

NO Way! BIRGing and CORFing by Football Fans in Their Reaction Videos toward Last Minute Goals

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Article Information	ABSTRACT
<p>Description Submission: 28 November 2025 Revised: 17 December 2025 Accepted: 29 December 2025 Approved: 01 January 2026</p> <p>Keywords BIRGing, CORFing, Expression, Impression, Football Fans</p> <p>Kata Kunci <i>BIRGing, CORFing, Ekspresi, Impresi, Penggemar Sepakbola</i></p>	<p>Football fandom has evolved into a digital space where emotions and identity are openly displayed. This study aims to examine how football fans express and manage emotions through <i>expression</i> and <i>impression</i> when reacting to last-minute goals. The problem addressed is how fans' emotional behaviors reflect Basking in Reflected Glory (BIRGing) and Cutting Off Reflected Failure (CORFing) within social identity theory. Using a descriptive qualitative method, data were collected from fan reaction videos on social media, analyzed through verbal and non-verbal cues. The findings reveal that victory triggers expressions of pride and unity (BIRGing), while defeat leads to disappointment and emotional distancing (CORFing). These emotional reactions not only reveal spontaneous feelings but also reflect deeper psychological connections between fans and their supported teams. They demonstrate how football fans perform their social identity and collective emotion in digital spaces, making emotional expression part of online cultural participation. Overall, the study argues that reaction videos are not merely sources of entertainment but serve as performative acts of identity negotiation and emotional expression, reflecting how digital culture shapes modern fandom and social belonging.</p> <p>Abstrak <i>Budaya penggemar sepak bola kini berkembang dalam ruang digital, tempat emosi dan identitas ditampilkan secara terbuka. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji bagaimana penggemar sepak bola mengekspresikan dan mengelola emosi melalui expression dan impression saat menanggapi gol di menit-menit terakhir. Permasalahan yang diangkat adalah bagaimana perilaku emosional penggemar mencerminkan konsep Basking in Reflected Glory (BIRGing) dan Cutting Off Reflected Failure (CORFing) dalam kerangka teori identitas sosial. Dengan metode kualitatif deskriptif, data diperoleh dari video reaksi penggemar di media sosial dan dianalisis berdasarkan isyarat verbal dan nonverbal. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kemenangan memunculkan ekspresi kebanggaan dan kebersamaan (BIRGing), sedangkan kekalahan menimbulkan kekecewaan dan jarak emosional (CORFing). Reaksi emosional ini tidak hanya menunjukkan perasaan spontan, tetapi juga mencerminkan keterikatan psikologis yang lebih dalam antara penggemar dan tim yang mereka dukung. Hal ini memperlihatkan bagaimana penggemar sepak bola menampilkan identitas sosial dan emosi kolektifnya di ruang digital, menjadikan ekspresi emosi sebagai bagian dari partisipasi budaya daring. Secara keseluruhan, penelitian ini berpendapat bahwa video reaksi bukan sekadar hiburan, tetapi merupakan tindakan performatif dalam negosiasi identitas dan ekspresi emosi yang mencerminkan bagaimana budaya digital membentuk fandom modern dan rasa kebersamaan sosial.</i></p>



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1. Introduction

Football is not just a sport, but also a social phenomenon that shapes individual and group identities. Football fans often associate themselves with their favorite team as part of an expression of loyalty and pride. In dramatic matches, especially during last-minute goals, fans' emotions can erupt in many forms, from triumphant cheers to deep frustration. Videos of fans' reactions to moments like these have become part of digital culture, where their emotions are authentically captured and can be witnessed by a wider audience. In social psychology, the concepts of Basking in Reflected Glory (BIRGing) and Cutting Off Reflected Failure (CORFing) are often used to explain fans' emotional attachment to their teams. According to Cialdini et al. (1976), BIRGing occurs when fans feel a sense of pride and associate themselves with their team's success, often using the pronoun "we" as in "We won!". In contrast, CORFing occurs when fans attempt to maintain a self-image by distancing themselves from the losing team, for example by saying "They played poorly" instead of "We lost". These mechanisms reveal that fandom is not merely about supporting a team but also about managing self-concept and social identity in response to collective success or defeat, highlighting how football operates as a powerful mirror of human emotion, belonging, and identity construction in contemporary culture and football context.

An example of this phenomenon of BIRGing and CORFing is For football fans, the experience of watching a match until the last minute is a moment full of tension. When the team you support scores a winning goal in the final minutes, spontaneous reactions such as jumping, shouting, or even crying for joy are common. Otherwise, if your favorite team concedes and loses at the last moment, expressions of disappointment such as bowing your head, slamming objects, or even leaving your seat in annoyance are also common sights. These moments are increasingly documented in reaction videos uploaded on social media, making them both entertainment and objects of social psychological study. With the development of social media platforms, the phenomenon of BIRGing and CORFing in football fans' reactions to late goals has become easier to observe. These videos are not only a form of spontaneous expression, but also reflect how people manage their identities and emotions in social situations and it is a form of identity work, where individuals negotiate pride, disappointment, and belonging through their emotional connection to the game and to the communities built around it.

Several similar previous studies have been conducted but none have focused on discussing how fans react to goals in the final minutes. For example, Jensen (2019) focuses on two main psychological concepts in the study of sports consumer behavior, namely BIRFing (*Basking in Spite of Reflected Failure*) and BIRGing (*Basking in Reflected Glory*), which analyzed From BIRFing to BIRGing: A 10-Year Study of the Psychology of Cubs Fans. The object is the fans of the

Chicago Cubs baseball club. Campbell (2004) this study responds to the limitations of previous models that only accommodate BIRGing and CORFing behavior, this study also develops several theoretical propositions to be tested in further studies, which analyzed *Beyond BIRGing and CORFing: Continuing the Exploration of Fan Behavior* such as the relationship between the level of fan identification with BIRFing or CORSing tendencies. Spinda (2011) In his article "The Development of BIRGing and CORFing Measure," he developed a specific instrument to measure the intensity of BIRGing and CORFing in various situations. This study offers a scale that can be used to understand how fans express their emotional attachment to their teams through reflective behavior. Bernache (2011) this research discusses the concept of COFFing (Cutting Off Future Failure) specifically in the context of rugby fans in France, which analyzed *Fans' Reactions to Their Team Victories: An Exploratory Look at the COFFing Process in Elite Sport Fandom*. Groeppel-Klein (2007) Article titled "You'll Never Walk Alone": How Loyal Are Football Fans to Their Clubs When They Are Struggling Against Relegation?, this study discusses the loyalty of professional soccer fans in critical situations, particularly when their team is threatened with relegation from the league's top division. This study aims to explore the psychological processes underlying fan loyalty.

In contrast to previous studies that relied on quantitative methods such as surveys and loyalty measurements based on attachment or commitment scales, as well as theoretical-analytical approaches to digital expression. This study uses a qualitative approach through video analysis of football fans' reactions to late goals. These reactions, captured and widely shared on social media, provide authentic data on how emotions such as great joy or deep disappointment manifest visually and verbally. This study aims to analyze how the phenomena of BIRGing and CORFing are manifested in football fans' reaction videos to last-minute goals. By understanding the emotional expressions captured in the videos, this research also seeks to explore the factors that influence fan responses, including attachment to the team, the outcome of the match, as well as the social dynamics that occur within the supporters' group. In addition, the study is expected to provide insights into the role of social media in strengthening group identity through the shared experience of supporting a football team.

According to Mudrick (2016), sports fans' behavior on social media is greatly influenced by two main expressive concepts: Basking in Reflected Glory (BIRGing) and Cutting Off Reflected Failure (CORFing). BIRGing refers to the act of individuals sharing the glory of others who are successful, with the aim of improving their self-image. In this context, fans use their team's success to publicly reinforce their social identity, such as through celebratory posts or expressions of pride on social media. Conversely, CORFing is the act of distancing oneself from those who have failed in order to maintain a positive perception in the eyes of the public. According to Mudrick (2016), although these two behaviors are opposite, they have the same goal, which is to maintain a positive reflection of oneself through association with a group. BIRGing and CORFing towards last minute goals through their reaction videos are divided into two categories, namely impression and expression. Impression and expression are described as

the first theoretical foundation that explains why fans display certain behaviors on social media after matches.

The relationship between impression and expression shows that fans' reactions to last-minute goals are not only an emotional release, but also a way to publicly display their social identity. In the context of reaction videos to last-minute goals, these two tendencies are clearly visible. Fans who are BIRGing display emotional outbursts and expressions of euphoria that strengthen the relationship between themselves and the team they support. Meanwhile, CORFing show expressions of disappointment, rejection, or even attempts to distance themselves from the team they support as a symbolic disengagement from the failure. Through these reactions, fan videos become a performative space for maintaining or restoring their social identity. Therefore, fan reaction videos to last-minute goals show how impression management and expression behavior interact as a bridge between emotion and social identity, making victory and defeat not just sporting events, but also performative events in the digital space.

2. Methods

This study employs a descriptive qualitative design. The sources of data in this research are football fans' reaction videos toward last-minute goals, taken from social media platforms such as YouTube and Instagram. These videos are chosen as the objects of study because they contain authentic emotional expressions and impressions. The technique of data collection was carried out through documentation and content analysis, namely collecting research objects in the form of videos of football fans' reactions to goals in the last minute uploaded on social media, then analyzed based on the BIRGing (Basking in Reflected Glory) and CORFing (Cutting Off Reflected Failure) theories According to Cialdini (1976). Thus, this study aims to reveal how football fans express their impressions and emotions, whether verbally or non-verbally, while also showing how these reactions reflect social and psychological mechanisms in fan culture in the digital age.

In conducting the data collection, the researcher observed multiple reaction videos to ensure data variety and validity. Each selected video was examined based on the fan's verbal expressions (such as cheering, shouting, or disappointment) and non-verbal cues (such as facial expressions, gestures, or body posture). The data were then categorized according to emotional tendencies that align with BIRGing or CORFing behaviors. To maintain credibility, only videos with clear audio-visual quality and genuine reactions were selected. This process allows the research to capture the dynamic interaction between emotion, identity, and digital representation within football fan communities.

Qualitative data analysis according to Spradley (1980) is conducted in four stages: domain analysis, taxonomic analysis, componential analysis, and cultural theme analysis. All data in the form of videos of soccer fans' reactions to goals in the final minutes were analyzed in depth to interpret the data contextually so that the meaning of expressions, both verbal and nonverbal, could be understood

from the participants' perspective. Based on this idea, this study analyzes data in the form of videos of football fans' reactions.

Table 1.
Componential

	Impression		Expression	
	Positive	Negative	Positive	Negative
Verbal			✓	✓
Non-verbal			✓	✓

Based on data obtained from videos of football fans' reactions on social media, audience responses can be understood through two main categories: verbal and non-verbal, each of which is further divided into impression and expression. The research data consist of textual data and visual data. Textual data refer to the verbal reactions captured in the videos, including shouts of victory ("Yes!", "We won!", "Goal!") or verbal disappointment ("They played so bad," "Nooo!"). Visual data, on the other hand, include the observable gestures and facial expressions of the fans, such as smiling, high-fiving, jumping, or in negative moments frowning, shaking the head, or slamming a table. These two types of data complement each other to reveal how emotions and social identity are expressed both through language and through physical actions.

In the verbal category, a positive impression typically appears as feelings of pride and excitement when the supported team scores a goal. This impression is then manifested in positive expressions such as loud cheers, extended shouts, and enthusiastic applause that reflect pure joy. Conversely, when the team concedes a goal, a negative impression emerges in the form of disappointment and frustration. This often triggers negative expressions, including complaints, sighs of dismay, or even brief outbursts of profanity uttered spontaneously by the fans.

Meanwhile, in the non-verbal category, a positive impression can be seen in feelings of satisfaction and pride when the favored team is winning. Such impressions are expressed through positive non-verbal actions like jumping for joy, broad smiles, and nods of approval. On the other hand, a negative impression surfaces when the team fails, leading to emotions such as anger, sadness, or frustration. Joy, broad smiles, and nods of approval. On the other hand, a negative impression surfaces when the team fails, leading to emotions such as anger, sadness, or frustration.

In the analytical process, Spradley's four-stage framework was systematically applied to gain a deeper understanding of the fans' behavior. The domain analysis identified recurring emotional patterns within the data, while the taxonomic analysis categorized the reactions into more detailed classifications of impressions and expressions. The componential analysis then examined variations in emotional intensity, ranging from mild disappointment to exuberant enthusiasm, allowing the researcher to map out the dynamics of emotional engagement among the fans. Finally, the cultural theme analysis synthesized all findings to interpret the broader cultural meanings and to highlight how football fandom shapes collective experiences related to emotion and social identity. This

approach not only explores observable behaviors but also uncovers the symbolic values behind each expression within the online fan community. Through this method, the study demonstrates that fans' digital reactions serve a dual function, as an emotional outlet and as a representation of social identity that reflects the connection between personal emotion, group solidarity, and contemporary digital culture.

3. Result and Discussion

The analysis reveals that football fans perform BIRGing and CORFing towards last minute goals through their reaction videos divided into two namely impression and expression. These impressions and expressions are sub-classified into positive and negative. According to Mudrick (2016), fan expression is a tangible form of emotion and social identity that fans display publicly, especially on social media after a game. This expression reflects how fans display their feelings about the outcome of a game, whether victory or defeat, as part of their group identity. Based on Mudrick (2016) version of Social Identity Theory, fans' emotional expressions reflect their level of team identification, which is how strongly a person identifies with the team.

According to Mudrick (2016) version of Social Identity Theory, Impression explains how fans manage their self-image in digital public spaces through reaction videos to assert or protect their social identity as team fans. This behavior reflects two main directions such as positive impression and negative impression, positive impression occurs when fans present an image that is building, loyal, and reinforces the social identity of their group. The goal is not to deceive the audience, but to show sincere support and pride in the team or identity they embrace. "Fans have traditionally demonstrated positive image management tactics, often in the constant pursuit of promoting positive collective identity". Negative impressions occur when fans try to maintain their self-image by avoiding association with failure or displaying defensive and destructive behavior. "This occurs when individuals attempt to distance themselves from those who are perceived as unsuccessful." (Mudrick, 2016). As with expression functions, there are two main forms such as Positive expressions and negative expressions, positive expressions appear when fans display emotions of pride and joy at their team's victory, and associate themselves with that success. This is known as the concept of BIRGing (Basking in Reflected Glory). Negative expressions appear when fans show disappointment, frustration, or even distance themselves from their team when they lose. This is called CORFing (Cutting off Reflected Failure).

According to Mudrick (2016), BIRGing is a phenomenon where someone attempts to share or enjoy the glory of another person's success that is associated with them. Individuals who engage in BIRGing "feel they can share in the success of others who are successful and have a connection with them.



Picture 1.

The image shows Goldbridge broadcasting live and was seen celebrating Manchester United's goal against Manchester City, which was the winning goal for Manchester United.

The phenomenon seen in the live broadcast of Manchester United fans can be analyzed through the perspective of the expression. In the broadcast, Positive Verbal expression reactions such as shouting "Amad, yes yes! Goal! 2-1 goal to Man United at the Etihad Stadium, we're in dream land!" accompanied by enthusiastic gestures and the use of club attributes show a form of spontaneous and authentic self-expression. These actions not only help shape how fans present themselves to others, but also serve as a way to express their emotions, pride, and sense of identity with their supporter community. In this way, digital platforms function as expressive spaces where fans can display their emotional engagement while reinforcing their social identity within the online public space.



Picture 2.

The image shows three Manchester United fans celebrating a late goal against Manchester City with enthusiastic body movements and joyful expressions.

In the broadcast, two Manchester United supporters display a strong emotional reaction immediately after their team scores a decisive goal in the final minutes of the match against Manchester City. Their nonverbal responses, such as standing up suddenly, opening their arms widely, laughing, and shouting with

enthusiasm, indicate a shared sense of happiness and pride. This behavior can be categorized as a positive nonverbal expression, representing the physical manifestation of joy, pride, and euphoria. Within the framework of Impression Management proposed by Cialdini and Hirt, this action illustrates the phenomenon of BIRGing (Basking in Reflected Glory), where individuals associate themselves with the success of their group. Through spontaneous and energetic gestures, the fans affirm their social identity as part of the victorious group and reinforce a positive image as loyal supporters.

Furthermore, bodily expressions such as laughter and open-arm movements serve as symbols of solidarity and emotional connection among fellow supporters. In the context of the digital public sphere, such expressions not only reflect personal emotional release but also function as performative acts that strengthen self-image before an online audience. By displaying authentic emotional reactions, the fans construct a shared narrative of togetherness and reinforce a collective identity that strengthens bonds within the supporter community. The antithesis of BIRGing is CORFing, also known as "cutting off reflected failure." This occurs when individuals attempt to distance themselves from those who are perceived as unsuccessful (Wann and Branscombe, 1990). Such acts may be exhibited by fans who publicly wear bags over their heads, in a deliberate attempt to mask their identity at sporting events for ineffective franchises. These behaviors are clear indicators of lesser degrees of loyalty to an organization, in addition to a statement of separation between team and supporter.



Picture 3.

The image shows a Manchester City fan reacting with visible frustration after his team conceded a late goal to Manchester United. His furrowed brows and open mouth suggest disbelief and disappointment.

The phenomenon seen in the live broadcast of Manchester City fans can be analyzed through the perspective of the expression. In the broadcast, Negative Verbal expression reactions such as shouting "Sell them all man all of them, this is a disgrace, I can't believe it man" He said to sell the players in the Manchester City team because he didn't believe they could make mistakes that

would lead to goals from the opponent. He seemed to blame the players in the club who were fighting for their club. This is what makes this a negative expression.



Picture 4.

The image shows a Manchester United fan from South Korea reacting angrily after his team conceded a goal in the final minutes. His action of throwing objects and walking away from the screen reflects frustration and emotional disengagement.

The action seen in the live broadcast of Manchester United fans can be analyzed from the perspective of the expression. Providing the non-verbal action, such as throwing objects, removing things related to the team, and physically distancing oneself from the surroundings, signifies a potent emotional response that is characterized by frustration and disappointment. This moment represents a visible form of CORFing (Cutting Off Reflected Failure), in which the fan attempts to psychologically and symbolically separate himself from the team's failure.

4. Conclusion

This research concludes that football fans' reactions to goals scored in the last minutes reflect two main behaviors in Social Identity Theory of Basking in Reflected Glory (BIRGing) and Cutting Off Reflected Failure (CORFing). These behaviors are reflected through impressions and expressions, which shape how fans manage and display their social identities in the digital space. When the team wins, fans exhibit BIRGing. When the team wins, fans show BIRGing via belonging and pride statements and actions, and after losing, they react with CORFing actions like disappointment or self-distance in order to preserve one's self-concept. Theoretically, the study adds to knowledge of how the online world impacts the social identity dynamics. Practically, these findings provide insights for sports organizations and media platforms to understand and interact with fan communities more effectively. For future studies, these findings can be used as a starting point to explore how people's impressions and expressions change along with the development of new media platforms, how algorithms and online interactions shape shared emotions, and how fan identities continue to evolve.

within today's fast-changing digital culture. Such research will deepen theoretical insights and support broader discussions about human emotions, identity, and connectivity in the digital age.

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