



# Soccer Violence: Factor and Tackling Mechanism: In the Case of Ethiopia Premier League (Epl)

**Alemmebrat Kiflu (Ph.D)**

*Department of Sport Science, College of Natural & Computational Science Addis Ababa University, Email:  
alemmembrat.kiflu@yahoo.com*

## **Abstract**

---

*Received in Jun, 2018  
Revised form Sep, 2018 to  
Jun, 2020  
Accepted: Dec, 2020  
Ethiopian Journal of Sport  
Science (EJSS),  
Volume I, Issue I,  
Published by Ethiopian Sport  
Academy.*

**Keywords:** *Violence, fans behavior,  
CCTV, potential respondents.*

---

*In Ethiopia, soccer violence was sporadic, however; these days, it is becoming a growing concern and it extended even outside the stadium. Spectators are reserved to go stadiums in afraid of violence related injuries, this violence damaging the sociocultural and economy of the country, and it also affects the image and development of football as a whole. Despite this, studies were scanty and not properly done.*

*Thus, the purpose of this study was to examine the causes and it's tackling strategies. A cross-sectional descriptive study was conducted among 137 potential respondents since 1st of January 2016 to 31 of October, 2017 using snow ball and stratified random sampling for the qualitative and quantitative data respectively. The interview was analyzed qualitatively while IBM SPSS software version 20 was applied as a statistical tool for the analysis of quantitative data. The findings revealed that the chief factors of spectator violence were found to be multifactorial, however; the root cause emerged from players; referees; coaches, spectators; clubs fans, football federation; clubs managers; the media bodies and quality of stadiums. As a means of tackling mechanism the best remedies are discussing the problems with the stakeholders; awareness creation and sustainable education of the communities; strict punishment policy followed by execution of the law are the major ones besides to identifying the most active place of violence, traditionally named as "Katanga".*

*In conclusion, there is a need to take serious and feasible action on how to curb the problem and how to ensure sustainable and peaceful tournaments before it traumatizing the sport families. The federation should improve also to the quality of stadiums using CCTV and good fence and pay attention on proactive strategies like education as a big weapon than focusing on reactive measure.*

---

## **INTRODUCTION**

Since its birth, football has been integral to our communities. It is more than a game, more than a sport; it is a way of life that we all embrace, regardless of nationality, creed, ethnicity,

education, gender or religion. **Soccer violence** is the term used to describe disorderly, violent or destructive behavior of spectators at a football event, the conflict may take place during or after

**Cited as: Alemmebrat Kiflu Adane (2020): Soccer Violence: Factor and Tackling Mechanism: In the Case of Ethiopia Premier League (Epl): Ethiopian Journal of Sport Science (EJSS)**



matches. In soccer, violence is a competitive behavior of socially organized fan groups, principally directed against opposing fan groups (Spaij, 2006; Lussier & Kimball, 2014). **Fair Play/ Fair competition** is respect rivalries, In Ethiopia, it was obvious that, soccer violence was unusual and if it was occurred, the violence was sporadic, & reasonable, however; these days, it is a major threat for the government, sport families and the whole citizens at large by expanding its domain. We, Ethiopian have our own peculiar and well- known features, such as hospitality, generosity kindness, mutual respect, and coexists in a peaceful manner, regardless of age, sex, religion, language and ethnicity. Above all, our People love football. In the history of CAF Ethiopia has always great place. B/c Ethiopia was one of the founder of CAF with other Africa Country such as Egypt, Sudan & South Africa but recently all our good values and moral judgements are highly eroded in many of our activities including in our sport environments as a result of this we are losing many of our social, cultural, economic and health benefits. This days our stadiums instead of serving fair play they are converted into battle fields. This is totally heart breaking & violating the FIFA code of ethics & Olympic sports charter also.

*"Sport for All is a movement promoting the Olympic ideal that sport is a human right for all individuals regardless of race, social class and sex. The movement encourages sports activities that can be exercised by people of all ages, both sexes and different social and economic conditions".*

**Cited as: Alemmebrat Kiflu (2020): Soccer Violence: Factor and Tackling Mechanism: In the Case of Ethiopia Premier League (Epl): Ethiopian Journal of Sport Science (EJSS)**



friendship, team spirit, equality, sport without doping, respect for written and unwritten rules such as integrity, fairness, solidarity, tolerance, care, excellence and joy, are the building blocks of fair play that can be experienced and learnt both on and off the field and a graceful acceptance of results (IOC-Charter about fair play).

*2004: FIFA Code of Ethics approved* - The FIFA Executive Committee approved a Code of Ethics, which included a statute that "officials, players and players' agents may not act in a discriminatory manner, especially with regard to ethnicity, race, culture, politics, religion, gender or language."*2002: FIFA started holding world days against discrimination and racism* -"Racism is a blight (disease) that we must eradicate forcefully and resolutely, "said FIFA

President Joseph S. Blatter during one. "Football has a unifying power that can and must be used to combat discrimination of all kinds. "As we all know, Sport has multifaceted benefits especially it has a strong link to bring peace (Sport for Peace and Development). The practice of sport is a recognized instrument for promoting peace, as it disregards both geographical borders and social classes. It also plays a significant role as a promoter of social integration and economic development in different geographical, cultural and political contexts. BUT the situation what is going on in our country is very different and bizarre. For example remarkable violence, was observed between:



✚ The 1<sup>st</sup> was b/n St. George and Adama City at Addis Ababa Stadium, in April, 2016;  
 ✚ The 2<sup>nd</sup> was Dashin Brewery and Ethiopia Coffee at Gondar stadium in May, 2016;  
 ✚ The 3<sup>rd</sup> and a painful violence between Ethiopia Coffee and Hawasa City at Addis Ababa Stadium in June 10, 2016 and  
 The 4<sup>th</sup> violence in which heavy injuries were recorded at the 12th Addis Ababa City Cup Final match that was held on October 22, 2017 between St. George FC and Ethiopia Coffee FC, and also others...All these heart breaking violence brought great catastrophes and put a scare in the mind of the whole community such as:

- Death of innocent people
- Sever & mild physical injuries
- Sever & mild psychological traumas
- Destruction of stadiums facilities & equipment (dismantle and throwing chairs.)
- Destruction of facilities, equipment and other individuals and Gov't properties like vehicles
- Lose of Gov't revenues
- wasting unnecessarily the time and energy of federal and regional police And above all, change desperately our country image-building (mental picture & belief of other people to our country) at large ETC.....

Regarding to the above mentioned factors, different studies reported that violence-related injuries in football cost the world community almost US\$ 500 billion in medical care, sick pay and lost productivity every year (WHO, 1993; Quidt & Johnston, 2005).

Therefore; as a professional person, all these things arose the researcher mind to investigate the major causes or factors of soccer violence and aimed to forward possible solutions as a means.

### Objective of the Study

#### General Objective:

"To Investigate Soccer Violence: Factors and Tackling Mechanism: In The Case of Ethiopia Premier League (EPL)"

#### Specific Objectives:

- ✚ To identify major football violence in the context of EPL
- ✚ To examine the means & methods of football violence tackling mechanism &
- To forward possible solution for future investigators and stakeholders

### Methodology of the Study

#### Research Design

In this study Cross-Sectional survey Method with Mixed method of quantitative and qualitative research design was applied. This is because this type of study uses different groups of people who differ in the variable of interest but who share other characteristics such as socioeconomic status, educational background, and ethnicity and this type of study involves looking at people who differ on one key characteristic at one specific point in time. The data was collected at the same time from people who are similar in other characteristics but different in a key factor of interest such as age, income levels, or geographic location.



The study area were delimited in Addis Ababa, Mikelle, Gondar, Bahirdar and Hawassa. **Study Subjects** (Justification for subject selection) In this study expected potential respondents were identified purposefully on the basis of proximity to the knowledge of soccer violence. such respondents were from soccer federation officials; players, coaches, supporters (fans) ; clubs administrative staffs; police officers; sport journalists; federal referees; professional sport persons like match commissioners, amateurs and sport science Lecturers etc.

**Population of the Study and Sampling Procedure**

The total target population of the study were 360, however among these population, to keep the heterogeneity of the potential respondents, disproportional stratified random sampling method were applied and 137 respondents were taken as a sample and they actively participated in this study. Among 137 respondents, 120 were participated in a 5-likert scale questionnaire items and the remaining 17 respondents who were selected by snowball sampling method were participated in unstructured interview question items.

**Data Collection Instruments:**

In this study data were collected through three instruments (questionnaire, interview and document analysis)

Valid	Items	Frequency	Percent	Mode	SD
Not sure	#-1	8	6.7		
Agree		19	15.8		
Strongly Agree		93	77.5	5.00	.585
Total		120	100.0		

**Table-1:** In Ethiopia, these days, spectator violence is growing?

**I. Questionnaire (using a five Point Likert Scale):**

The researcher used this scale to measure the **attitudes and opinions** of the respondents with a greater degree of nuance than a simple “yes/no” question.

This scale also allow the respondents to express how much they agree or disagree **with** a particular statement (soccer Violence questions)

**II. Interview (Semi-Structured with a face-to-face interview technique)**

Semi-structured interviews were applied, but the interviewer can adjust the sequence or add different questions based on the interviewee’s responses

**I. Document analysis (Pictures and/or Photographs)**

Document analysis is a form of qualitative research in which documents are interpreted by the researcher to give voice and meaning around an assessment topic (Bowen, 2009).

**Results and Discussion:** This section of the study depicted the factors and tackling strategies result obtained from respondents and interviewees:-

### **I. Result Obtained from Respondents Using Likert Scale as Questionnaires:**

The above table clearly depicted the existence of the problem (spectator violence) in Ethiopia premier league match. This initial result is a good indicator for the current study and which is also supported by the pictures illustrated below.

#### **HEART BREAKING INCIDENTS**

Match held b/n **ETHIOPIA COFFEE** and **HAWASA** at Hawasa City at regional stadium.

**Picture-1: Fans violence ‘used chairs as weapons to attack rivals’.**

**Source:** \*\*The Ethiopian Herald Vol. LXXII No 201 May 2016;



*\*\*This incidence occurred on October 22, 2017 between St. George FC and Ethiopia Coffee FC, at the 12th Addis Ababa City Cup Final. According to the reporter news 39 spectators were seriously injured, where 9 of them were still under critical conditions (right pic.). \*The picture on the left side indicated the incidence occurred during the match held b/n Dashin Beer and Ethiopia Coffee.*

**Source:** \*\*The Reporter English News 15 Oct, 2016 & Vol. XXII No. 1103 and \*October 28, 2017. (From left to right)



## MAJOR FACTORS

**Table: 2** Factors of Spectator Violence obtained from Likert scale Questionnaire

**Key:** 5= strongly agree; 4= agree; 3= not sure; 2= disagree and 1= strongly disagree.

Items	5 (SA)		4 (A)		3 (NS)		2 (D)		1 (SD)		Mode	SD
	F	%	F	%	F	%	f	%	F	%		
Item # 2	9	7.5	19	15.8	12	10	45	37.5	35	29.2	2.00	1.26
Item # 3	-	-	21	31.4	5	4.1	65	53.7	29	24	2.00	0.98
Item # 4	56	46.3	38		26	21.5	-	-	-	-	5	0.79
Item # 5	74	59.2	44		2	1.6	-	-	-	-	5	0.527
Item # 6	38	31.4	54		15	12.4	13	10.7	-	-	4	0.93
Item # 7	29	24.0	69		14	11.6	8	6.6	-	-	4	0.79
Item # 8	54	44.6	47		2	1.7	17	14.0	-	-	5	1.00
Item # 9	-	-	23	19.2	4	3.3	33	27.5	60	50.0	1	1.14
Item # 10	-	-	15	12.5	10	8.3	43	35.8	52	43.3	1	1.00

As indicated in the above table-2

**Item # 2:** players show fair play?

Lack of fair play, spectators' unethical behavior (use of bad-mannered language)

**Item # 3:** Coaches' show ethical behavior during the match?

Alcohol consumption of the spectators and fans

**Item # 4:** spectators and or fans drink alcohol when they entered to the match..?

The soccer Federation is too lenient in punishing clubs whose fans engage in acts of Violence

**Item # 5:** Most spectators/fans don't know well the rule of the game...?

The results of the present study are associated with the finding of the other studies. For example Terry & Jackson, (1985) explained that Punishing aggression severely enough to deter further aggressive behavior, combined with substantial rewards for fair play. The other most important factor is frustration of players in loss of points.

**Item # 6:** Spectators violence steamed from frustration in thinking of loss of points?

This finding is supported by the most prevalent fan violence theories include instinct theory, frustration-aggression theory, and hooligan addiction theory also supported the current study (R.E. Ward 2002).

**Item # 7:** Spectators violence is a learned social behavior?

**Item # 8:** Referees have different type of problems

**Item # 9:** Most of the stadiums fulfil the basic standard

**Item # 10:** the soccer federation discharges its legal duty and responsibility to avoid spectator violence.



### 1.1. TACKLING MECHANISM

**Table: 3.** Tackling Mechanism of Spectator Violence obtained from Likert scale.

Items	5 (SA)		4 (A)		3 (NS)		2 (D)		1 (SD)		Mode	SD
	F	%	F	%	F	%	f	%	F	%		
Item # 1	3	2.5	38	31.4	5	4.1	42	34.7	31	25.6	2	2.17
Item # 2	-	-	-	-	-	-	40	33.1	80	66.1	1	0.47
Item # 3	25	20.7	66	54.5	-	-	29	24.0	4	3.3	4	1.05
Item # 4	46	38.0	41	33.9	10	8.3	19	15.7	4	3.3	5	1.18
Item # 5	9	7.4	48	39.7	10	8.3	45	37.2	8	6.6	4	1.6
Item # 6	11	9.2	50	41.7	16	13.3	23	19.2	20	16.7	4	1.28
Item # 7	13	10.7	22	18.2	10	8.3	46	38.0	29	24.0	2	1.32
Item # 8	12	9.9	21	17.4	7	5.8	38	31.4	42	34.7	1	1.3

Key: 5= strongly agree; 4= agree 3= not sure; 2= disagree and 1= strongly disagree

**Item # 1.** When a high-risk match is supposed the federation changes stadium.

**Item # 2.** Stadiums are equipped with CCTV (closed-circuit Television).

**Item # 3.** Security polices seriously checks fans/ spectators/ pockets and bags.

**Item # 4.** The Security polices punish the violators in a dangerous manner.

**Item # 5.** The Security polices focuses on proactive measure than reactive.

**Item # 6.** When fans involve in violence action, the federation penalized the violators;

**Item # 7.** The types and strength of penalty given by the Ethiopian Football Federation (EFF)

On the violators are lesson learned

**Item # 8.** The Sport Media is always unbiased & do not provoke when it broadcasting the Violence New

### INTERVIEW RESULT

Factors of spectator Violence

Q. To your Knowledge, what CAN you Imagen about the main factors that trigger or lead Spectators/fans/ into the action of Violence...?

**ANSWERS: is Multifactorial i.e.,**

For the question mentioned above the interviewees replayed that the problems for soccer violence are multifactorial, such as:

**NO FAIR PLAY:** Fair Play Is Highly Eroded; Unethical Manner & Behaviors Were Practiced By Fans/Spectators/; Players; Coaches and Clubs.

Like Alcohol Drinks; Immaturity (Being Emotional), Unhealthy Moral Values & Judgment

**Not to Accept Any of the Referees' Decision**

When Fans Are Under Great Tension and Frustration in Losing of Points, this Situation Drove the Whole Spectators to the Action of Violence;

Fans Do Not Understand & Accept the Beauty of Soccer (Unpredictability of Results)

**Cited as:** Temesgen Haile, Mohammed Endris, Yohannes Andargachew, Mesay Desalegn, Wubidil Demeke, Ephrem Tamrat and Worku Tekleyes (2020): *Soccer Violence: Factor and Tackling Mechanism: In the Case of Ethiopia Premier League (Epl): Ethiopian Journal of Sport Science (EJSS)*,



**CLUBS:** Many Clubs do not discharge properly their duties & responsibilities. (Do not teach & control their players and supporters

Some clubs are Uncultured i.e. Not Governed by FIFA Code of Ethics

**Ethiopia Football Federation (Eff):**

EFF do not properly discharge its duties & responsibilities. i.e.

Too much lenient (soft) in Punishing clubs whose fans engage in the act of Violence & also in designing and implementing rules & regulations

**POLICE OR SECURITIES:**

The police or security does not properly discharge their duties & responsibilities. i.e.

Penalties are not lesson learned

unable to deploy enough & specially trained Police

Some police are biased ( knowingly or knowingly they were observed to support either clubs) Some Referees are corrupted & partialities were also observed

**POLITICS:**

Egoism (Selfishness and arrogances)

Some individuals or club administrators used the country politics as instruments

Such individuals/administrators are NEITHER pure politicians NOR pure sport professionals/amateur

They are major traits to the gov't & sport families as a whole refute the FIFA code of ethics & engulfed with ethnic group (ብሄር) & ethnicity (ጎሳ)

**FACILITIES OF STADIUM**

The stadiums are not well-equipped and they are not to the standard (poor fence; no CCTV. Madensen & Eck, (2008) strongly recommend that the major task is to devise strategies to reduce violence such as incorporating technology like CCTV (closed-circuit television) cameras and nonlethal weapons can be useful crowd-monitoring and control devices

**MEDIA**

Media bodies are broadcasting biased and exaggerating news which provoke the fans and even sometimes the unverified reports were directly released on air

**Stadium Ticketing System:**

The stadium ticketing system is traditional and exposed to corruption. This trigger Violence.

**2.2. Q.:** In your opinion, what **TACKLING MECHANISM** should be designed & implemented to minimize or avoid spectator violence

**SPECTATOR VIOLENCE TACKLING MECHANIS**

**ANSWER:** Two strategies:

1.) **PROACTIVE STRATEGIES &**





## 2.) REACTIVE STRATEGIES

1<sup>ST</sup> the **EFF; Clubs & ALL** other stakeholders work jointly on human brain to bring behavioural and holistic change.

2<sup>ND</sup> The **MOE** (Ministry of Education) must revise the curriculum & include civic & ethical education to all grade level.

✚ “Intelligence is not enough. Intelligence plus character that is the goal of true education.”—**Martin Luther King Jr.** She is an education administrator and American politician. Spellings was the President of the University of North Carolina, overseeing the seventeen campus system from March 1, 2016 until March 1, 2019.

She has said:

✚ “The cornerstone of the academic achievement and professional success built upon a foundation of moral strength & civic virtue. ‘

✚ “A quality education provides citizens with the tools to participate fully in their society.” And the pay-offs for encouraging our children’s character development are enormous.

✚ Research has shown that children who grow up with strong, positive values are happier and do better in school. They are also better able to balance their personal wants and needs against those of others and to make *positive contributions to society*.

On the other hand, if children do not learn proper values and behaviour when they are

very young, problems can develop. These problems can mushroom with serious consequences as children grow older—dropping out of school, drug use, teenage pregnancy, violent crime—the list goes on

3<sup>rd</sup> **Parents; communities & schools** should be a good model to the offspring.

We all work on our children to be responsible citizens’.

4<sup>th</sup> **MEDIA, & POLICE** should discharged *sincerely* their responsibility.

**POLICE:** Police should be unbiased to both clubs; deploy special trained police; use advanced technology & should detect or identify in advance those individuals who drank alcohol before they enter in the stadium. 5<sup>th</sup> the **Federation (EFF)** should not be lenient for any individuals who attempts to trigger violence in any form like disseminating wrong information through social media.

6<sup>th</sup> **STADIUMS** should be to the standard and **CCTV** should be installed,

Besides to this, the security should identify *the most active place of the violence*, i.e. “**Katanga**” which has a congested seat in the stadium and get this name traditionally by the spectators.

7<sup>th</sup> **THE STADIUM TICKETING SYSTEM** should be improved (E-Ticketing Service or Automated). This avoid Corruption & provide Fast service. Regarding to this issue /finding Dunning *et al.* (1988), stated that poor ticketing management or system is considered

as one cause of spectator violence. **Lastly; Federation (EFF)** should create platforms like preparing national and international symposiums, workshop, conferences and seminar and effectively utilized the inputs in discussing with the Stakeholders before the violence control & engulf all of us.

### **CONCLUSIONS**

Based on the findings of the study it was concluded that the root causes of spectator violence is **MULTIFACTORIAL**, therefore to curb the problem, football federation along with stakeholders, other institutions and pertinent individuals should discuss together and design feasible strategy to get ride the problem in a step-by-step manner.

### **REFERENCES:**

### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. The Federation (EFF) should arrange consultative workshops with Main Stake holders to curb the problem.
2. EFF should not be Lenient & must sit & discuss the issue with the Gov't authority.
3. Each Clubs must respect the FIFA Code of Ethics.
4. The MOE Must revise the Curriculum & incorporate Civic & Ethical Educ. in a new manner
5. Every Concerned Bodies such as Federation, Media, Police, Clubs, Players, coaches, Referees; spectators and Fans, etc must discharge their responsibilities & be a Man of Action.



- Dunning, E., Murphy, P. and Williams, J. (1988). *The Roots of Football Hooliganism: An Historical and Sociological Study*. Leicester University Press, Leicester.
- Glenn A. Bowen, (2009) "Document Analysis as a Qualitative Research Method", *Qualitative Research Journal*, Vol. 9 Issue: 2, pp.27-40.
- Lussier, R.N., & Kimball, D.C. (2014). *Applied Sport Management Skills* 2nd edit. Canad: Human Kinetics
- Madensen, T.D., & Eck, J.E. (2008). *Spectator Violence in Stadium*. US: Center for problem-Oriented Policing inc.
- Quidt, J.d., & Johnston, E. (2005). *Prevention of Violence in Sport*. Lisbon (Portugal): France: Council of Europe Pre-Press Unit.
- R.E. Ward Jr. (2002). *Aggression and Violent Behaviour*. Elsevier Science Ltd. 7, 453-475
- Spaij, R. (2006). *Understanding Football Hooliganism: A Comparison of Six Western European Football Clubs*. Amsterdam: VossiuspersUvA.
- Terry, P.C., & Jackson, J.J. (1985). *The Determinants and Control of Violence in Sport*. QUEST, 37,.
- World Health Organization (1993). *Handle Life with Care. Prevent Violence and Negligence*. WHO, Geneva.