
SPORT FOR SOCIAL CHANGE IN INDONESIA: A QUALITATIVE STUDY

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Abstract

Introduction

With more than 17,500 islands Indonesia is the world's largest archipelagic state. The five main islands of Indonesia are Sumatra, Java, Kalimantan, Sulawesi, and Papua. Out of a population of 234 million, more than 32 million Indonesians currently live below the poverty line. Unemployment, malnutrition, maternal and child health, and education are some of the main social and economic challenges the country is facing (The World Bank Group, 2014).

Until now no research has been conducted on Sport-for-development (SFD) projects in Indonesia. This explorative study will fill the gap and seek to produce insights on the Indonesian perspective on Sport as a vehicle for social change.

The main purpose of this study is to map and assess programmes that use sport, physical activity and play as tools for social development. The key questions guiding the research are: What types of SFD projects exist in Indonesia? How do actors in Indonesia make use of sport? Which social issues do projects seek to address?

Methods

A systematic investigation of projects and organisations was conducted in the form of expert consultations, online research, electronic literature research and through outreach to personal networks.

More than 20 organisations were contacted and data was collected on 17 of them. 4 semi-structured interviews, 6 interviews via Skype, and 7 interviews via e-mail were conducted with initiators and managers of projects.

Variables identified for analysis include target group(s), sports, activities, objectives and intended impacts, as well as financial factors, theoretical

background, and challenges.

Interview responses were recorded and will be collated into a summary. The summaries will be emailed to interviewees for review and comments. Collected data will be analysed using qualitative content analysis.

Results

10 projects have been identified in Java, 3 in Papua, 2 in Maluku Islands, 1 in East Nusa Tenggara and 1 in Bali. Some of the organisations have multiple programmes across Indonesia.

Football has been found to be the most popular sport in Indonesia and more than half of the projects focus on football for social change.

Common programme content included health education (e.g. HIV/Aids, alcohol/drug abuse, nutrition), social inclusion (e.g. equality, accessibility, breaking down stereotypes), and personal development (e.g. life skills, leadership). All projects aim to address some of the major challenges faced by Indonesia, such as youth unemployment, malnutrition, education and HIV/Aids.

According to Green's approach (2008) of categorising SFD programmes, sport can also be used to get people's attention followed by the provision of services such as career counselling, access to health care, and tutoring (Hancock, Lyras & Ha, 2013). Most of the identified organisations use sport to mobilise children and youth in order to combine sport activities with educational programmes.

Another interesting finding is that most of the financial support comes from international organisations and companies. Moreover, Indonesian SFD organisations are trying to raise awareness in society and seek to engage with government.

The final results are not yet available at the time of abstract submission, but will be presented at the conference. Summaries of findings will be drafted to provide information about project locations, programme themes, and contextual factors.

Discussion

Although the analysis has not been completed the data shows that there are several organisations in Indonesia that use sport as a tool for social change - contrary to the responses of most interview partners who could not name any other SFD initiative. In the Indonesian context of SFD social change is understood for instance as the fight against HIV/Aids and social stigma, the empowerment of girls and women, and social inclusion. The identified projects work towards solving some of the challenges outlined above.

Most interviewees mentioned the need for and lack of effective monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems to assess the impact of their interventions. Also, most of the projects lack theoretical grounding, which can serve as the foundation for the intervention.

There is little evidence on the impacts of SFD programme globally

(Hancock, 2013 et al.), and there is no impact study on SFD in Indonesia. No clear evidence exists that the examined projects promote social change. Some organisations use basic M&E tools to get a sense of levels of participation, as well as training processes and progress, but most of them are not using sophisticated M&E tools that are informed by research.

While the study has several limitations - mainly due to challenges related to conducting the interviews - this qualitative research is the first attempt to provide an overview of SFD projects in Indonesia.

References

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