsmanship and respectful rivalry from an early stage. Furthermore, collaboration among schools, supporter communities, and local governments is essential to ensure systematic character education that integrates national values and principles of fair play.

Participants emphasized that early exposure to civic education significantly influences how young supporters perceive rivalry and sporting conduct. Drawing from experiences like "Arema Goes to School," respondents noted that direct engagement through relatable figures, such as players and coaches, made the lessons on fair play and respect more impactful. As stated by Informant 1, a young supporter affiliated with PSS Sleman:

"When our school was visited by a former player who talked about respecting opponents and supporting without violence, it really changed my perspective. I realized that football is about pride, but also about respect." (Informant 1, young supporter of PSS Sleman, July 2024)

Moreover, educators highlighted that contextualizing civic values through football narratives enhanced students' emotional connection to concepts like fairness, unity, and mutual respect. A schoolteacher from Sleman further explained:

"Teaching about tolerance and unity using football as a theme was very effective. Students who are passionate about football easily connect ideas of fair play on the field with fairness and respect in daily life." (Informant 6, civic education teacher, Sleman, July 2024)

Beyond formal education settings, academic experts stressed the importance of sustained community engagement to reinforce civic values. As observed by an academic specializing in civic education:

"School programs are important, but what happens in the community matters just as much. We need youth supporter programs that run year-round, not just one-time events." (Informant 12, academic in civic education, Yogyakarta, July 2024)

In summary, strengthening civic disposition through education demands a multi-tiered approach that combines early interventions in schools with continuous community-based reinforcement. Football culture offers an accessible and powerful medium to internalize civic values, enabling the next generation of supporters to embody principles of sportsmanship, peace, and national solidarity. Systematic and collaborative educational efforts, grounded in national identity and unity in diversity, offer a promising pathway to transform football rivalries into expressions of constructive solidarity.

Building Unity Through Cultural Rituals and Symbolic Actions

Building unity among football supporters often requires approaches beyond formal education and regulation. This study found that culturally grounded initiatives that foster emotional bonds across rival groups are crucial for promoting unity in diversity. The spontaneous peace gesture

at Gubeng Station between Bonek and Jakmania, as well as the “Tanam Pohon Cinta” ceremony between Pasoepati and Bonek, highlight the potential of symbolic actions to transform historical rivalries into solidarity. For the case of PSS Sleman and PSIM Yogyakarta, adopting similar local cultural rituals, such as organizing joint community service activities, peace ceremonies, or intercultural festivals, can help channel supporter energy towards positive expressions of shared identity.

Participants emphasized that symbolic acts embedded within local traditions resonate more deeply with supporter identities than formal peace declarations. Several informants reflected on the emotional impact of engaging in reconciliation activities that involved shared rituals, symbols of hope, or communal acts of remembrance. One supporter leader recounted:

"When we planted a tree together with former rival supporters, it felt like we were creating something lasting. It wasn't about words, it was about sharing a commitment to peace in a way we could all feel." (Informant 7, senior supporter leader of PSIM Yogyakarta, July 2024)

Moreover, these symbolic gestures were often perceived as a way to reclaim agency from violent narratives frequently amplified by external actors. Community-led ceremonies provided a platform for supporters to redefine rivalry from a destructive competition into a celebration of shared passion and regional pride. Another supporter from PSS Sleman emphasized:

"Doing something simple like lighting candles together or singing one song across groups made me realize that we are the same, fans who love football, not enemies." (Informant 3, member of BCS Sleman, July 2024)

However, participants also noted that for symbolic actions to be effective, they must be accompanied by sincere dialogue and follow-up community activities. Rituals that remain isolated events risk being perceived as superficial if not embedded into longer-term relationship building. As explained by a local cultural activist engaged in supporter mediation:

"Ceremonies like tree planting or mass prayers are powerful starting points, but they must be linked to ongoing collaboration projects, so the peace becomes a daily practice, not just a memory." (Informant 9, community mediator and cultural activist, Yogyakarta, July 2024)

In summary, building unity through cultural rituals and symbolic actions offers an emotionally resonant pathway to soften entrenched rivalries between football supporters. When culturally sensitive events such as service activities, peace ceremonies, and intercultural festivals are sustained over time, they foster deeper solidarity rooted in local identity and contribute significantly to strengthening unity in diversity.

Institutional Mediation and Dialogue Platforms

Formal mediation initiatives play a vital role in sustaining peace between rival supporter groups. This study found that structured dialogue platforms, when conducted sincerely and inclusively, serve as essential mechanisms for de-escalating tensions and fostering a shared sense of identity. The Declaration of Peace signed between PSIM and PSS supporters in 2018, facilitated by Poldadiy, illustrates how properly mediated dialogues can prevent conflict escalation and promote a collective commitment to peaceful rivalry. Regular dialogue sessions involving supporter leaders, club officials, and local government authorities institutionalize conflict resolution, allowing supporters to express concerns, negotiate differences, and reaffirm their regional pride and shared national identity.

Participants consistently highlighted the importance of trust-building during mediation processes. Many described early skepticism towards formal dialogues, yet observed that when mediation was conducted respectfully and participatively, perceptions gradually changed. As one supporter leader recalled:

"At first, we thought the meeting was just for show. But when the police allowed us to speak openly and treated us equally, it made a difference. We realized that dialogue wasn't about blaming, it was about listening and moving forward." (Informant 5, coordinator of Brajamusti PSIM Yogyakarta, July 2024)

Moreover, participants emphasized that the timing and public framing of mediation efforts enhanced their impact. Dialogue sessions conducted ahead of high-stakes matches, supplemented by visible peace gestures and joint public statements, were seen as effective in shaping supporter attitudes. As noted by a senior supporter:

"It helped when right before a derby, there were joint statements and we saw our own leaders shaking hands with rival groups. It reminded us that whatever happens, we are still Jogja people first." (Informant 2, senior member of BCS PSS Sleman, July 2024)

However, several informants cautioned that institutional mediation must move beyond ceremonial declarations. Real progress depends on translating dialogue outcomes into collaborative programs and tangible joint actions. As a club management representative explained:

"Dialogue needs to lead somewhere. It's good to declare peace, but better when it becomes programs, like working together on stadium campaigns or helping each other's communities after disasters." (Informant 10, management representative of PSS Sleman, July 2024)

In summary, institutional mediation and dialogue platforms, when properly facilitated, offer football supporters opportunities to voice concerns, negotiate differences, and strengthen solidarity rooted in regional and national pride. For PSS Sleman and PSIM Yogyakarta, embedding mediation into an ongoing culture of collaboration provides a sustainable pathway to transform historical rivalries into a celebration of unity in diversity.

Positive Media Engagement for Narrative Change

Media platforms offer a powerful tool for reshaping both public perceptions and internal supporter narratives. This study found that football clubs and supporter groups that actively manage their digital presence can significantly influence fan behavior by promoting messages of sportsmanship, acceptance, and national solidarity. The "Representasi Nilai Sportivitas #PSSday" campaign by PSS Sleman serves as a notable example of how social media can be creatively utilized to normalize fair play, acceptance of defeat, and respectful engagement with rivals. Building on this model, PSS Sleman and PSIM Yogyakarta could launch coordinated media campaigns that celebrate moments of supporter unity, highlight acts of fair play, and advocate for a vision of rivalry that strengthens rather than undermines Indonesian national identity.

Participants emphasized that well-designed media campaigns, especially those using humor, creativity, and emotional resonance, are more effective than traditional moralistic appeals. As one digital media coordinator recounted:

"When we post humorous animations or videos showing respect to opponents, it gets shared

faster and influences the mood. It becomes cool to support without hate." (Informant 8, digital media coordinator for PSS Sleman, July 2024)

Moreover, supporters stressed that consistency in positive messaging, before, during, and after matches, was crucial to establishing a new normative standard. Sporadic campaigns were perceived as less effective compared to continuous, embedded narratives of unity and fair play. A young supporter from PSIM Yogyakarta reflected:

"It feels different when official pages post friendly messages after a match, even if we lose. It makes us fans feel that rivalry is about passion, not hatred." (Informant 4, young supporter of PSIM Yogyakarta, July 2024)

Participants also noted that coordinated media actions between rival clubs, such as joint postings and synchronized peace messages, can multiply the positive impact. As a social media administrator involved in cross-club collaborations explained:

"When two rival clubs both post a picture of players shaking hands or fans smiling together, it gives a strong message that we can be fierce on the field but still brothers off the field." (Informant 2, social media admin and supporter liaison, July 2024)

In summary, positive media engagement offers a powerful and accessible avenue for transforming supporter culture. For PSS Sleman and PSIM Yogyakarta, launching creative, sustained, and collaborative media campaigns focused on civic values, national solidarity, and constructive rivalry can help build a supporter identity that proudly embodies the principle of unity in diversity, both online and offline.

Mass Mobilization for Collective Identity

Mass mobilization plays a crucial role in transforming fragmented supporter identities into a collective force rooted in national solidarity. Large-scale, inclusive events such as the "Mataram Is Love" solidarity movement exemplify how supporter groups can transcend club loyalties and reaffirm their shared identity as Indonesians. This study found that organizing joint ceremonies involving supporters from different backgrounds, through prayers, public pledges, cultural performances, and symbolic acts, can reinforce the message that local rivalries are part of a broader tapestry of national unity. Repeating such events periodically would help to embed the values of unity in diversity into the fabric of supporter culture.

Participants highlighted the profound emotional impact of participating in mass peace gatherings, describing them as moments of collective reflection and redefinition of supporter roles. As one activist involved in the "Mataram Is Love" event explained:

"Standing together with thousands of supporters, lighting candles for victims, we all realized that beyond club colors, we are brothers and sisters who love this country." (Informant 11, organizer of "Mataram Is Love," Yogyakarta, July 2024)

Moreover, respondents emphasized that mass mobilizations are most effective when framed around national values, humanitarian causes, and regional pride, rather than being limited to reactive responses to tragedies. Proactive events, such as annual supporter unity festivals, public cultural performances, or collaborative peace ceremonies, can channel supporter passion into constructive expressions of solidarity. A representative from Slemania shared his perspective:

"If we had more events like a 'Jogja Supporter Unity Festival' every year, maybe our rivalries would be more about showing creativity and pride, not violence." (Informant 1, member of

Participants also stressed that the authenticity of mass mobilization efforts depends on genuine grassroots ownership and inclusive planning processes. Events must be co-created by supporters themselves to be sustainable and meaningful. As a veteran from The Maident expressed:

"It only works when the idea comes from us, the fans. We need to plan together, decide together, and celebrate together. That's how real brotherhood grows." (Informant 7, senior member of The Maident PSIM Yogyakarta, July 2024)

In conclusion, mass mobilization through repeated, inclusive, and culturally grounded ceremonies can significantly reinforce unity in diversity among football supporters. For PSS Sleman and PSIM Yogyakarta, embedding mass solidarity actions into annual traditions provides a sustainable pathway to transform rivalry into a celebration of shared national identity and civic pride.

Discussion

This study explored the development of a strategic model based on Civic Disposition and Unity in Diversity to strengthen national identity among football supporters, focusing on the rivalry between PSS Sleman and PSIM Yogyakarta. The research, drawing insights from 15 informants, identified several key mechanisms for transforming destructive supporter rivalries into constructive solidarity. These findings illuminate the pathways by which civic values can be integrated into grassroots football culture to foster national cohesion.

The first strategic is strengthening civic disposition among supporters. It was found to require early and sustained educational efforts. Programs like "Arema Goes to School" showed that embedding civic education within football identity could cultivate tolerance, discipline, and sportsmanship among young supporters. Education initiatives that combined school-based activities with community reinforcement proved particularly effective in nurturing civic values across generations.

After strengthening civic disposition among supporters, symbolic cultural actions also emerged as crucial tools in reshaping supporter relations. Rituals such as tree planting, joint prayers, and intercultural gatherings provided emotionally resonant experiences that transcended traditional rivalries. By engaging in these shared symbolic acts, supporters were able to reframe their group identities towards collective pride and national solidarity.

Institutional mediation, exemplified by the 2018 Peace Declaration facilitated by Polda DIY, played a vital role in formalizing peace-building efforts. Structured dialogues allowed supporters to express grievances, negotiate differences, and reaffirm mutual commitments to regional pride and national unity. These mediated encounters laid the groundwork for more sustainable and respectful rivalries.

Positive media engagement further amplified the cultivation of civic values within supporter communities. Initiatives like "#PSSday" demonstrated the power of creative and continuous social media strategies in normalizing fair play and respectful rivalry narratives. Collaborative digital messaging between rival clubs was particularly effective in fostering an online environment of tolerance and solidarity.

Finally, mass mobilization through inclusive events like "Mataram Is Love" proved effective in fostering a collective supporter identity rooted in unity in diversity. Large-scale gatherings

framed around humanitarian and national themes offered a transformative space for embedding civic values into supporter culture. Periodic repetition of such events was seen as essential to sustain these positive shifts over time.

The findings of this study align closely with the concept of Civic Disposition in citizenship education. Civic traits such as tolerance, respect for diversity, and national loyalty, identified as necessary for responsible citizenship, were evident in the educational interventions analyzed (Lily Hidayani, 2022; Pasandaran et al., 2018). The early education programs modeled in supporter communities demonstrate that Civic Disposition can be deliberately cultivated through systematic exposure and community engagement (Zharovska, 2022).

The principle of Unity in Diversity, fundamental to Indonesia's national ideology, was operationalized effectively through collaborative supporter initiatives. Activities like intercultural festivals and joint symbolic rituals exemplify the practical embodiment of *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* (Abdulkarim et al., 2020). These findings support contemporary pluralist interpretations that advocate for egalitarian social structures while maintaining strong national cohesion (Jegalus et al., 2024; Muqsith et al., 2022).

Social Identity Theory provides a compelling framework to interpret how supporters shifted from narrow ingroup loyalties to broader civic identities. Participation in mass mobilizations and peace rituals facilitated social recategorization processes, reinforcing national solidarity over local divisions (Triandafyllidou, 1998). The study confirms that social identities among supporters are fluid and can be reshaped through intentional shared experiences.

Multicultural Citizenship theory also becomes relevant in understanding the recognition and integration of local supporter identities within national frameworks. Protecting local supporter cultures while embedding civic values reflects the principles of group-differentiated rights articulated by Kymlicka (Gianni, 2023). The study further highlights the need to balance cultural protection with political inclusion, as emphasized by (Rask & Shin, 2024), ensuring that diversity strengthens rather than fragments national identity (Gogoué Jean Claude et al., 2024; JEKAYINOLUWA & ADEOWU, 2024).

Together, these theoretical integrations demonstrate that football supporter culture offers a fertile domain for advancing civic education, identity transformation, and national solidarity. By applying frameworks of civic disposition, unity in diversity, social identity, and multicultural citizenship simultaneously, the findings reveal a comprehensive pathway for nurturing tolerant and cohesive supporter communities.

This study contributes to the growing body of literature on civic education and social cohesion by offering an applied model situated within football supporter culture. While previous research has emphasized civic disposition within formal educational contexts (Pasandaran et al., 2018; Hidayani, 2022), this study extends its application into informal, emotionally charged environments where civic virtues are often most needed. It demonstrates that structured educational and cultural interventions can successfully embed civic values within supporter communities.

Additionally, the study advances theoretical discussions on Unity in Diversity by providing an empirical case of how pluralistic national identity can be operationalized at the grassroots level. Prior scholarship has mainly addressed pluralism through institutional or policy perspectives (Jegalus et al., 2024; Muqsith et al., 2022), whereas this research highlights bottom-up cultural practices as effective means of reinforcing national unity. It shows that local supporter rivalries,

when properly managed, can serve as dynamic arenas for practicing tolerance and solidarity.

The findings also contribute to Social Identity Theory by illustrating how supporter identities can be positively reconstructed through shared symbolic actions. While earlier work has emphasized the persistence of ingroup-outgroup dynamics (Triandafyllidou, 1998), this study shows that mass mobilizations and collaborative rituals can shift identity boundaries toward inclusive national belonging. It enriches our understanding of identity flexibility in emotionally intense group settings.

Finally, the research provides a contextual application of Multicultural Citizenship theory within sports communities, an area rarely explored in prior studies (Gianni, 2023; Wahlbeck, 2023). By recognizing local supporter cultures while embedding national values, the study offers a practical model of group-differentiated citizenship that strengthens social cohesion without undermining cultural diversity. It affirms that the principles of multiculturalism can be meaningfully adapted beyond formal political structures into vibrant community life.

The findings of this study offer practical strategies for football supporter organizations seeking to cultivate a more civic, tolerant, and nationally cohesive supporter culture. Groups such as Brajamusti, The Maident, Slemania, and BCS could implement structured civic education programs, modeled after initiatives like "Arema Goes to School," targeting young supporters. Early intervention through educational outreach would instill values of sportsmanship, respect for diversity, and acceptance of competition outcomes.

Football clubs such as PSIM Yogyakarta and PSS Sleman also have significant roles to play by institutionalizing positive media engagement. Through coordinated campaigns that highlight acts of fair play, unity, and shared national identity, clubs can reshape supporter narratives. Strategic use of social media platforms would allow rival supporter groups to celebrate collective values while maintaining healthy competition on the field.

Local governments and civic organizations can further contribute by facilitating structured mediation platforms and supporting mass mobilization initiatives. Initiatives like the "Mataram Is Love" solidarity movement demonstrated how government support, when aligned with grassroots enthusiasm, can foster sustainable peace between historically rival groups. Regularly scheduled peace festivals, cultural celebrations, and public civic rituals would reinforce civic disposition and Unity in Diversity principles.

Educational institutions also have a role in integrating football-based civic education into broader youth engagement strategies. By connecting football supporter identities to national values through classroom programs and community projects, schools can amplify the reach and impact of civic disposition education. Collaboration between educators, local governments, and football organizations would create a multilayered support system for strengthening national identity through everyday cultural participation.

Overall, the application of these strategies requires consistent, collaborative efforts across supporter groups, clubs, government bodies, and educational institutions. A holistic, multi-stakeholder approach will ensure that the values of tolerance, solidarity, and national pride are deeply rooted within the vibrant and influential world of Indonesian football supporters.

While this study provides valuable insights into fostering civic disposition and unity among football supporters, several limitations must be acknowledged. First, the qualitative nature of the research and the reliance on 15 informants limit the generalizability of the findings beyond the

PSS Sleman and PSIM Yogyakarta supporter contexts. Second, the study's focus on a single regional rivalry, despite its significance, may not fully capture the diversity of supporter cultures across Indonesia's broader football landscape. Third, although participant observation and interviews provided rich data, the absence of longitudinal tracking means that long-term effects of civic interventions could not be assessed. Finally, the emotional and politically sensitive nature of football rivalries may have influenced the openness of some participants, introducing potential biases despite efforts at triangulation and member checking. These limitations suggest that caution is needed when extending the conclusions to other contexts, and they point to opportunities for further research using broader samples and longitudinal designs.

Future research could expand the scope of this study by conducting comparative analyses across different regions in Indonesia, where supporter cultures and rivalries may exhibit unique characteristics. Longitudinal studies would be particularly valuable in tracking whether civic disposition and unity-building interventions produce sustained behavioral changes over time. Additionally, future research should explore the role of digital platforms more deeply, particularly examining how online interactions among supporters can either reinforce or undermine civic values. Investigating the perspectives of younger generations, especially those heavily engaged in digital fandom, could offer insights into how civic education strategies must evolve in the digital era. Finally, interdisciplinary approaches combining sociology, education, political science, and media studies could enrich the understanding of how sports culture interacts with broader processes of national identity formation and social cohesion.

Conclusion

This study identified five key strategies based on Civic Disposition and Unity in Diversity to strengthen national identity among football supporters, with a particular focus on the rivalry between PSS Sleman and PSIM Yogyakarta. Through educational interventions, symbolic cultural actions, formal mediation, positive media engagement, and mass mobilization, the research demonstrated that supporter rivalries can be redirected toward constructive expressions of national solidarity. The findings affirm that football supporter culture is a vital and underutilized domain for fostering civic virtues and strengthening Indonesian national identity, especially when approached through participatory, culturally resonant strategies. Integrating insights from Civic Education, Social Identity Theory, and Multicultural Citizenship Theory, this study contributes both theoretical and practical innovations to the fields of civic engagement and sports sociology. Future work that expands across different supporter cultures and incorporates digital dynamics will be crucial in sustaining and scaling these positive transformations within Indonesia's vibrant football communities.

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