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What new practices emerged following VAR in football among spectators, and how do these practices relate to potential value co-creation and co-destruction?

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Abstract

Technological tools are widely used in all industries. In football, Video Assistant Referee (VAR) has been implemented and is becoming more common in nearly all domestic leagues and international organizations. Previous research has shown how VAR affected the game objectively, as well as people's perspectives toward this new technology. However, there has been no research into how VAR affects customers and their consumption practices. In our research, we focus on spectators and the types of new consumption practices that emerged after implementation of VAR, as well as their potential of value formation throughout the football consumption process. To understand this, we used a qualitative research method and conducted interviews with ten people who regularly watch football games. Taking practice theory and the concept of value co-creation and value co-destruction into consideration, we reveal that two emotional practices trigger consumption practices: calm emotion as a practice and anger/anxiety as a practice. These emotional practices led people to engage in other practices such as illegal betting, non-football-related social media checking, small things to do, social media checking, and focusing on the game. Each practice has a unique relationship with value co-creation and co-destruction. Our study presents a novel concept in which emotional practices shape people's consumption practices in football after the implementation of VAR, as well as a novel concept of value co-formation with emotional practices.

Keywords: video assistant referee, practice theory, consumption practices, emotional practices, value co-creation, value co-destruction, interactive value formation

1. Introduction

Refereeing is, perhaps, the most crucial factor in a game of football. On-field, the referees are responsible for ensuring that the rules are followed, and their decisions can directly impact the results of a match (Gulec et al., 2019). Considering the importance refereeing has over the very sport itself, there has been a growing usage of technology to make it more accurate and fair. Currently, there is multi-dimensional use of technology in sports in general (Livingston et al., 2017). Specifically for refereeing, there are different refereeing or controlling technologies in place in various sports. As far as football is concerned, there has been a predominant utilization of goal-line technology even in recent days. All these technologies provide referees with more information about incidents or insights about the game that help them lower the possibility of a potential error (Fişne et al., 2021). In the series of such technologies, Video Assistant Referee, commonly known as VAR, is the latest introduction in football.

VAR is a video-based advanced technology that is designated to assist the on-field referees in football to maximize fairness in the game. They are also instrumental in deploying the regulations implemented by the International Football Association Board (IFAB) and the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) – which are the two regulatory bodies for football rules and regulations worldwide (Fişne et al., 2021). Both these governing bodies agreed upon putting VAR on the global stage for the first time in 2018 after multiple extensive trials. FIFA Men's World Cup was the first international event to officially launch VAR (IFAB, 2017; FIFA, n.d.; Zhiliang, 2021). Many other domestic football competitions began to adopt VAR after the World Cup in 2018. The Turkish Football League was one of the pioneers in officially implementing VAR in their contests from the 2018-19 season. Among the major

European championships, Bundesliga (German first division) and the Serie A (Italian first division) also applied VAR simultaneously from the 2018-19 season (Fişne et al., 2021). They were followed by English Premier League, the most popular domestic football competition, which started using VAR in the 2019-20 season (Scanlon et al., 2022).

Previous studies have shown how VAR affects the game objectively. VAR increased the playing time in the first and second half (Han et al., 2020), improved referee decision accuracy (Fişne et al., 2021; Scanlon et al., 2022; Winand et al., 2021), and increased fairness (Fişne et al., 2021; Winand et al., 2021). A common belief is that VAR brings more justice to the game with more accurate referee decisions, which is the fundamental purpose of implementing VAR, according to IFAB (IFAB, 2017). Meanwhile, some studies argue that VAR technology reduces the fluency of the game (Scanlon et al., 2022). Furthermore, VAR is killing fans' passion as they cannot celebrate a triumphant moment immediately as it occurs (Fişne et al., 2021). Unlike previous refereeing technologies, it has been shown that the ongoing game goes to a standstill while the on-field or first referee checks the VAR. This buffer time between VAR checking and declaring a decision gives spectators time to express their emotions and engage in various practices. However, no studies have been conducted to determine how VAR affects people's consumption practices while watching a game after its implementation.

While we are discussing regulatory aspects of football in light of VAR, other equally essential perspectives are also present in a football match. From a marketing viewpoint, various consumption activities occur centering on a football match, which has eventually formed an enormous industry through decades (Deloitte, 2022). Fans and spectators are most likely the most significant catalysts of this market since they are considered the most influential consumers of it (Moura & Souza-Leão, 2020). Spectators and fans can be differentiated based on their consumption of football as a game or relevant products or services. Fans are more involved with the clubs as well as the consumption practices in terms of season tickets, official club membership, buying club or football merchandise, etc., which make them different from spectators in general. Giulianotti (2002), however, considers spectators as the whole spectrum while fans have some particular identities. The author finds fans as loyally attached to clubs and that clubs' performance affects fans' level of attachment. Whereas spectators might not show emotional attachment to the club; instead, it's more about watching the game to them. However, fans and spectators are both the same when it comes to watching a football match since viewing becomes the core purpose for all of them. Even consumption that occurs during match viewing also doesn't differ. Based on that, our study will consider fans and spectators on the same scale since all fans are spectators anyway.

The actions performed by the fans and spectators usually characterize them, and these individual behaviors and choices are the single components of the collective consumption practices (Moura & Souza-Leão, 2020). Warde (2005, p.137) mentions, "consumption is not itself a practice but is, rather, a moment in almost every practice," meaning every practice involves consumption to some extent. Many practices have emerged throughout the match viewing experience, such as consuming food and alcohol or beverages, engaging in discussion with fellow viewers or community members, etc. These practices are different for every individual spectator or the creator of the practices (Giulianotti, 2002; Moura & Souza-Leão, 2020; Waliaula, 2019). Yuksel et al. (2017) also mention that consumers create value while they craft their personalized experiences throughout their consumption journey.

Value formation has become an essential concept in contemporary service and marketing research. Previous studies have found two distinct types of value formation. The first is non-interactive value formation, which holds that value is produced by providers and consumed by customers. In this viewpoint, value is conceptualized as exchanged (Bagozzi, 1975; Hunt, 1976). This value-in-exchange concept, which is based on goods-dominant logic, has been questioned by other researchers, leading to the development of an alternative view of economic exchange known as service-dominant logic (S.D.L.) (Grönroos, 2008; Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004; Vargo & Lusch, 2004, 2008). According to this view, the second value formation is based on the idea that value is jointly created by the provider and the customer during interaction (Grönroos, 2008; Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004; Vargo & Lusch, 2004). This collaborative value-creation process among different actors is known as value co-creation (Vargo & Lusch, 2004, 2008). According to recent research, there is a shift from non-interactive to interactive value formation, and the customer should be viewed primarily as a co-creator of experience or value (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004). Even though value-creation is a collective process, it is strongly linked to personal experiences (Holbrook, 1994; Vargo & Lusch, 2008). On the other hand, a collaboration between the different actors involved in the service process could result in value co-destruction (Echeverri & Skålén, 2011; Plé & Cáceres, 2010). Plé and Cáceres (2010) define value co-destruction (VCD) as “an interactional process between systems (providers and customers) that results in decline in at least one of the system's well-being”. According to Smith (2013), when the actors involved in a relationship do not possess a resource acting on other resources, such as skills and knowledge, value co-destruction can emerge. Value co-destruction can also emerge if actors do not integrate the resource they possess (Plé & Cáceres, 2010). Hence, value co-destruction emerges for a variety of reasons or antecedents.

These interactive value formations, both co-creation, and co-destruction, led researchers to develop more dynamic models of how value is co-formed during an interaction. In order to address this phenomenon in contemporary value co-creation and value co-destructive research, three major dominant theories have been applied: service ecosystem theory, resource integration theory, and practice theory (Echeverri & Skålén, 2021). We applied practice theory to understand value co-creation and or value co-destruction in this paper. The purpose of this research is to understand the following research question: “*What new practices emerged following VAR in football among spectators, and how do these practices relate to potential value co-creation and co-destruction?*”.

This paper has the following structure. First, the theoretical framework for value formation is presented, followed by practice theoretical perspectives for value formation, VAR and consumption practices in football. Following that, the methodology is explained in detail, along with a data collection method. The findings and analysis are then presented. Finally, the conclusion is presented, followed by recommendations for future research and limitations.

2) Literature Review

2.1. Value Co-creation and Co-destruction

In marketing theory, two major types of value formation have been conceptualized: non-interactive value formation and interactive value formation. Value is conceptualized as exchanged in non-interactive value formation, which contends that value is produced by providers and consumed by customers (Bagozzi, 1975; Hunt, 1976). This viewpoint separates

value-creation from the customer, and value is embedded in the products or services that organizations produce.

Other researchers have questioned this value-in-exchange concept, which is based on goods-dominant logic, leading to the development of an alternative view of economic exchange known as service-dominant logic (SDL) (Vargo & Lusch, 2004, 2008). This viewpoint holds that value is created when customers use products or services to meet their needs or desires, which is referred to as "value in use". (Vargo & Lusch, 2004, 2008). Grönroos (2006) developed the "value-in-use" model and established the "service logic" concept. This new model is based on the premise that value co-creation develops through interactions, such that consumers co-create value when they interact with the company. According to Prahalad and Ramaswamy (2004), value co-creation occurs through experiences, which is based on the idea that consumers and firms collaborate to create unique experiences. Hence, this viewpoint differs from the conceptualization of value as embedded in the product and instead emphasizes providers co-create products and services in collaboration with their customers. According to recent research, there is a shift from non-interactive to interactive value formation, and the customer should be viewed primarily as a co-creator of experience or value (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004). In the case of sport management, customers co-create value (Stieler et al., 2014). This proposition implies that value is co-created, realized, and evaluated within the social context of the simultaneous production and consumption process, rather than simply added during a separate and non-interactive production and consumption process. This collaborative value-creation process among different actors is known as value co-creation (Vargo & Lusch, 2004, 2008). Despite the fact that value-creation is a collaborative process among actors, it is inextricably linked to personal experiences (Vargo & Lusch, 2008). Co-creation of value for one actor may be co-destruction of value for another, depending on consumer expectations and perception of the situation (Stieler et al., 2014). In the service-centred view, the most important resources for co-creating value during interactions between providers and consumers are operant resources -knowledge and skills- (Echeverri & Skålén, 2011; Vargo & Lusch, 2004, 2008). Vargo and Lusch (2008) highlight how value is created through specialization and the exchange of services through the integration and application of both "operant resources" (a resource that can act on other resources, such as skills and knowledge) and "operand resources" (a resource that is acted upon, such as goods).

In this field, most marketing research focuses on value co-creation, but one concept has been frequently overlooked: value co-destruction. Collaboration among the various actors involved in the service process may result in value co-destruction (Plé & Cáceres, 2010). There has been increasing evidence that the interaction value-creation process between consumers and service encounters sometimes results in value co-destruction (Camilleri & Neuhofer, 2017; Echeverri & Skålén, 2011). Plé and Cáceres (2010) define value co-destruction (VCD) as "an interactional process between systems that results in a decline in at least one of the system's well-being". Operant resources -skills and knowledge- are essential for value co-creation as well as value co-destruction (Echeverri & Skålén, 2011). According to Ple and Caceres (2010), when actors use resources inappropriately or unexpectedly (their own and/or those of other parties) result in value co-destruction. According to Ple and Caceres (2010), value co-destruction occurs when actors accidentally or intentionally misuse resources (their own and/or those of other parties) by acting inappropriately or unexpectedly. Another perspective is that the actors who involved in a relationship do not possess a resource, value co-destruction can emerge (Smith, 2013). Inability to change, an insufficient level of trust, absence of information,

an inability to serve, mistakes, the absence of clear expectations, customer misbehavior and blaming could be a reason for value co-destruction (Järvi et al., 2018). According to Echeverri and Skålén (2011), interactive value formation derives from providers and customers drawing on congruent (value co-creation) and incongruent (value co-destruction) elements of practices. Hence, value co-destruction emerges for a variety of reasons or antecedents.

These interactive value formation, both co-creation and co-destruction, led researchers to develop more dynamic models of how value is co-formed during the interaction. In order to address this phenomenon in contemporary value co-creation and value co-destructive research, three major dominant theories have been applied in the previous research: service ecosystem theory, resource integration theory, and practice theory (Echeverri & Skålén, 2021). Service ecosystem theory focuses on network characteristics such as multi-actor relations, embedded multi-level structures, organizational arrangements (Beiro et al., 2017). Different sets or composites of human and non-human capacities are addressed in resource integration theory (Smith, 2013). These two streams overlook the inherent social and dynamic aspects of the interactive value formation processes (Echeverri, 2021). Hence, focusing on the interactive value formation with practice theory addressed this problem (Camilleri & Neuhofer, 2017; Echeverri & Skålén, 2011, 2021; Makkonen & Olkkonen, 2017) and uncovers social interaction in spaces of value formation (Crowther & Donlan, 2011). The term "spaces" refers to an undefined sphere in which value formation activities take place in order to demonstrate how actors shift between value co-creation and value co-destruction (Crowther & Donlan, 2011).

2.2. A practice-theoretical perspective

Research on value co-formation is increasingly using practice-theory perspectives for interactive value formation. Echeverri and Skålén (2021) use the term "value co-formation" to refer to both the positive (creation) and negative (destruction) aspects of this phenomenon. According to Bourdieu (1977), individuals are social entities and actors, who co-create value through practices. Practices refer to "doings and sayings"- "[the] routinized way(s) in which bodies are moved, objects are handled, subjects are treated, things are described, and the world is understood" (Reckwitz, 2002, p.250). Schatzki (2002) argued that practices, which include elements like understandings, procedures, and engagements, are relatively routine actions that people perform. Understandings represent practical knowledge or skills among interactants, a kind of know-how. Procedures represent explicit rules, principles, precept and instructions a form of know-what, understandings represent practical knowledge or skills, a type of know-how or knowledge of what to say and do, engagements represent 'teleo-affective' structures embracing projects, tasks, ends, emotions, moods, purposes (Schatzki, 2002; Schau et al., 2009).

In the service and marketing contexts, value co-formation is realized through a reciprocal relationship between value co-creation and value co-destruction (Crowther & Donland, 2011; Daunt & Harris, 2017; Echeverri & Skålén, 2011). Echeverri and Skålén (2011) argued that interactional practice itself helps in understanding the reciprocal relationship between customers and firms, and they explained this reciprocal relationship through congruent/incongruent concepts of practice elements. According to Echeverri and Skålén (2011), when actors in a relationship have congruent conceptions of elements of practices, it results in value co-creation, whereas when actors in a relationship have incongruent conceptions of elements of practices, it results in value co-destruction. Following this research,

Echeverri and Salomonsson (2017) suggested that alignment/misalignment determines value co-formation not only "within" but also "between" elements of practices. Echeverri and Salomonsson (2017) suggested a conceptual difference the term "within" and "between". The term "within" refers to the degree to which specific practice elements are aligned between the actors involved (know-what), whereas the term "between" refers to the degree to which each actor's set of different practice elements is aligned (know-what and know-how) (Echeverri & Salomonsson, 2017). The term "within" and "between" elements of practices conceptualized as a framework by Echeverri and Skålén (2021) and interactive value formation space framework include the alignment/misalignment of practice elements (procedures, understandings, engagement), both within and between practice elements. In a recent study, Echeverri and Skålén (2021) suggest a conceptual framework of the interactive value formation space which argued that interactive value formation space framework include the alignment/misalignment of practice elements (procedures, understandings, engagement), both within and in-between practice elements. Furthermore, Echeverri and Skålén (2021) also argued that resources are integrated within practices and this argument developed Ple and Caceres (2010) model which claims that integrating resources in an appropriate or expected way results in value co-creation, while integrating resources in an inappropriate or unexpected way results in value co-destruction.

According to recent marketing research, there is a shift from non-interactive to interactive value formation, and the customer should be viewed primarily as a co-creator of experience or value (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004), and practice theory covers the social and dynamic aspects of interactive value formation processes. In accordance with these insights, we use an "interactive value formation" in conjunction with practice theory for VAR situations in football in order to conceptualize new practices and potential value co-creation and co-destruction.

In addition to that, emotion is expressed in so many ways by people. Sports fandom is the sole reflection of the emotions involved in it (Moura & Souza-Leão, 2020). Babac & Podobnik (2016) have divided such emotions into complex emotions (anger, frustration, disappointment) and soft emotions (grief, loneliness, fear). The authors emphasized emotions expressed through interactions considering a sports event and put them into pre-viewing and post-viewing activities. Emotions, from a different practice theoretical perspective, can be considered a practice in and of themselves, because they cause not only feelings or cognitive phenomena, but also acts or 'doings' (Scheer, 2012). Scheer (2012) recognizes emotional practices as "habituated behavior executed without much cognitive attention paid". The author also stresses bodily emotions and their visible display through dynamic practices (Scheer, 2012). According to Scheer (2012), emotional practices are habits, rituals, and daily activities that help us in achieving a specific emotional state; for example, naming such as 'I am angry' is an example of an emotional practice. Furthermore, emotions are inseparably linked to bodily practices; throughout history, analysts have been unable to describe them without also describing the practice in which they are experienced (Scheer, 2012). Scheer (2012) classifies emotional practices into four categories: naming, communicating, mobilizing and regulating. Naming practices such as "I am angry" organize experience, as can naming practices known as "emotives". Communicating practices are emotional performances such as shouting loudly to team as a coach. Mobilizing practices include those that evoke or change emotions. Finally, regulating practices are embodied emotion norms, acquired through the habitus (Scheer, 2012).

2.3. VAR and Consumption in Football

Technology has been used as a decision-aid to assist referees in ensuring better accuracy in decision-making in football. Video Assistant Referee or VAR is the latest addition to football refereeing technology. Before VAR, goal-line technology was the most powerful technique that was used to assist the referee in making more accurate decisions (Fişne et al., 2021; Scanlon et al., 2022). International Football Association Board (IFAB) and the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) are the two major football regulatory bodies globally that implemented VAR and decided upon its rules and regulations. Fişne et al. (2021) have also highlighted how VAR works. As described by the authors and FIFA (FIFA, n.d.), VAR is a video-based technology that is operated by one or more outfield referees. According to IFAB, achieving a 100% success rate in terms of accuracy in fair decision-making is nearly impossible in football. The central philosophy of VAR is not to create interference in the middle of the game but instead assist and guide the on-field referee to end up with better and more errorless decisions during the match (IFAB, 2017). The core idea of VAR is to achieve the highest benefit from the lowest possible interference. A dedicated team is assigned for VAR in every match, who are responsible for observing the game from every conceivable angle and checking for each potential match-altering incident. As per the guidelines of IFAB (IFAB, 2018) and FIFA (FIFA, n.d.), four such occasions must be considered match-altering events. They are the following incidents or potential offenses leading to these incidents - goals, penalty decisions, direct red card incidents excluding a second yellow card or warning, and in case of mistaken identities. The VAR team is only supposed to inform the referee when there is a deviation in decisions compared to the incident seen by VAR (Fişne et al., 2021).

Previous studies have shown how VAR affects the game objectively. According to Han et al. (2020), following the implementation of VAR, (1) the number of offsides and fouls in the Chinese Super League decreased significantly, (2) the playing time in the first and second half increased significantly, and (3) the home team advantage decreased slightly. Moreover, VAR improves referee decision accuracy (Fişne et al., 2021; Scanlon et al., 2022; Winand et al., 2021). According to Fişne et al. (2021) and Winand et al. (2021), it also increases fairness. Fans in the English Premier League are generally optimistic about VAR technology but believe it could be improved (Hamsund & Scelles, 2021). A common belief is that VAR brings more fairness to the game, with more accurate referee decisions, which is the fundamental purpose of implementing VAR as per IFAB. The ongoing game, however, comes to a stop while the on-field or first referee checks the VAR. In this regard, some studies contend that VAR technology reduces game fluency (Scanlon et al., 2022). Fans either have a much more enjoyable time or have a rather tense moment while the referee checks the VAR system to make a decision. And that this technology can also ruin the momentum of a game, in case it is moving at a fast pace before pausing it and moving on to a VAR decision (Scanlon et al., 2022). Furthermore, VAR is killing fans' passion as they cannot celebrate a triumphant moment immediately as it occurs (Fişne et al., 2021).

Multiple authors have observed various consumptions taking place throughout a football match or overall match viewing experience. While match viewing is the core objective of the process, many other consumption events keep taking place altogether. Yuksel et al. (2017) have considered the game itself as a sports product and indicated spectators as a limited form of consumer of this product. Hence, watching the game is also considered consumption, the center of all relevant consumption activities per se, and several practices comprise this consumption

process (Trail et al., 2003; Waliaula, 2019). Stander and Van Zyl (2016) have also discussed sports and football consumption while they focused on the motives for consumption as such. The authors further explain that motivations to follow a sport are unique, and everyone has different reasons. Meanwhile, Moura and Souza-Leão (2020) consider sports consumption a collective process. Trail et al. (2003) consider acquisition of knowledge, social interaction, and excitement – as the primary motivations to consume sports. Whereas, Stander and Van Zyl (2016) stress it further and identify eight fundamental motivating factors to drive towards sports, and consumption eventually. While many authors have studied and identified multiple consumption activities involved in sports or football in particular, they have emphasized different activities in their research. All the consumption activities are related to spectatorship or fandom to some extent. Varela (2014), Gornall (2014), and Pearson and Sale (2011) have emphasized alcohol consumption in relation to watching football. Varela (2014) has further associated spectator or fan violence with alcohol consumption. The author states examples of 'hooligans' in British football and 'barra' in the Mexican football community.

Multiple authors have looked upon the vital presence of social media in the consumption of football in many ways. Vale and Fernandes (2018) state that social media has changed the way supporters engage with sports. The authors, along with Lewis et al. (2021), elaborated on how spectators and fans engage with football in general, as well as clubs and players, through social media. Social media has been considered the biggest platform for interaction and engagement in football. Engaging in social media includes following club and players' pages, joining community groups, browsing these pages and groups, following content shared from these pages or by fellow group members, reacting to content, and engaging in a discussion through comments, etc. Lewis et al. (2021) pointed out four motivations for fans to look into social media: interaction, promotions, live game updates, and news. Interaction is the most significant part of social media engagement by fans and spectators, followed by collecting updates and information. Although Lewis et al. (2021) separate game updates and news in the sense that game updates are concerned with matchday events, whereas news predominantly means club and player updates. However, Vale and Fernandes (2018) testify that all consumers do not engage in social media similarly. Therefore, spectators and fans have various motivations to be involved in social media activities. Some might follow club and player profiles only to get the latest information (e.g. player transfers, club news, updates on injured players, etc.). There might be spectators and fans who are only following fellow supporter groups without actively commenting or getting involved in discussions there. They are there only to stay updated and follow the opinions of fellow supporters, or sometimes football pundits, who perhaps share their expert opinion over any particular sports event or player performance. Because social media has become so prevalent, researchers studied value co-creation and co-destruction in this specific practice. Yin et al. (2019), Dolan et al. (2019), and Healy and McDonagh (2013) discussed how consumers are part of the value-creation or destruction process through interaction with each other. While Yin et al. (2019) focus on the value-creation process from a consumer experience perspective in particular, Dolan et al. (2019) and Healy and McDonagh (2013) specifically emphasize how consumer social media interaction can create value. Dolan et al. (2019) state that consumers seek information and share their experiences through social media to validate them from the community members. Healy and McDonagh (2013) theorize interaction in the context of football, and they also recognize that emotions drive fandom and their activities. They consider football as a consumption process but also mention "fans are not

regular customers” and that fans co-produce value through interacting among themselves on social media.

On the other hand, apart from mainstream social media activities, similar interests cannot be identified directly as social media; instead, they can be considered as online activities associated with football. Yuksel et al. (2017) and O'Brien et al. (2021) mention fantasy football as an emerging online consumer activity in the football consumption community. It is a simulation of football games where users craft their teams on various online platforms to achieve scores based on the real-life performance of their selected players (O'Brien et al., 2021). Lopez-Gonzalez and Tulloch (2015) identify betting or gambling as part of football consumption, where bets are placed based on events that occur during a football match. The authors further explain how betting platforms have been easier to access with the emergence of digital and media technologies and due to the legalization of betting in some professional leagues or championships.

3. Methodology

3.1. Philosophy of Research

Philosophical worldview influence the practice of research and need to be identified (Creswell, 2009). The term worldview is defined as “a basic set of beliefs that guide action” (Guba, 1990, p. 17). Since the aim of the study focuses on understanding people’s view of the specific situation the social constructivist worldview is applicable (Creswell, 2009). Individuals have subjective meanings of their experiences in this worldview, meanings directed toward specific objects or things. These subjective meanings are negotiated socially and historically, formed through interaction with others and historical and cultural norms (Creswell, 2009). As a result of subjectivity, these meanings are varied and multiple, leading the researcher to seek the complexity of perspectives rather than narrowing meanings into a few categories or ideas (Creswell, 2009). According to Creswell (2009), the subjective, humanistic, and qualitative characteristics of the social constructivist worldview distinguish it. Because the goal of the study is to learn about people’s view on the situation and how they practice during this specific situation, qualitative methodology is applicable. Qualitative methodology focuses on words rather than numbers; understanding of behavior, values, beliefs, and so on in the context of the research (Bryman, 2012). Furthermore, qualitative research is concerned with the meaning of action (Bryman, 2012).

3.2. Semi-Structured Interviews

The interview is widely used method in qualitative research (Bryman, 2012). According to Orr et al. (2020), interviews are one of the best ways to elicit information in the health, human, and social sciences. Interviews can be used by researchers to gather detailed information and gain an understanding of participants' actions, as well as articulate multiple points of view, perspectives, and meanings (Orr et al., 2020). Unstructured and semi-structured interviews are the most commonly used interview types in qualitative research (Bryman, 2012). Semi-structured interviews are most applicable to address specific issues for researchers who have a fairly clear focus rather than a very general notion on a topic (Bryman, 2012). Hence, we used a semi-structured interview to address a specific topic, guided by the research questions stated in the introduction.

3.3. Purposive Sampling

Purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling method that ensures those included in the sample are relevant to the research questions posed, which is especially useful in qualitative research (Bryman, 2012). Because it is a non-probability sampling approach, purposive sampling does not allow the researcher to generalize to a population (Bryman, 2012). Furthermore, it is assumed to allow the researcher to ensure variety in the sample so that the members differ slightly in terms of characteristics (Bryman, 2012). Hence, as we are football spectators ourselves, we relied upon our known periphery of people and identified individuals who are accustomed to the latest football regulations and watch football on a regular basis. Since the whole study is based on game-spectating practices, consequently, we avoided the sample being generalized by selecting people in terms of football knowledge and spectating as a priority.

In terms of sample size, theoretical saturation is the key for researchers to achieve in qualitative studies so that there is no set numerical requirement for sample size (Bryman, 2012). Saturation describes the point at which more data stops producing new information (Braun & Clarke, 2013). Since it is unknown when the theoretical saturation will be reached, it is not easy to set the required number of samples (Bryman, 2012). However, the more extensive the scope of a qualitative study and the more comparisons between groups, the more interviews are required (Bryman, 2012). Because the study's goal is to understand people's practices and to value co-creation and co-destruction, no further comparisons will be made, and a large sample size is not required. According to Braun & Clarke (2013), research that aims to find patterns across data typically uses a sample size of between fifteen and thirty individual interviews. Because time and resources were limited for this thesis, we interviewed ten people.

3.4. Data Collection Process

For data collection, we chose a total of ten participants. As we identified from Bryman (2012), it is essential to inform the participants with as much information as possible regarding the research, including its background, topic, and context. Participants were informed of the format and design of the interview before starting it, including the total approximate time required. They were also encouraged to ensure a comfortable environment with a stable internet connection in order to avoid any interruption (Bryman, 2012). Each interview took 30-45 minutes at most, depending on the discussion spread and relevant experiences and examples. Out of ten, two interviews were conducted in person, and the rest were taken via video meeting service Zoom due to the convenience of the participants. Five of the participants live outside of Sweden – two in Turkey, two in Bangladesh, and one in Germany.

According to Denzin and Lincoln (2018), follow-up questions are a vital part of semi-structured interviews, and it helps to extract information from the participants more efficiently. Follow-up questions were designed with relevance to the questions to obtain detailed responses from the participants. For example, in questions related to participation in social media activities, participants were followed up with how they usually engage or interact in social media before/during/after a football match (Appendix 1). Also, they were asked to give examples in multiple questions relevant to particular incidents, such as reactions and agreements or disagreements. Participants shared how they reacted and what activities they partook in during and after a VAR situation, and from that, we observed what practices it led to. We tried to

keep the discussion as much conversational so that the participants could share their opinion and experience without any pre-set sentiments (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018).

3.5. Ethical Considerations

Consent from the participants was taken before the interview was recorded. Since the interview was recorded, consent from the participants was taken before each interview before starting to record (Crang & Cook, 2007; Bryman, 2012; Bryman & Bell, 2011); however, not in a written format. Moreover, participants' names, ages, and professions were also collected with their consent before the interview for the sake of interview identity (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). This personal information had nothing to do with the analysis part of this research from the very beginning. We recorded the interview and mentioned the participants' names only after receiving their consent, considering the concept of 'invasion of privacy' as mentioned by Bryman (2012) and Bryman & Bell (2011).

Bryman & Bell (2011) also emphasize that the topic and context of research, along with the interview questionnaire, must not create embarrassment, discomfort, or humiliation of any sort. Based on that, we wanted to make sure our research topic and interview questions do not hurt any individual feelings, religious beliefs, cultural traditions, or sexual orientation – which includes our interview participants as well.

3.6. Quality of Research

One of the most key criteria for assessing the study's quality is trustworthiness (Bryman & Bell, 2011; Bryman, 2012). Trustworthiness has four main dimensions: credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability. All dimensions were considered throughout the process, but criteria were assessed after the study was completed.

To ensure credibility, the findings were first presented to a select group of interviewees. This enabled the researcher to confirm the social world through member validation of the presented findings and the perspectives and experiences of the participants (Bryman & Bell, 2015). Lincoln and Guba (1985) argue that the criteria for transferability is to find a link between the research and previous studies in the field. Transferability was achieved since this research could be viewed as an extension of previous research within the subject and findings were analyzed in relation to previous studies. Regarding dependability, the research process from beginning to end needs to be logical and traceable, which is thought to increase dependability (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008). The authors have documented all collected material and data from beginning to end for dependability. Lastly, conformability can be achieved when other researchers and individuals understand the researchers' interpretations of the findings in the same way that the researchers do (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The authors highlighted how they achieve the results using quotes from interview notes. As a result, conformability can be assessed by readers. However, because of interpretative research, different interpretations of the same data can all be meaningful (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008).

3.7. Thematic analysis

We followed an 'inductive approach' to get our desired results, which is also known as "bottom-up approach," where a conclusion is drawn from a specific assumption by leading it to a general one (Braun & Clarke, 2006). In terms of the analysis method, we followed thematic

analysis. Thematic analysis allows us to interpret interview findings by coding them in relation to the research question and relevant theories in the literature (Bryman & Bell, 2011).

We used the six phases recommended by Braun and Clarke (2006) for thematic analysis. In the first phase, we recorded and transcribed each interview in order to become familiar with our data. Transcription is a time-consuming process, but it allows us to thoroughly examine the responses. The transcriptions were then coded using the widely used software Nvivo 12 Pro. After coding, we looked for potential themes in all of the data to create significant themes. The possible themes were reviewed in the following step, and some of them came together after careful consideration. When we had a suitable thematic map of our data, we identified and refined the themes for our analysis and named them. Lastly, we completed the report and drew the final thematic map shown in figure 1 below.

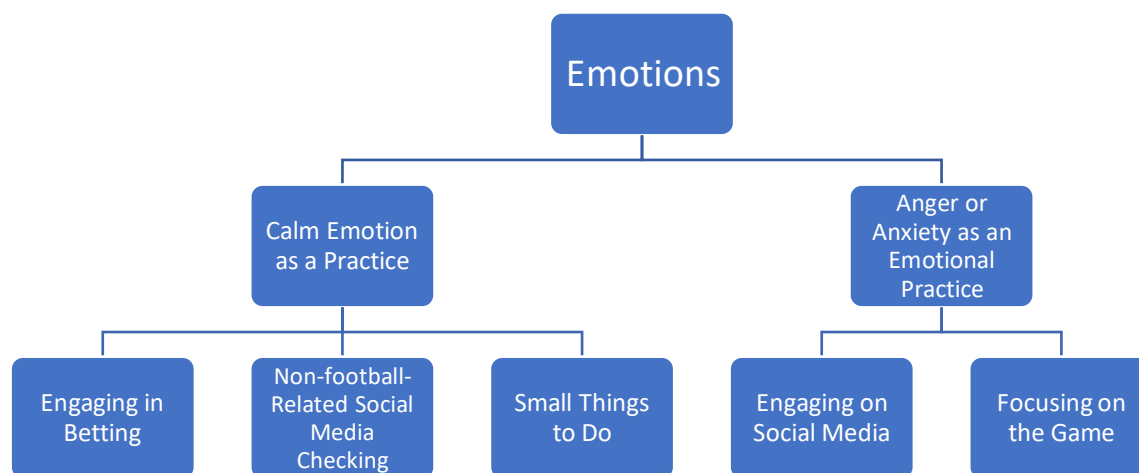


Figure 1: Final Thematic Map

4. Findings and Analysis

In our findings, we observed that emotional practices trigger new practices during VAR situation. Scheer (2012) argued that "naming practices" is one of the emotional practices. In our research, we discovered that naming practices are common among participants, and that these practices organize experience. We discovered two distinct emotional practices that are related to another new practice at the top: calm as an emotional practice and anger & anxiety as an emotional practice. These emotional practices organize experience and trigger new practices in football during VAR situation.

4.1. Calm emotion as a practice

During the VAR situation in football, we discovered that feeling or naming their feelings as being calm 'I am calm,' 'I feel calm' has been discovered. These expressions make it possible for them to engage in other practices. This naming practice led people to engage in other

practices. In general, betting, non-football-related social media checking, and small things to do have been the most commonly discovered practices in our research related with calm emotional practices. Apart from betting, we argue that the two other practices distract from game viewing and cause value co-destruction.

4.1.1 Engaging in Betting

In our findings, we have found two distinct betting practices, one of the most important consumption practices associated with football (Lopez-Gonzalez & Tulloch, 2015). The first type of betting is illegal betting, in which people bet illegally on VAR situations on illegal betting websites. Spectators bet on the VAR situation while the referee look over the VAR. It is a new consumption practice because there was no break before the VAR to check critical positions during the game with camera control. Illegal websites now allow people to bet on the VAR control to predict what referee will decide on the VAR situation. Another type of betting is general betting, in which people bet on other games while also checking their coupons to see if they won or not.

Co-creation and co-destruction of value in betting

To begin with, betting practices are influenced by emotional practices of calm. During the interviews, people discussed how they react in a VAR situation and engage in other practices, and the results show that people bet when they are calm in a VAR situation. Hence, value co-creation and value co-destruction is directly related with emotional practices. In illegal betting for VAR situation, when asked in detail, participants bet when they feel sure for the outcome of VAR situation. However, these feelings have sometimes changed as a result of betting results.

”When the decision is so critical in control, And I know that it will change the rest of the game. I do bet about the outcome of the control results in illegal online gambling because mostly I feel relax, calm during VAR situation because I know that the outcome will be same with my opinion. I lost several times for sure with the decision of the referee. Most of the time, I win because I watch nearly all major league and national football teams. I can say that I am knowledgeable about rules and VAR protocols. But sometimes, I lose a bet because I don't understand why the referee made a bad decision. I don't have much faith in the referees which makes me angry. It was the position's rules; they just made the wrong decision”. (Participant B)

In those circumstances, we suggest that our findings are consistent with Echeverri and Skálén (2021) finding that the formation of interactive values is a function of the combined alignment and misalignment within and between elements of practices including understandings, procedure, and engagement. A quote the one above shows that participant B watches all of the major leagues and is familiar with the VAR protocols, which is related to the “procedure” element of practices; therefore, participant B understands the position, which is related to the “understanding” element of practices; and as a result, participant B engages in illegal betting to earn money, which is related to the “engagement” element of practices. However, this engagement (illegal betting) is not intended by the producers, thus there must be alignment among the different actors involved. If there is alignment within and between elements of

practices and among different actors, VCC is the consequence; if there is misalignment, VCD is the result. In addition, practices integrate operand (a resource that is acted upon, such as goods) and operant resources (a resource that can act on other resources, such as skills and knowledge) (Echeverri & Skålén, 2021).

However, if we accept calm emotion as a practice (Scheer, 2012) to lead betting practices in a VAR situation, we suggest that this emotional practice must be the same before and after betting for value co-creation, which means that the VAR results must be consistent with people's opinions of the VAR situation. Hence, we suggest that when people align elements of practices, they have similar triggering emotions at the end of the engagement, and that these emotions encouraged them to engage in betting practices, resulting in value co-creation. Because people validate their opinions of the VAR situation by earning money, and when the VAR controls come for another position, they have the same emotion, which triggers betting practices. However, if participants are unable to align elements of practices, or if they can align but third-parties (referees) make a mistake, the emotional practice for triggering betting engagement is harmed. Because participants convinced them that they were correct about the position, but the referee made a different decision against the participant, causing a discrepancy which effects VCD. Furthermore, we suggest that VAR integrates betting practices more into the game, which increases the risk of value co-destruction and game detachment. Because participants do not trust the referees, and if they lose betting because of the referee, this lack of trust can become unacceptable, resulting in VCD (Järvi et al., 2018). Hence, there is a risk of game viewing.

General betting is another type of betting in which people bet on other games while also checking their coupons to see if they won or not. Hence, we suggest that game viewing is harmed, and people lose concentration on the game, resulting in detachment from the game and value co-destruction. However, our findings imply that spectators actively gamble on the games they watch. Hence, this lively betting increases enjoyment of the game and leads to value co-creation. These findings revealed a relationship between VCC/VCD and personal experiences. In the first situation, spectators engaged in betting to avoid watching VAR control, however in the second situation, spectators use this break to bet actively on the games in order to enjoy themselves more while watching.

4.1.2. Non-football-related social media checking

Social media usage is common among spectators during the games related with football (Lewis et al., 2021; Vale & Fernandes, 2018). According to our findings, calm as an emotional practice led to people using social media for non-football related goals during VAR situation. We suggest that this practice is about detachment from the VAR situation and football. Participants expressed their calm feelings about VAR control in two ways: they are certain about the outcome of the VAR results or they do not care about the outcome of the VAR results.

Co-creation and co-destruction of value in non-football-related social media checking

In our findings, during the game, spectators are faced with the VAR situation, and people use social media to communicate with others, such as Instagram and Whatsapp, or other social media platforms unrelated to football. Hence, in those situations, spectator practices have shaped and led people to concentrate on the game less. According to Scanlon et al., (2022), the VAR situation has an impact on game flow and negatively impacts the fan experience. In addition, VAR situation had increased the average duration of games (Scanlon et al., 2022).

According to our findings, when the VAR situation comes and people have a calm feeling in response to the VAR situation, calm emotional practice triggers engagement in non-football-related social media checking, resulting in value co-destruction. Because previous research has shown that VAR affects game flow, our findings reveal that this impact on the game leads to spectators engaging in other practices and detachment from the game.

“If the position is not important for me, if I know the results at the beginning so I don't have to do anything else, I'm checking my social media Instagram, I'm checking my WhatsApp messages or something like that because I do not have feeling the game I react so calm to VAR situation”. (Participant E)

This practice cannot easily be determined by the combination of alignment/misalignment elements of practices of within and between practices mentioned by Echeverri and Skålén (2021) for VCC/VCD. Because calm emotional practice triggers other practices, even if those other practices, such as non-football-related social media checking, align with elements of practices, this practice results in value co-destruction because participants preferred to focus on what they do at this time instead of unrelated activities. Hence, our findings represent a novel concept in football consumption research for value co-creation/co-destruction through emotional practices.

4.1.3. Small Things to do

"Small things to do" practices explain how spectators try to spend their time effectively during VAR situations because they do not want to watch the VAR situation and instead do some small practices such as getting new drinks/foods, basic human needs (toilet), smoking outside and so on. These small practices are also related with feeling of calm hence we argue that calm as an emotional practice led people to do these practices.

Co-creation and co-destruction of value in small things to do

Small things to do practices are mostly about detachment from the VAR situation and football because people during this break do not watch the game if it is not important to them and they are calm about it. But, after these practices they continue to watch the game. Hence, we suggest that the key findings are the detachment from the VAR situation and football. However, in those situations, personal experiences are important. According to Vargo (2018), personal experiences are inextricably linked to value co-creation. Our findings demonstrate that, in addition to value co-creation, personal experiences are also linked to value co-destruction. First of all, participants answered that they do not watch the VAR situation and the outcome of the results after VAR because it is not sufficiently important for them. It takes too much time to decide the position hence they feel calm about the VAR situation. In such cases, the results are value co-destruction and a negative impact on people's viewing of the games.

“They are screening the VAR position like twenty times, which I think is unnecessary. Because of that I feel like a calm, relax and evaluate this break to do something. VAR decision is not important for me to watch. So after the watch one or two, I'm just going for a bathroom or going for smoking outside. Maybe make a tea for me, or open a new beer I don't know. But they are screening the VAR position like twenty times every time, so one or two is Enough for me”. (Participant O)

Quotes like the one above show that when the VAR decision is made, people want to evaluate the time and feel more calm while watching the game. Because this break allows them to do something productive. However, it causes value co-destruction because people lose concentration on the game, resulting in detachment from the game. On the other hand, some participants evaluate this break as an advantage to do something such as eating, drinking and so on and when they finish their “small things to do” practices if the game continues, they evaluate it as a win-win situation, resulting in value co-creation. But if the VAR situation still goes on, this result in value co-destruction.

“Sometimes when the VAR takes so much time, I just go and cook some pizza or something like a small village pizza that takes two minutes in the microwave. Because the game is not important for me I do not care anything to what referee gonna decide and while I come back maybe the VAR is gone and then win win situation for me. I get fitted and I can watch the football”.
(Participant M)

According to our findings, value co-creation is linked to personal experiences in “small things to do” practices that support Vargo (2018). In addition, value co-destruction is also linked to personal experiences in “small things to do” practices. People detach from watching the game during the VAR break in the first case, resulting in value co-destruction. In the first example, participant O had no expectation, and the spectator preferred to do something instead of watching the VAR control again and again. The second example, on the other hand, shows that people take advantage of the VAR situation and do something. In this case, participant M had an expectation, and when participant M used this break to do anything, he wanted to continue watching the game, not VAR control following this practice. Hence, value co-creation/destruction associated with personal expectations in situations where this VAR break is viewed as advantageous. The same actions that create value for one actor may destroy value for another and it is related to expectations (Stieler et al., 2014).

4.2 Anger/Anxiety as an emotional practice

The other significant emotional practices our analysis uncovers are anger and anxiety. In our study, anger represents the reaction or surge of emotion followed by disagreement with VAR decisions. Meanwhile, anxiety can be associated with tension or distress among spectators when there is a game of their favorite team, and certain events might not be going in favor of them. Scheer (2012) recognizes anger and anxiety as emotions expressed through ‘bodily activities’. Babac & Podobnik (2016) identify anger and anxiety as hard emotions along with considerably similar feelings like frustration or disappointment. Meanwhile, Scheer (2012) also considers anger as a manifestation of anxiety. We demonstrate that these emotions (anger, frustration, and anxiety) exist or are expressed through practices by the spectators within the game-related experiences during VAR control. However, such practices or expressions of emotions by spectators are often driven by the results of VAR decisions, depending on whether it is going in favor of the team they support. Two central practices were identified related to the emotions of anger or anxiety: Social-media engagement and focusing on the game. Both

these practices lead to value co-creation while using social media, which might also result in value co-destruction followed by disagreement.

4.2.1 Engaging on social media

Previously we discussed how staying calm has directed our respondents towards using social media during VAR situations in ways that are not related to football or watching the game. Those activities can be mainly denoted as “random browsing” on social media. However, the very use of social media has turned out differently when the emotional state is the opposite of being calm. As we observed, the way and purpose of the use of social media keep changing depending on the timeline of the match, and it starts way before the game begins. Babac & Podobnik (2016) have differentiated these social media practices as “pre-viewing” and “post-viewing” practices, while our findings show that social media activities are happening during the game also. Lewis et al. (2021), Vale and Fernandes (2018), and Yuksel et al. (2016) have discussed in their respective studies how spectators interact in social media regarding sports in different phases or events of the game and with other purposes. We also discovered from our respondents that they keep interacting on social media throughout the game in various circumstances. Discussions start even before the match begins when the lineup for that particular match is announced, and this discussion keeps going on during the game. The lineup shows which players are going to play in that specific match, along with substitution players. If the results go south, people tend to bring that back to their discussions about how putting a different player might have affected the game and so on.

In light of that, not only do people engage in discussions over social media when a player is playing good or bad, but also when a crucial moment occurs in the game. Since VAR deals with the four most critical incidents that can happen during a football match (IFAB, 2018; FIFA, n.d.), our participants' discussions eventually involved VAR occasions and decisions. We observed a practice of engaging in debate on social media in order to immediately validate the response of the actual VAR decision or what the spectator thinks it is. Some respondents acknowledge that a VAR moment might make them anxious, especially if it goes against the team they support. Even though they are happy with the initial incident, such as a goal, they become tense the next moment if it goes to VAR.

“...if that decision was already kind of in favor of you, it is done with the joy part. It's just waiting in a tense or every moment and just a relief if the decision goes for the team”. (Participant M)

The same might also happen in the opposite scenario, as in the opposition scored, and it has gone to VAR. Because there will still be a chance of offside, and the goal might be disallowed. In both cases, the spectators are nervous until VAR makes a final decision. Apart from the decision being in favor or against the favorite team, participants' emotional states also changed depending on whether they considered the decision right or wrong. If the VAR decision they think is right, even if it has gone against their favorite team, they don't become much angry. On the contrary, when a decision goes against the team, but they consider it right, it causes distress among the participants.

“I think that depends on if it's against or if it's for Manchester United. If it's against, I usually get quite upset. And it also depends on if I agree with the

decision. I don't get very upset. But it's like the common thing. If it feels wrong, you get upset” (Participant O)

Anger is a common reaction when a VAR decision goes against the team that a spectator is supporting. Similarly, they might get angry if they feel that VAR mistreated their team or the opponent benefited from a supposedly biased VAR decision. In their study, Filo et al. (2015) supported this practice of engaging in a social media conversation out of rage or searching for information through social media content when the opposition is believed to be benefited. It was a common practice among the respondents to take this anger to their social media discussion. They either check what other people think about this decision or engage in conversation within a closed group regarding their own opinion.

“I think that's when we discuss on the WhatsApp group whether the decision will be overturned or it will stay the same. We discuss our point of view on what did we read from watching the game live. And what is our interpretation of the moment of play”. (Participant N)

It is noticeable that respondents use the time of VAR control to engage in these social media practices. While watching the replays during the VAR decision, they form their own opinion within the first couple of replays shown. Plenty of replays from many different angles are going on the screen until the referee decides, and that is when participants tend to engage in discussion on social media. However, such discussions are not limited to the VAR control time only. Following the indications of Babac & Podobnik (2016), we discovered that spectators are engaging in post-match discussions on social media regarding one or more VAR incidents or decisions. The social media platforms might vary from Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram to instant messaging platforms like WhatsApp and Snapchat. Discussions primarily involve the latest match incidents, which are predominantly VAR incidents. However, spectators do not limit themselves to discussions regarding match incidents only. Sometimes there might be a sheer expression of their rage against any particular VAR decision, which might have impacted the result in an unexpected way. Respondents have shared their anger and even tried to take it to the regulatory authorities through social media. It is another prime example of how experiencing a game of football and reactions caused by disagreement with the results have changed due to social media.

“Instantly after that game, I tweeted to the Association of English Referees or something like that. I don't know what it's called, but I tweeted that it was so horrible. And a lot of Arsenal fans did. So we created kind of a movement”.
(Participant I)

Co-creation or co-destruction of value while engaging on social media

Echeverri and Skålén (2011, 2021), Echeverri (2021), and Yin et al. (2019) have discussed how interaction among consumers results in value co-creation and value co-destruction. Dolan et al. (2019) and Healy and McDonagh (2013) particularly emphasized how value is co-created or co-destroyed through consumer interaction practices in social media or virtual environments, while the latter specifically focused on how football spectators' interaction results in it. Dolan et al. (2019) theorized that interactions among fellow consumers or consumers within a community co-create value. In connection with the theories and supported

by the responses from participants, we realized that value is co-created when spectators are engaged in practices like discussing VAR incidents or the possible or actual outcomes of a VAR decision on social media, even though it might trigger complex emotions like anger or anxiety, as we found from the responses.

On the other hand, when anger results in expressing rage or raising a complaint out of it – that also results in an individual practice. Echeverri & Skálén (2021) points out that value co-destruction, or VCD, as the authors mention, is interactional but unilateral at the same time. Referring to the complaint raised to the Association of English Referees would be an example of value co-destruction while interacting. The spectator is definitely interacting through social media, but he is also raising a complaint, which is an individual effort. The association was not involved in this interaction right away, and we are not sure how they responded later or if they responded at all. Since an absence of trust and accusing occurred here between a spectator and the regulatory authority (referees in this case), and they are considered reasons for VCD (Järvi et al., 2018), we can conclude that anger might lead to potential value co-destruction in such a way.

4.2.2 Focusing on the game

While the matches are going on, the most prominent topic of discussion is evidently VAR moments. As per our respondents, VAR moments are anxious for them, especially if there is a game of the team they usually support. Moreover, when someone is watching the match with the serious intention of watching it, they also take VAR moments seriously, at least for watching the initial replays, to make their own decision regarding the incident that happened, which caused VAR to be involved.

“because we watch the replay at the same time as the referee does, the viewers usually already formed an opinion. So either say. Yeah. Very good decision. I agree. Or the opposite”. (Participant I)

However, Lewis et al. (2021) stressed that fans and spectators have a practice of visiting social media during a match or a VAR moment in order to get an update on the game. Almost all the respondents' statements validate this claim by the authors too. They admit to browsing social media or engaging in discussions with friends over messaging platforms. On the contrary, some say they keep focusing on the game and VAR checks instead of following social media or a secondary screen. As mentioned before, it mostly happens when they support one of the teams playing, or it's a “high voltage” match with some big teams playing (e.g., El Clasico between Real Madrid and Barcelona in La Liga, Manchester Derby or London Derby in Premier League), or some vital match of a championship (World Cup Final, or Champions League Final, etc.). If we try to relate Scheer (2012) with this phenomenon, among all the emotions she mentioned that drive bodily activities or practices, anxiety is the only relevant emotion that could navigate this practice of keep focusing on the game.

“Because football will have very few incidents in a 90 minutes span, maximum have about 3-4 goals, maybe one red card on the occasion right? So in terms of incidents, they're not many that happen on a football pitch, and VAR is only getting involved in when it's guaranteed to have some discussion around it. So that's one reason that I don't do anything much. The other reason is during VAR time, there's a lot of commentator analysis that

goes into telling you what the likely outcome should be, or could be or even commentator might have debates where they agree, disagree with each other as to what the right decision is". (Participant S)

That means spectators usually focus on the game when it is a crucial match according to them. The above quote reflects that not only is the particular event important to them, but it is also essential to have a clear understanding of the situation for the spectators. In order to do that, they often go to community groups or closed circles to discuss and validate their opinion. Sometimes they do it to get an idea of the possible outcome of a VAR decision. However, even if they check or interact on social media, they do it to keep up with the moments of the game or any particular incident which might significantly impact the result. Spectators mainly focus on the game or VAR replays and only shift to social media when nothing happens on the TV screen.

"So during those the only activity I'll engage in is possibly just tuning into my social media threads parallelly and having the same chat with my friends as to they expect the outcome to be or what their thoughts are on the decision. I won't zone out of the game, I'll still be watching and I'll just see what their opinion is on the incident". (Participant S)

Yuksel et al. (2016) phrase it as "consumption episodes," which occur in between or simultaneously with a core practice: watching the game or VAR replays, in the case of our study. We figured that there are two types of exercise going on among the spectators – one that solely focuses on the game viewing and keeps the focus during VAR control moments as well, and the other that simultaneously watches the game (or VAR checks) and keeps an eye over social media with even some limited engagement perhaps. However, anxiety is the steering emotion that equally impacts these practices for both the group of spectators during a game of football or an event of VAR incident. It is anxiety that is keeping them on their toes to follow the game or follow VAR replays with attention. Healy and McDonagh (2013) state that football fans are guided by emotion. We also relate it to the practice of social media engagement during VAR checks in a similar way because they are tracking fellow spectators' opinions or gathering information on the VAR incident to validate their own opinion. Scheer (2012) recognizes emotions as practices when there is communication involved. It only strengthens our reasoning for treating the abovementioned game-viewing practices on the same scale, which anxiety activates. Both kinds of spectators are eventually following the game or the VAR incident for similar purposes.

Co-creation or co-destruction of value while focusing on the game

Vargo and Lusch (2004, 2008) theorize that resources (operand and operant resources) participate in value production processes. Resources can also be considered incorporated within practices or elements of practices (Echeverri & Skålén, 2021). Echeverri and Skålén (2021) mention three elements of any practice – procedures, understandings, and engagements. Echeverri (2021) also highlights that value is co-formed as a result of alignment/misalignment within or between emotional practices. While the primary practice considered for this study is watching the game or VAR checks, they don't qualify as a resource according to these theories above. None of the authors identify viewing as a resource; instead, it is a practice itself. However, Camilleri and Neuhofer (2017) consider that the experience of consumption can produce value. Although watching a game is a recognized consumption practice, the residing

logic is not strong enough to establish it as a value-creating practice. Thus, we couldn't connect it with any alignment/misalignment or congruence/incongruences of elements within the practice theory perspective. It is safe to indicate that the game-watching or VAR replay-watching practice does not co-create or co-destruct value.

Dolan et al. (2019) emphasized that community engagement or consumer-to-consumer interaction co-produces value. The authors challenge the familiar concept of customer-provider interactive value formation. Nowadays, this engagement among consumers, which is spectators in our case, almost entirely takes place in social media or virtual environments. According to Vale and Fernandes (2018), social media is the ideal platform for spectators and supporters to engage in conversation, share their opinions, or validate their ideas.

“I've always had this kind of discussion during games because I think it's a nice way of interacting with others, but VAR perhaps added more opportunities to watch Twitter, for example, because when there is a VAR moment, everyone tweets about it”. (Participant O)

Interacting on social media at the same time as watching the game or during a VAR moment is an entirely new practice that is emerging. However, it is VAR that is influencing this interaction among fellow spectators or community members. Even though the course of watching the game or VAR control itself does not co-create or co-destruct value, discussing its events on social media or the physical environment co-creates value as a result of interaction between spectators.

5. Concluding discussion

The goal of this study was to explain new consumption practices following the implementation of VAR in football and to understand these new practices' potential VCC and VCD. According to Scheer (2012) emotional practices are rituals, habits, and daily actions that help us achieving a specific emotional state. We discovered that these emotional practices can also trigger other practices, and our study has identified two emotional practices as core themes that trigger another practices: calm emotion as a practice and anger/anxiety as a practice.

To begin, calm emotion as a practice triggers three distinct forms of practices: engaging in betting, non-football-related social media checking, and small things to do. Engaging is betting associated with illegal betting, and people gamble on illegal betting websites for VAR situations in order to earn money. Spectators engage in this practice when they feel/express their emotions as a calm, and if they win the bet, it results in VCC. If they do not win the bet, they begin to blame the referee or directly VAR technology for the incorrect judgment, which results in VCD. Because spectators believe that they understand the position and know the rules and they want to use their knowledge to earn money and they go directly to illegal betting. In those cases, our findings are consistent with Echeverri and Skálén (2021), and when spectators combine alignment within and between elements of practices (understandings, procedure, and engagement), it results in VCC; otherwise, it results in VCD. Furthermore, we suggest that VAR integrates betting practices into the game, which poses a risk to the football industry. To begin with, VAR provides new opportunities for illegal betting websites while also potentially harming licensed betting companies financially. In addition, it is a concern for game detachment because spectators may stop watching the game following betting practices.

Another two distinct practices are triggered by calm feelings/expressions: non-football-related social media checking and small things to do practices. These two practices are about detachment from the VAR situation and football. In general, spectators engage in these two practices when they are certain of the likely outcome of VAR result or when they do not care about the outcome. Hence, we suggest that VAR causes spectators to lose focus on the game, resulting in VCD in those situations when they feel calm. Small things to do practices have also demonstrated that value co-creation is linked to personal experiences (Vargo, 2018). Our findings imply that, in addition to value co-creation, value co-destruction is also linked to personal experiences.

Anger/anxiety, on the other hand, as an emotional practice, triggers two distinct practices: engaging on social media and focusing on the game. Anger or anxiety expression results in engagement on social media, which begins before the game and occasionally continues afterward. Such engagement mainly consists of discussion in forums or closed groups regarding one or multiple VAR incidents. However, the expression of anger or anxiety varies if the spectator's favorite team is partaking in the game. In that case, any VAR control moment excerpt anxiety until there is a decision. Suppose the decision is in favor of the team in concern. In that case, spectators discuss the other significant components of the game (such as fouls, potential goal-scoring chances, players' performances, etc.) within their spectator community or closed group of friends. However, if the decision is against the supported team, spectators tend to be angry, and it is no surprise that it results from frustration. That is when spectators express their rage or hatred against the system, the particular referee, or the decision itself. Expression of anger sometimes reaches the limit of complaining on social media platforms. In any case, spectators tend to analyze and discuss the legitimacy of such decisions with their fellow spectators. However, such analysis of VAR decisions occurs irrespective of the impact of the result (favorable or unfavorable) sometimes. If spectators engage in discussions regarding contemporary components of the game, it creates value as part of the interaction between spectators. However, the value will be co-destroyed if the discussion turns out to be an expression of anger or result in a complaint.

While a favorite team is in the context, spectators are more likely to focus on the game rather than engaging in some other activities. Even they consider replays during a VAR control necessary to validate their opinion regarding the incident. When their favorite team is playing, spectators tend to watch the entire game, irrespective of the results. However, our interview respondents agreed that they don't stay equally focused on a game throughout the match. Sometimes, nothing significant is happening, and that is when they visit social media.

Interestingly, although detached from the practice of watching the game, they discuss some of the game's key moments on social media in such instances. Sometimes, spectators engage in social media discussions to validate their opinion with fellow spectators while checking VAR replays. While watching or focusing on the game itself does not affect value formation, such engagement practices co-create value as interaction.

5.1 Theoretical Contribution

Previous studies have shown how VAR is perceived among spectators, in particular. Fişne et al. (2021), Scanlon et al. (2022), and Winand et al. (2021) have highlighted the regulatory perspectives of VAR among spectators. On the other hand, Hamsund and Scelles (2021) discuss what personal expectations exist among spectators regarding VAR and also the future

potential of it. Whereas this research mainly focuses on the new practices that have emerged in accordance with the introduction of VAR, unlike previous studies on perception. We find that spectators are engaged in various practices that are apparently driven by emotions. The emotional connection of these practices, which is associated with VAR or influenced by it, is a novel study in the field of marketing and service research and sociology on a bigger scale. We figured that VAR is either driving the spectators away from the game, causing a detachment from the game and engagement in other activities, or watching the game with uninterrupted attention due to emotional attachment to the team playing.

While we discuss attachment or detachment from the game, it leads us to potential value co-creation or value co-destruction caused by VAR control moments, decisions, or the practices resulting from it. We showed that some spectators are detached from the game during VAR control, and some take advantage of the break by using it more effectively (engaging in some other activities f.e. making quick bites, grabbing a drink, smoking, or browsing social media, etc.) in their consideration. We also discussed that such detachments are co-destructing value, while other activities (such as social media interaction) create value instead. In our study, we combined the concept of Interactive Value Formation, or IVF, with the practice theory perspective in the context of VAR in football. Moreover, this study also discovers that VAR has added context to the social media interactions among spectators.

5.2 Managerial Implications

This study has managerial implications along with academic contributions. First of all, new consumption practices have been found following the implementation of VAR in football. The football industry's actors (clubs, organizations, social media, and so on) must comprehend these new consumption practices and adapt their marketing strategies for VAR moments. For example, illegal betting is becoming more frequent among spectators during VAR situations to gamble on the position; legal betting firms should be aware of this opportunity and may need to incorporate this betting model into their websites. However, illegal betting poses a risk to football regulators, which must be considered.

Furthermore, VAR situations have led spectators to engage in other practices or to focus solely on the game, so we suggest that it is not a suitable time to show advertisements at this time. However, all spectators have the same response: they use social media for different reasons during VAR moments. Social media actors in the football industry can take advantage of this opportunity to generate awareness about their products/services or directly about the game.

Finally, some spectators take advantage of the VAR break to do something; football regulators may highlight these results to other spectators and continue providing more fairness to football with VAR technology.

5.3 Limitations and Future Research

Regardless of the opportunities and facilities throughout the study, we also had our fair share of limitations. The most significant struggle that we faced was time constraints. A scheduled timeline restrained us from collecting data from a bigger sample size. A bigger sample size would have enabled us to explore further new practices that have emerged among spectators because of VAR. We believe those new practices might have certainly added some dimensions to our study. Hence, future studies with a larger sample size might be conducted to find new consumption practices. Moreover, due to time limitations, we could not observe any real-life

football match along with spectators for the research or do a similar experiment to strengthen our findings. We were skeptical of the certainty of a VAR incident occurring during the game we would watch. In that case, it will bring no intended result anyway. Thus, in addition to interviews, the observation method could be useful for future study to observe practices.

Similarly, we could not bring cultural and gender diversity among our respondents. All our respondents are males who watch football on a regular basis, and we could not find or connect to any female who does the same. Otherwise, it would have given us an idea of what practices have emerged among females due to VAR. It would be a fascinating finding, of course. Moreover, all our respondents belong to some particular geographic and demographic background. We could not look for respondents from different locations and cultures to bring diversified outcomes to our study.

Finally, this study is interpretative; thus, the findings cannot be claimed as absolute. According to Eriksson and Kovalainen (2008), it is possible to have different interpretations of the same empirical data and its analysis for such research.

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Appendix 1

Interview Questions

THEME 1:

Football as consumption

- How often do you watch football matches?
- Do you follow any particular league/championship or watch in general?
- Where do you watch these games typically?

Practice: Procedure and engagement

- Do you have any regular routines for game preparation?
- Do you usually watch alone or with friends, or with accompaniment?
- Do you normally watch the whole game?
- Does the result affect your duration of watching the game?
- Do you follow club/players social accounts? (If yes, how do you interact with these accounts?)
- Do you engage in discussion on social media before/during/after the match? (If yes, how do you engage in?)
- What are your usual topics of discussion?
- How do you react to referee decisions such as fouls, red/yellow cards, penalties, offsides and goals?

Theme 2:

Value co-creation or co-destruction by VAR

- How do you react if a decision goes to the team you are supporting after VAR control? (Can you give an example?)
- How do you react if a decision goes against the team you are supporting after VAR control? (Can you give an example?)
- How do you react if your friends had a different opinion before/after VAR control? (Can you give an example?)
- Do you always agree with referee decisions following VAR review? (If not, can you give an example?)
- What is your reaction if you think VAR should be checked, but the referee did not check?

- Have you ever experienced a VAR treating your team unfairly? (If yes, can you give an example and how did affect your reaction after the match and preparation for the next game?)

Value co-creation or co-destruction by engagement

- Do you engage in any other activity apart from watching the game during VAR control? (If yes, can you explain further)
- Have you ever done this prior to the implementation of VAR in football?
- Do you check your social media during VAR control?
- If yes, what are you usually doing on social media, particularly at that time (checking of VAR)?
- Do you talk with someone about one or more VAR incidents/decisions during/after the game?
- Where do you have this discussion and with whom?
- Do you think VAR has brought a difference in your match experience? (If yes, can you explain further?)
- What is your opinion/perception about VAR? Explain the pros and cons.

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