



ASSESSMENT OF HIGH DEATH RATE AMONG FOOTBALL MATCH VIEWERS: THE ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS SCHOLAR'S PERSPECTIVE

MUHAMMAD-JAMIU ISSA Ph. D.

Department of Arts Education

Prince Abubakar Audu University Anyigba, Nigeria

issa.mj@ksu.edu.ng

08034686946

USMAN ADISA ISSA

Al-Hikmah University Ilorin, Nigeria

imamabujamilat@gmail.com

08066875449

AYUBA OLANIYI JIBRIL Ph. D.

Al-Hikmah University Ilorin, Nigeria

Ayubaolaniyijibril38@gmail.com

08038620638

LAWAL ABUBAKAR

Dept: IJMB center Kwara polytechnic.

0803 628 2002 abubakarolarewaju700@gmail.com

Abstract

This study assessed Islamic religious scholars' perspective on the high rate of death among football match viewers. The study sample was 200 wards in Ilorin Emirate, Nigeria. Structural questionnaire was used to gather data and was analysed using mean and standard deviation. Finding revealed that the impact of watching football matches on youths and adults' psychological, economic and health stability is high. It is therefore recommended that special sensitization programmes should be organized to ameliorate the incident.

Key words: Assessment, High Death rate, Football, Ilorin Emirate, Islamic Religious, Scholar's Perspective.

Introduction

Football is one of the oldest games in the world that persistently gain peoples' attention and participation till the present time. According to Iwuagwu et al. (2023) football is a sporting activity that helps individual enjoy relaxation, relief from stress and ability to cope with anxiety, trauma and pressure of life. Similarly, Epting et al. (2011) defined football as an athlete that is performed



in front of crowds; the individual player's performance is observed and measured throughout the activity. Callega et al. (2022) also presented football as a sport carried out by group of people aiming to compete in the presence of spectators and other football management officers. Topend (2021) delineated football as a well-known soccer with more than 3millions followers word wide. Hassabi et al. (2018); Kramer et al. (2018) described football as a sporting activity that globally records the highest number of viewers, sponsors and supporters. Iwuagwu et al. (2023) added that football is a very popular game among Nigerian youths and adults because it is where they catch fun, pleasure and relaxation.

Football is a game played between two competing teams and it is allowed in Islam to compete based on fundamental rulings guiding playing football (Ibrahim and Firhan, 2019). It is stated that permissibility of playing football is in line with the consensus of contemporary scholars such as al-Qardawi, Muhammad Nasirul-deen Al-Bani and Abdullah al-Faqih that there is no concrete or authentic evidence from al-Quran or Hadith that nullifies watching or playing football (Ibrahim & Firhan, 2019). It implies that watching football is *halal* in Islam as far as it fulfills the following conditions: it must free from gambling, cheating, exposition of nudity and it must not be watched during *Salah* (Sule & Adam, 2018). Similarly, al-Qardawi (2006) stated that football viewers must maintain decorum and exhibit good moral and ethics.

Football watching is gaining patronage among Nigerian youths and adults day in day out. It is observed according to Iwuagwu et al. (2023) that football watching has been worshipping god that must be looked after preciously among Nigerian youths and adults. Cheeron (2019) stated more than 100 million Nigerian youths prefer watching football to any other thing. Akpodonor (2019) and Diaz (2018) observed that football watching in Nigeria has resulted to numerous unwanted situations such as violence, anxiety, loss of property, depression, displeasure and some other problems. Kramer et al. (2018) submitted that football watching has ended to many unpleasant



scenarios that always claim lives or property. Emanuel (2021) asserted that a man was reportedly died just because his fan was defeated at Enugu State. This incident normally happens through depression and anxiety which cause the heart failure.

Literature Review

Psychological stress, anxiety of competition, physical exhaustion and unethical confrontation among football viewers are the major things that affect football watching on the Nigerian youths and adults (Sothorn & O’Gorman, 2021). Kramer et al. (2018) revealed that there is a significant correlation of football viewers and depression and anxiety. It is however, explained that depression and anxiety induce heart failure that normally leads to death. Brawn et al. (2015) and Pruna and Bahdur (2016) concluded that there is higher level of depression among football fans. In the same vein, Brechbuhl et al. (2017) submitted that psychological factors and physical appearance have significant impacts on critical incidents that happen during football matches.

Economic stability of many Nigerian youths and adults is shaking due to the fact that they engage in football betting. According to Iwuagwu et al. (2023) over 60 million Nigerians between the ages of 18 to 40 engage in football betting. Owonikoko (2020) also submitted that football betting is an aspect of betting that gain patronage every day in Nigeria. Akyereko (2020) noted that loss of money and valuable things have reportedly accelerated suicide acts in Nigeria. In Islam, any sport that involves betting is not permitted because it is not allowed in Islam to engage in anything that is not certain or unlawful (Sule & Adam, 2018). It shows that many Nigerian youths including adults engage in football gambling which wrecks them financially and terminates their lives dishonourably.

Islam is a religion that praises self-defense and discards suicide. Al-Quran mentioned it categorically that the severe punishment designed for suicide committers and other relevant criminal activities. Suicide is strongly condemned by Allah. The Qur’ān states that one should not



be the instrument of his own destruction (Q2:195) or engage in self-murder (Q4:29). The Prophet also said that whoever commits suicide with an object, will be tortured with the same object in the hell (Bukhari, vol. 8 p. 577 & Muslim, vol. 5 p.109). This is a basic injunction, and it is the reason most scholars stress that suicide is a terrible sin and not martyrdom in Islam.

Health issue is another problem associated with football watching nowadays. Many people are nursing something in the body and shouting, depression and anger originated from watching football matches might hike the illness and complicate it. According to Sule and Adam (2018) watching football is very dangerous for someone who takes it personal because it may lead to high blood pressure, depression, frustration, anger and above all death. Ibrahim and Firhan (2019) commented that among the benefits of watching football is that it gives relief, relaxation and rest of mind after being exposed to different official activities during the day. According to Ochogwu (2024), many people in Nigeria now are walking with different type of illness such as severe hypertension and cardiovascular diseases and they may not be aware until the diseases wreck them down. This type of people, if care is not taken, may collapse during frustration and challenging scenarios.

Justification of the Study

Islam is a religion that permits its adherents to practice and enjoy some activities as far as the conduct of such activities are not in any way affect such persons or other human beings. Playing or watching football is allowed in Islam as far as it is not performed on another platform contradicting the rules and regulations laid down in Islam. One is enjoined to distance any act that can terminate or injure one's life or other beings in Islam.

It has become frequent whenever football match is played, loss of irreplaceable live, properties and so many other valuable materials in the name of showing love and satisfaction or displeasure and dissatisfaction. Therefore, football viewers are needed to encourage to be cognizant of their



lives more than anything, because killing oneself has no tenable excuse in Islam. However, the present study assessed the high death rate among football match viewers: The Islamic religious scholar's perspective.

However, several scholars and researchers in and outside Nigeria have worked on assessment of high death rate among football match viewers. Majority of those scholars concluded that there is higher level of depression and anxiety among the football fans. From the review, the Islamic Religious scholar's perspective towards high death rate among football match viewers has not done to the best of the researcher's knowledge. The review in this area therefore justified the need for the present study. This is why this stud focused on assessment of high death rate among football match viewers: The Islamic Religious scholar's perspective. In order to fill part of the research gaps, the researcher hopes that this study shall be a value addition to this research area.

Aims and Objectives

Generally, this study assessed high death rate among football match viewers: The Islamic religious scholar's perspective. Specifically, the study determined the:

1. Islamic position on psychological rate impact of youths and adults football match viewers in Ilorin Emirate.
2. Islamic position on economic rate impact of the youths and adults football match viewers in Ilorin Emirate.
3. Islamic position on health rate impact on the youths and adults football match viewers in Ilorin Emirate.



Research Questions

1. What is the Islamic position on psychological rate impact of youths and adults football match viewers in Ilorin Emirate?
2. What is the Islamic position on economic rate impact of the youths and adults football match viewers in Ilorin Emirate?
3. What is the Islamic position on health rate impact on the youths and adults football match viewers in Ilorin Emirate?

Methodology

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The population of the study comprised all Muslim youths and adults in Ilorin Emirate. Ilorin Emirate consisted of five local government areas in Nigeria which are: Ilorin East, Ilorin South, Ilorin West, Asa and Moro local government areas. Simple random sampling technique was used to select 20 wards out of 67 wards in all five local government areas in Ilorin Emirate. 200 Muslim youths and adults were randomly selected for this study. Structural questionnaire was used as instrument for data collection in the study. Mean and Standard Deviation of descriptive statistical tool was used to answer all research questions raised in the study.



Result

Table 1: Islamic position on psychological rate impact of youths and adults football match viewers in Ilorin Emirate.

S/N	ITEM	SA	A	UD	D	SD	Mean	Standard Deviation
1	Watching of football match leads to insensitivity to the dos and don't of Allah	67	0	33	66	34	3.000	1.537
2	I usually feel disturbed whenever my supporting team is defeated in match is not Islamic	67	67	33	33	0	3.840	1.068
3	Emotionally, watching of football matches usually makes me behave recklessly whenever my team won or defeated in the match.	34	33	33	67	33	2.840	1.350
4	Mocking the losing group in football match is not permissible in Islam	33	101	33	0	33	3.505	1.256
5	I do feel rejected and depressed whenever my supporting team loss.	100	33	34	0	33	3.835	1.462

It shows from the table that item 2, 4 & 5 have the highest impact with means of 3.840, 3.505 and 3.835 respectively. This implies that youths and adults take watching football to the high level without considering their psychological status in Ilorin Emirate.



Table 2: Islamic position on Economic Rate Impact of the Youths and Adults Football Match Viewers in Ilorin Emirate

S/N	ITEM	SA	A	UD	D	SD	Mean	Standard Deviation
1	Spending money on football matches and neglect other necessities is not allowed in Islam	101	33	33	33	0	4.010	1.156
2	Using property for betting when a match is being played is prohibited in Islam	167	33	0	0	0	4.835	0.372
3	Islam does not support paying entrance fee whenever there is football match show	34	0	66	33	67	2.505	1.396
4	Islam prohibits football matches betting	200	0	0	0	0	5.000	0.000
5	distributing money for people whenever a favourite team wins the match is not permitted in Islam	34	0	100	66	0	3.010	1.007

The table above revealed that items 1, 2, & 4 with means of 4.010, 4.835 and 5.000 are the most dangerous problems that normally contribute to high rate of death among the youths and adults that watch football in Ilorin Emirate. Item 4 has the highest number of mean which indicated that it is the only item that contributes lot to the early death or deadly sickness to youths and adults that watch football in Ilorin Emirate.



Table 3: Islamic Position on Health Rate Impact on the Youths and Adults Football Match

Viewers in Ilorin Emirate

S/N	ITEM	SA	A	UD	D	SD	Mean	Standard Deviation
1	Islam instructs hypertensive patient to feel normal but whenever my supporting teamloss, my body's organs and temperature usually work abnormal and pressed before, during and after the match	67	67	33	33	0	3.840	1.068
2	Islam does not permit anybody to fall sick just because his team suffered a defeat in the match	133	0	34	0	33	4.000	1.527
3	Islam advises everybody to be aware of his health status and try to maintain moderate position whenever his favourite team is playing	133	67	0	0	0	4.665	0.472
4	felling shivering when one's team is about to play corner or penalty is out of Islam	67	100	0	33	0	4.005	0.999
5	Feeling bad or unpleasant whenever one's favourite team is defeated is not a teaching of Islam	33	167	0	0	0	4.165	0.372

The table shows that all items have high impact on the life of youths and adults in Ilorin Emirate. It is indicated in the table that no item had mean less than 4 point, which shows that health wise watching football is very dangerous for youths and adults in Ilorin Emirate.



Discussion

The finding of the study showed that youths and adults take watching football to the high level without considering their psychological implications in Ilorin Emirate. This finding is in line with the submission of Anthony et al. (2023) that psychological risk factors such as violence, anxiety and suicide are likely consequences of watching football on the youths and adults in Nigeria.

The result of this study also revealed that watching football contributes a lot to the early death or deadly sickness of youths and adults in Ilorin Emirate. This finding supported the finding of Ibrahim and Firhan (2019) that watching football match is causing harms to people's properties and dignity of the viewers. The outcome of this study revealed equally that watching football has high negative implications on the life of youths and adults in Ilorin Emirate. Health wise, watching football is very dangerous for youths and adults because of attendant health related issues. This finding corresponds with the finding of Sule and Adam (2018) that watching football is very dangerous, it may lead to high blood pressure, depression, frustration, anger and heart failure.

Conclusion

This study has shown the negative effects of watching football matches and the attendant health risk involved. It is therefore concluded that watching football matches by youths and adults should be done adopting selective and cautionary approaches in Ilorin Emirates.

Recommendations

The following are the recommendations raised in the study based on the findings:

1. Football viewers should try to control their emotions whenever the matches are in progress either in favour of their supporting team or not.
2. Football viewers should not lavish money or engage in football betting
3. Football viewers should be conscious of their state of health before engaging in argument with other viewers.



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