

## Conference Paper

### Cultural Identity of Football Supporter Community in Surabaya (Phenomenology Studies of *Bonek* Campus as a Supporter Community of Persebaya in Surabaya)

Ririn Puspita Tutiasri<sup>1\*</sup>, Ade Kusuma<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of Communication, Universitas Pembangunan Nasional "Veteran" Surabaya, East Java, Indonesia

---

#### Abstract

Cultural identity refers to the characteristics or sign possessed by a cultured group. Cultural identity will be attached to the identity of members of the cultural group. One of the cultural identity inherent in Surabaya is the term "*Bonek*". At first, the *Bonek* call was only intended for football supporter of *Persebaya* in Surabaya, but later it become the one of the stereotypes inherent in the people of Surabaya as a whole. Image of *Bonek* can not be separated from the abbreviation of the word itself, ie *bondo nekat* or it means dare to do anything to support them despite not having capital (material). *Bonek* appearance that tends to 'quirky' and not neatly also create a negative impression. *Bonek* also often reported getting into fight with other supporters, security apparatus, or journalists so that create a fanatical supporters image can not be separated by the riots that happen inside or outside the stadium. This prejudice will obviously disadvantageous to Surabaya supporters who are sportive and orderly when their support *Persebaya* Surabaya. *Bonek* Campus is one of the community of *Persebaya* Surabaya supporters who has been established since 2011. Their existence will give its own color to the diversity of football supporters in Surabaya, even Indonesia. For that the researcher is interested to conduct phenomenology study about *Bonek* Campus as a community of *Persebaya* supporters in Surabaya. Data collection through participatory observation, indepth interview, focus group discussion and literature study to explore more in depth how perception of *Bonek* Campus members to their role and function as football supporter community? Furthermore, researchers will identify how the cultural identity *Bonek* Campus as a community of football supporters *Persebaya* in Surabaya? Given the image of football supporters, especially *Persebaya* Surabaya is often considered arrogant, as do actions that result in fights and vandalism of public facilities.

The output of this first phase of research is the data of *Bonek* Campus cultural identity as one of football supporter community in Surabaya. Further, the results will used as the basis of the preparation and development of the model of cultural identity learning as an effort to formation of Indonesian football supporters who have ethics and sportive.

**Keywords:** Cultural identity, community, supporter

---

#### INTRODUCTION

---

\* Corresponding author

Email address: ririnpt.ik@upnjatim.ac.id

---

How to cite this article: Tutiasri, R.P., A. Kusuma (2017) Cultural Identity of Football Supporter Community in Surabaya (Phenomenology Studies of *Bonek* Campus as a Supporter Community of *Persebaya* in Surabaya). *International Seminar of Research Month and Technology in Publication, Implementation and Commercialization*. NST Proceedings. pages 421-427. doi: 10.11594/nstp.2018.0164.

Supporters are part of the football club. Supporters play an important role to provide support and motivation to football players. On the other hand, the fanatical supporters image that can not be separated by the unrest. It can be occurs between supporters inside and outside the stadium. *Bonek* Surabaya is a supporter of Persebaya Surabaya team. Its presence is often attributed with fanatical supporters who can posing a threat to vandalism, fights and other criminal acts. Several times PSSI firmly put sanctions on the supporters or clubs because of it as an effort for realize a sportivity football competition, but similar things often happen again.

The image of *Bonek* can not be separated from abbreviation of the word itself, (in Javanese Language) it means dare to do anything to support the pride's team whose competing, despite not having capital (material). *Bonek* appearance that tends to 'quirky' and not neatly also create a negative impression. *Bonek* also fought several times with other supporters, apparatus, journalists or the community where they are in while traveling to support away games in other cities. Due to the action of them which is often done, PSSI had dropped a ban to play for the team Persebaya Surabaya in the main division of Indonesian football. The punishment then causes new problem which is the issue of duality Persebaya Surabaya since the 2009/2010 season. Although the club Persebaya faced many problems both in the league or in management but the presence of the *Bonek* still coloring football in Surabaya. Supporters of Persebaya Surabaya fans touted as one of the strengths for the rise of Persebaya Surabaya. Like the presence of *Bonek* who voluntarily went to Bandung to escort Congress PSSI in January 2017 ago. One of the congress results is *Persebaya* Surabaya recognized again and also allowed to competed in the main division of Indonesian football league this season.

One of the interesting is the emergence *Bonek* Campus. *Bonek* Campus is one of the community of Persebaya Surabaya supporters who exist since 2011. Their existence of course will give its own color to the diversity of football supporters in Surabaya, even Indonesia. *Bonek* Campus gives a different impression both from appearance and behavior, rather than *Bonek* in general. For that the researcher is interested to conduct phenomenology study about *Bonek* Campus as a community of Persebaya supporters in Surabaya. Data collection through participatory observation, indepth interview, focus group discussion and literature study to explore mo re in depth how perception of *Bonek* Campus members to their role and function as soccer supporter community? Furthermore, researchers will identify how the identity of *Bonek* Campus culture as a community of football fans Persebaya in Surabaya? Given the image of football supporters, especially Persebaya Surabaya is often considered arrogant, as well as performing actions that result in fights and vandalism of public facilities.

## METHODS

This is a qualitative explorative research using phenomenology study. Prof. Engkus Kuswarno (2009) describes the study of phenomenology to know the world from the point of view of those who experience it directly or in connection with the nature of human experience, and the meaning embedded. The data collection technique to be used is by using Focus Group Discussion and indepth interview. This technique is chosen because it allows to obtain perception of informant with the point of view of himself and also experience with various backgrounds. Researchers got five informants who are administrators of *Bonek* Campus Community period 2017.

**Table 1.** Informant Data

Name	Age	Name of Campus	Job description
Ujang Ilyas R	25	Universitas 17 Agustus 1945 Surabaya	1 <sup>st</sup> Coordinator
Nindi Widia R	24	UPN "Veteran" of East Java	Member
Abdul Kholik	22	Universitas PGRI Adi Buana Surabaya	Member
Naldo R	20	Universitas Dr. Soetomo Surabaya	Member
Fikri Wahyu T	21	UPN "Veteran" of East Java	Member

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Communication of Group in The *Bonek* Campus Community

*Bonek* Campus is one of the community of *Persebaya* Surabaya supporters that existed since 2014. Their existence will of course give its own color to the diversity of football supporters in Surabaya, even Indonesia. According to 1st informant, *Bonek* Campus's existence begins with the frequent gathering of several students from various campuses in Surabaya who have the same a passion and love to club *Persebaya* Surabaya. The existence of *Bonek* Kampus was spearheaded by some *Bonek* who also have status as students from State University of Surabaya, Universitas 17 Agustus (UNTAG), Airlangga University, and ITATS.

1st informant : "*Bonek* Campus Community is starting to exist when the era of struggle *persebaya*, let we can get together so the *Bonek* did not disappear although *Persebaya* did not join to competition, *Bonek* still existed. When the first time *Bonek* Campus is there, there is no a leader but just together"

*Bonek* Campus exists because of *Bonek* awareness who are also have a status as a students, to continue to provide support to *Persebaya* Surabaya although the team are not join the competition.

1st informant explains more about the management of the *Bonek* Campus community since 2016 that their activities are more structured and organized internally. The selection of organizational structure is done by appointing representatives from each campus who are members of the community. The composition of it includes the positions of 1st and 2nd coordinators, treasurer, secretary, public relations, creator of design, and delegation of campus respectively.

3rd informant added that there are currently 14 campuses in the community, namely State University of Surabaya, Univesitas 17 Agustus 1945 Surabaya, Universitas PGRI Adi Buana Surabaya, Airlangga University, ITATS, STESIA Surabaya, Universitas Muhammadiyah Surabaya, UPN "Veteran" of East Java, Universitas Sunan Giri Surabaya, University of Surabaya, Wijaya Kusuma University of Surabaya, HangTuah University, Bhayangkara University and Merdeka University of Surabaya. Even so fans of *Bonek* Campus community members also come from outside Surabaya, it's only for a while they are more focused on the members and activities in Surabaya first.

3rd informant: "The enthusiasm from out of Surabaya is a lot, but we have focus with members in Surabaya first. Worry about it when we need to meeting, a little bit difficult to organized".

According to 2nd informant, in addition to being a place together the lovers club *Persebaya* Surabaya, who are still a students, existence of *Bonek* Campus community is also a forum for them to grow the experience of organizing and special events. Some of the events they have ever made are exhibition activities of photography work, book review, donation, and sharing about club history of *Persebaya* Surabaya or its supporters are *Bonek*.

4rd informant: "we often getting meeting, to share about *Bonek*'s history, the goal is to educate. We try to capture how *Persebaya* has been in the 1980s to the present."

All the informants who attended the focus group discussion said something similar to what the 4rd informant said. The activities undertaken by the *Bonek* Campus Community is specifically to educate *Bonek* or community about the role of supporters who should provide support to the pride's club.

5th informant: "Anything is okay to do when you to watch the game but tickets must be bought. Tickets is one of source of income for club and also football players of *Persebaya* Surabaya"

Some of motivation and education are not only can be do on meeting event (they say it kopdar), they also used social media to update information about schedule and news of the game, the achievement of the football players of *Persebaya* Surabaya, performance organizing committee of football's competition, constructive criticisms of club's management, and a campaign to change the image of Surabaya supporters about their safety and behavior.

Based on the grouping of the development of a community according to Umstot (1988), *Bonek* Campus community has reached the stage of performing. It is perform a cycle where there has been an effective cooperation in carrying out tasks within a group. The *Bonek* Campus community exist when the Persebaya Surabaya was getting a ban to join on competition in the Indonesian football main division, but in less than two years the *Bonek* Campus community is able to actualize themselves as one of the supporting communities that support their pride team not only when in the football field (when the team is compete). They love Persebaya Surabaya not just for now but also its future existence.

### **The Use of Social Media For *Bonek* Campus Community**

Today, social media can not be separated from human life as an efficient communication media, and more closer to the user. Social media is a gathering place for people who want to share information, to make new friends and interact with other friends by online. Brogran (2010) define social media as a new tool for communicating, collaborating and enabling various types of interactions that were not previously available in the traditional community. Mayfield (2008) describe that social media as a medium for being able to participate in it, create dan share message. Even though the essence of social media is not a new way of communicating

Salamoon (2013) describe that social media instagram created in order to smartphone user will feel the camera installed in the gadget is not in vain. One of the popular social media today is instagram. Currently Instagram already has 500 million active users worldwide (Instagram, 2016). Instagram focuses more on a photo-sharing app that lets users take photos, apply digital filters, and streams to various social networking services. Photos that have been automatically uploaded shared to followers as well as the central server. Everyone can "communicate" with photos. This is a new form of communication where communication is no longer verbal but also in the form of images (Salamoon 2013).

Based on the results of observation and researcher's analysis of potential accounts @ bonekcampus27 still dominated as information media *Persepaya* Surabaya and media interaction for *Bonek* to interact through cyberspace. However, on the other hand, researchers also see an attempt to show their existence through the variety of activities, ideas, and thoughts conveyed through posting photos, videos, or writing on instagram account.

Instagram account of *Bonek* Campus not only show the activities of the management or its football players while Persebaya Surabaya in the stadium, or when the supporters watch the football games together. Researchers found some other activities they performed outside of the club's schedule Persebaya Surabaya; among others their meetings (known as 'kopdar') for discussion between the organization committe and its members in various campuses. Information about other activities that have been uploaded in @bonekcampus27 is learning the writing class by them (posted on April 25, 2017). It is the activity poster completed with caption:

"By writing, the history of the greatness of PERSEBAYA can remain eternal and can be remembered by the next generation, and by writing, romantic stories with PERSEBAYA can we describe on to our children and grandchildren later".

Through the post, researchers found the effort of the *Bonek* Campus community to invite the follower to recognize and preserve the history of the club, and produce a work as a form of positive support to their pride's club.

Another information that researcher found is associated with ideas and thoughts about the value of sportivity and the ethics as a football supporters. They remind that the football supporter should be behave or take action that is not destructive or does not give negative image to their pride's club, or the supporters themselves. One thing that serious concern from *Bonek* Campus is related to the ticket. The phrase "*no tickets, no games*" is often used as a hastag is a form of criticism of the actions of supporters who ignore the individual's safety, and damage the facility. Also it is reminder to supporters that ticket is one of source for income the club. Instagram account

of *Bonek* Campus community does not hesitate to upload photos or videos that provide concrete evidence of 'naughty supporters' who behave or perform the action, as in a photo posting on March 26, 2017.



Figure 1. Examples of account page instagram @ bonekcampus27 which portray criticism of the behavior of unscrupulous *Bonek* (in person) and detrimental to the image of the supporters

Another thing that became the findings on instagram account of *Bonek* Campus is an effort to participate "a sense of security" for the community when they in around *Bonek*. The post with the theme of "love of pride" (posted on February 16, 2016) with the caption "The proof of our love for the pride's club and society of Surabaya that breaks the boundaries of space and time", shows the activities of them handing-out the flowers for the visitor of all ages in car free day. A similar message the researchers found in a post on December 20, 2015, when they had campaigned "Surabaya Safe For The Newcomers", it written on a sticker held by one of them.

"*Bonek* has proved that bad things do not have to be repaid with the same things. Today, *Bonek* has proved by the action of handing-out flowers to the motorist or car drivers who have vehicle license plat instead of Surabaya, especially license plat of N. At least the action was expected to be able to dismiss a lot of negative news in most mass media. Hopefully mass media is more balanced to shows news of them, not only from the negative of *Bonek*. Finally, we are *Bonek* advise the visitors in Surabaya do not be afraid of *Bonek*, do not be afraid there will be retaliation actions that harm you, because Surabaya will always be a safe and comfortable city for visitors.

They are campaigning about security and feeling comfort for visitor in Surabaya. *Bonek* Campus as a part of a group of Persebaya Surabaya supporters try to interact in order to give a positive effect and motivation for *Bonek* in general. Jhonson and Jhonson (2012) in group dynamics books describe the most commonly associated with groups can be defined as people who like to be together to achieve a goal. The group is there for the reason. People form groups to achieve goals that they can not achieve on their own. It is also what researchers found in this study, *Bonek* Campus as a community tries to campaign to all of *Bonek* to be a football supporter who have ethics and sportive.

### Stereotype of *Bonek*, Nowadays

According to Klyukanov in the book of Samovar entitled Communications Between Culture (2010), cultural identity can also be identify by a member in a group where everyone uses the same symbol system. Green is a color symbol of clothes, attributes, and accessories of *Bonek* as a football supporters of *Persebaya* Surabaya. In

addition, a group also has stereotype as their cultural identity. Stereotypes can be interpreted as an ideas of individuals who are part of a particular group, and leads us to look at individuals or groups with the same image.

Stereotypes are the labeling given by society by generalizing the behavioral habits, traits or other characteristics of the individual or social group, so they are relatively fixed. Stereotypes are studied and socialized through individual experience and mass media. According to Scarborough, when generalizing a group of people, just as we do in explaining culture, we are dealing with stereotype issues (Samovar, 2014: 50).

*Bonek* is often known as a supporter who is arrogant and likes to make riots. However, it is believed to be different by the five informants of this study when following the focus group discussion. They agree that there has been a significant change to the image and behavior of *Bonek* today. Slowly has begun many *Bonek* who are aware about the need to instill a positive image for *Persebaya* Surabaya supporters. Supporters not only support the team while playing but become part of a football team and also provide a positive spirit for football Surabaya, even Indonesia. Supporters not only provide support but also live and become one of the world's sports icons.

2nd informant 2: "Supporters, or *Bonek* is the 12th player of the team"

4th informant: "Supporters not only support but also provide income, live, educate, or give a real campaign to improve of sports in Surabaya. *Bonek* also as an icon."

1st informant: "Supporters become unifying in sport"

2nd informant explains there is shifting meaning of *Bonek*, today. Previously, *Bonek* is defined as a supporter of Persebaya Surabaya, who dare to do anything to support the pride's team whose competing, despite not having capital (material). It is interpreted as a negative behavior because he will do anything, even if it must violate the rules or danger.

2nd informant : "Nowdays, *Bonek* means dare to spend money to go to stadium, buy a ticket to watch the games of their pride's team"

5th informant : " *Bonek* is faithful. Brotherhood, Familiarity".

On the other hand, the informants also alluded to the role of *Bonek* Campus community members who want to be unifier and strengthen the familial relationship between *Bonek Persebaya* supporters of Surabaya. *Bonek* Campus seeks to be the motor of change for better and more positive image changes in the community, although they recognize that it is natural that the expected changes do not directly occur directly but need to slowly improve themselves from *Bonek*, the supporters of Persebaya Surabaya.

## CONCLUSION

*Bonek* Campus is one of the community of Persebaya Surabaya supporters who believed that positif image and behaviour of supporters are become one of the important things and should get attention. They describe that the future existence of football's team is also depends on the supporters. *Bonek* Campus community seeks to be the motor of change for the better and more positive imange of Persebaya Surabaya's supporters. They utilize social media to communicate and campaign ideas, how is to be a football supporters who have ethics and sportive.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We would like to give my appreciation to Institution for Research and Community Services, UPN "Veteran" of East Java, and *Bonek* Campus Community Surabaya.

## REFERENCES

- Anwar, A. (1984). *Strategi Komunikasi: Suatu Pengantar Ringkas (Communication Strategy : An Introduction)*, Bandung: Armico.
- Bales, R. F. (1950). *Interaction Process Analysis: A Method for the Study of Small Groups*, Cambridge: Addison-Wesley



- Bambang, A. S. (2015). *Dinamika Kelompok (Group Dynamics)*, Bandung: Pustaka Setia
- David, J.W., and Fran, J. P. (2012). *Dinamika Kelompok Teori dan Keterampilan (Theory and Skills of Group Dynamics)*. Jakarta Indeks
- Fajar, J. (2012). *Bonek: Komunitas Suporter Pertama dan Terbesar di Indonesia (Bonek: First and Largest Supporters Community in Indonesia)*. Suka Buku
- Floyd, C.B., Winsor, J.J., and Jerry L. (2005). *Komunikasi Bisnis dan Profesional (Professional and Bisnis Communication)*, Bandung: PT Remaja Rosdakarya
- Kuswarno, E. (2009). *Metodologi penelitian komunikasi Fenomenologi: Konsepsi, pedoman, dan contoh Penelitiannya (Methodology Research of Communication, Phenomenology : Concept, Guidelines, and Sample Research)*, Bandung : Widya Padjajaran
- Littlejohn (1999). *Theories of Human Communication*, Belmont, California: Wadsworth Publishing Company.
- Manuel, C. (2000). *Information Age. The Rise of the Network society*. Oxford: Blackwell
- Maslow, A. H. (1970). *Motivation and Personality*, New York: Harper&Row Publisher
- Mayfield, A. (2008). What is Social Media. Retrieved from iCrossing: [http://www. icrossing. co. uk/fileadmin/uploads/eBooks/What\\_is\\_Social\\_Media\\_Crossing\\_ebook. Pdf](http://www.icrossing.co.uk/fileadmin/uploads/eBooks/What_is_Social_Media_Crossing_ebook.Pdf)
- Moleong, L. J. (2007). *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif (Methodology of Qualitative Research)*. Rosda. Bandung
- Mulyana, D. (2010). *Ilmu Komunikasi: Suatu Pengantar (Communication Sciences: An Introduction)*, Bandung: PT Remaja Rosdakarya.
- Pujileksono, S. (2014). *Modul Penelitian Komunikasi (Modul of Communication Research)*. ProgdI Ikom FISIP UPN Veteran Jatim, Surabaya
- Salamoon, D. K. (2013). *Instagram, Ketika Foto Menjadi Mediator Komunikasi Lintas Budaya di Dunia Maya (When a photo becomes a mediator of cross-cultural communication in cyberspace)* (Thesis. Online. Downloaded in [http://repository.petra.ac.id/16642/1/Publikasi1\\_10021\\_1481.pdf](http://repository.petra.ac.id/16642/1/Publikasi1_10021_1481.pdf), accessed on Januari 20, 2016).
- Samovar, L.A., R.E. Porter., and E.R. McDaniel. (2010). *Komunikasi Lintas Budaya : Communication Between Cultures*. Jakarta: Salemba Humanika.
- Sanarru, H. S. (2011). *Dinamika Kelompok (Group Dynamic)*. Yogyakarta: Sekolah Pascasarjana Universitas Gajah Mada.
- Schutz, W. D. (1966). *The Interpersonal Underworld*, Palo Alto: Science and Behavior Books.
- Sobur .(2009). *Psikologi Umum (General Psychology)*, Pustaka Setia, Bandung.
- Stewart, K. Gill, P., E. Treasure, and B. Chadwick. (2008). Methods of data collection in qualitative research: Interviews and focus groups. *British Dental Journal*, 204(6).
- Sudjarwo. (2011). *Dinamika Kelompok (Group Dynamic)*. Bandung: CV. Mandar Maju.
- West, Richard dan Turner, Lynn H. (2008). *Pengantar Teori Komunikasi: Analisis dan Aplikasi (An Introduction of Communication Theories: Analysis and Application)*. Jakarta: PT. Salemba Humanika.
- Wildan, Z. (2014). *Dinamika Kelompok (Group Dynamics)*, Jakarta: Bumi Aksara.
- Wiryanto. (2005). *Pengantar Ilmu Komunikasi (An Introduction of Communication Sciences)* Jakarta: Gramedia Widiasarana Indonesia.