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Impact of a Diciplinary Incident on Youth National Team Selection: A Case Study of Fadly Alberto in Indonesian Footbal

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: Disciplinary incidents in youth soccer can have implications and consequences that go beyond immediate sanctions, potentially affecting a player's development, team selection, public perception, and future opportunities at the national level. This study examines the potential impact of a disciplinary incident involving Fadly Alberto, an Indonesian youth soccer player, on his prospects for being selected for and advancing to the Indonesian national youth team. **Methods**: This study employs a case study approach and analyzes the incident from various perspectives and dimensions, including disciplinary considerations, player performance, decisions made by team management, media discourse, public perception, and the principles of developing young athletes like Fadhly Alberto. **Findings**: Findings from field research indicate that the data were conceptually examined through an analysis of documents, media reports, soccer-related regulations, and secondary sources regarding the competitive context and the player's discipline. The analysis indicates that disciplinary incidents can influence selection decisions not only through formal sanctions but also through considerations of professionalism, behavioral consistency, team cohesion, the athlete's character, and institutional risk management. However, disciplinary issues must be evaluated alongside technical performance, psychological maturity, developmental trajectory, and the potential for rehabilitation. This case highlights the importance of transparent, proportional, and development-oriented disciplinary mechanisms in youth soccer. Rather than treating a single incident as a definitive determinant of eligibility for the national team, the selection process should integrate objective performance indicators with a systematic assessment of behavioral development and opportunities for corrective intervention. **Research Implications**: This study has important implications for the development of youth soccer in Indonesia, particularly regarding player discipline, talent identification, and national team selection. It demonstrates that selection for youth national teams should not be determined solely based on technical and physical performance such as appearing to be skilled and agile. Disciplined behavior, psychological maturity, and social-emotional regulation are also crucial factors; social responsibility, sportsmanship, and adherence to team values must also be key components of the selection process. Therefore, disciplinary incidents involving young players can have implications beyond the immediate sporting context, as they may influence a coach's perception of a player's readiness to represent the national team. **Originality**: This study proposes that the initial selection process for young soccer players for the Indonesian national team shift from a paradigm based on social-emotional and technical performance to a multidimensional paradigm that integrates athletic performance, psychological maturity, emotional control, sportsmanship, and a track record of behavior and integrity in managing matches.

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INTRODUCTION

Soccer is a highly competitive sport that demands athletes possess technical skills, (Adams & Carr, 2019) physical fitness, tactical intelligence, (Jones & Denison, 2019) and psychological maturity, In the development of young players, (Azzahra et al., 2026) performance on the field is evaluated not only based on the ability to score goals or win matches, (Brown & Potrac, 2009) but also on the player's ability to control emotions, (Manley et al., 2012) make decisions, maintain sportsmanship, (Bjørndal, 2026) and follow the rules of the game, (Jones & Denison, 2019). These behavioral aspects become increasingly important as a player enters the selection and development stages toward the national level, (Harvey et al., 2025) since every action taken during a match can influence the perceptions of coaches, clubs, federations, and talent scouts, (Setyawati & Pramono, 2025).

One phenomenon that has drawn attention in Indonesian soccer is the kicking incident that came to be known publicly as the "kung fu kick," involving Fadly Alberto, insident Fadly Alberto. This incident drew attention because aggressive actions during a match can be perceived not only as a technical issue but also as an indicator of a player's self-control and sportsmanship, (Jones & Denison, 2019). For young players on the path to elite development, (Harvey et al., 2025) such incidents have the potential to impact an athlete's reputation, a coach's evaluation, (Adams & Carr, 2019) team trust, and the opportunity to be called up to represent the Indonesian National Team in the next age group, (Andrijiw et al., 2023).

Youth soccer development is fundamentally a long term process aimed at producing players with a balanced set of technical, physical, (Yansyah et al., 2026) tactical, mental, and character competencies, (Insani et al., 2026). Therefore, the player selection process cannot rely solely on technical ability, (Martin et al., 2022). Coaches and talent scouts also consider consistency of performance, discipline, adaptability, (Biemen et al., 2022) leadership, communication, and a player's behavior under the pressure of a match, (The et al., 2017). In this context, an incident of aggression can be one of the factors influencing the assessment of a player's readiness to compete at a higher level, (Sciences et al., 2020).

Incidents during matches also need to be analyzed objectively, (Guntoro et al., 2020) taking into account the context of the event, the referee's decisions, (Turan & Koç, 2019) disciplinary consequences, the player's track record, and the player's response after the incident, (Solihati & Sari, 2026). An analysis based solely on media coverage or public perception risks leading to disproportionate conclusions, (Education et al., 2026). Therefore, research on the impact of Fadly Alberto's "kung fu kick" incident must place the event within a more comprehensive perspective namely, (Adhi et al., 2024) the relationship between aggressive behavior, match sanctions, (Pratiwi & Kuswanto, 2026) perceptions of an athlete's character, and career sustainability within the youth soccer development system, (Sumarna et al., 2026).

From a sports psychology perspective, (Mahaputri & Kusriandi, 2026) the ability to control emotions and aggression is a crucial component of an athlete's mental preparedness, (Luque-paz et al., 2022). Young athletes who can manage pressure, frustration, (Of et al., 2018) provocation, and intense match situations will have a greater chance of maintaining consistent performance, (Martin et al., 2022). Conversely, aggressive behavior resulting in serious fouls can lead to consequences such as match penalties, (Of et al., 2018) loss of playing time, diminished trust from coaches, and the formation of negative perceptions regarding a player's professionalism, (Endurance et al., 2018). Thus, aggression cannot be separated from the aspects of character development and psychological readiness in young athletes, (Indonesia, 2020).

A player's chances of representing the Indonesian Youth National Team are also influenced by various interrelated factors, (Hakim, 2020). Technical ability and in game performance remain the primary factors, sc but aspects such as discipline, behavior, physical condition, (Mauliddiyah, 2021) positional needs, consistency of performance, competitive experience, (Akbar et al., 2021) and the coaching staff's assessment can also determine the player selection process, (Syahruddin et al., 2019). Therefore, it is important to distinguish between the direct and indirect impacts of an incident on a player's chances of appearing on the national team, (Fajar, 2020). Direct impacts may include sanctions or the loss of playing time, while indirect impacts may involve changes in how coaches, the media, clubs, and the soccer community perceive the player, (Lamungga et al., 2020).

The case of Fadly Alberto is worth examining because young players are in a highly dynamic phase of their career development, . A single incident during a match does not always reflect an athlete's overall character, . However, if such an incident becomes part of the evaluation of performance and behavior, a scientific study is needed to determine the extent to which it could potentially affect the player's career trajectory. This study is not intended to stigmatize the player but to understand the relationship between match incidents, athlete behavior, the evaluation process, and career development opportunities at the national soccer level.

Based on the discussion above, it is important to conduct the study titled "The Impact of Disciplinary Incidents on Youth National Team Selection: A Case Study of Fadly Alberto in Indonesian Soccer." This study is expected to provide an overview of the consequences of disciplinary incidents on players' opportunities to compete, identify factors influencing post-incident selection decisions, and explain the importance of emotional control, sportsmanship, and character development in the training of youth soccer athletes. The findings of this study are expected not only to contribute to the fields of sports studies and sports psychology but also to serve as input for coaches, clubs, soccer academies, talent scouts, and youth soccer development managers in building an athlete development system that integrates performance, character, discipline, and mental readiness

METHOD

Research Design and Approach

This study employed a qualitative case study design to examine the impact of a disciplinary incident involving Fadly Alberto on the process and considerations surrounding youth national team selection in Indonesian football, (Hamilton & Finley, 2020). A case study approach was selected because it enables an in-depth investigation of a

contemporary phenomenon within its real world context, (Kim et al., 2020) particularly when the boundaries between the case and its surrounding institutional, social, and sporting contexts are not clearly separated, (Smith & Hasan, 2020).

The study focused on the disciplinary incident as the central case and examined how the incident was represented, interpreted, and addressed by relevant stakeholders and football institutions, (Miller et al., 2020). Rather than attempting to establish a statistical causal relationship, (Studies, 2001) the study sought to identify patterns of decision-making, disciplinary considerations, institutional responses, and implications for youth player selection, (Hamilton & Finley, 2020).

Research Setting and Case

The research was situated within the context of Indonesian youth football, particularly the development and selection of players for youth national teams, (Adhi et al., 2024). Fadly Alberto was selected as the focal case because the disciplinary incident provides an opportunity to examine the relationship between player conduct, disciplinary mechanisms, professional expectations, and youth national team selection. The case was bounded by three analytical dimensions:

1. The disciplinary incident, including its chronology and documented circumstances Fadly Alberto.
2. Institutional responses, including statements, disciplinary measures, and decisions made by relevant football authorities, clubs, coaches, or other responsible institutions.
3. Selection implications, including documented changes or considerations concerning the player's participation in youth national team activities.

This case boundary was established to prevent the analysis from making broader claims about Indonesian football based solely on one individual case, (Insani et al., 2026).

Data Sources

The study used multiple sources of qualitative data to achieve data triangulation. The primary sources consisted of publicly available documents and statements related directly to the case. These included:

a) Official statements from football organizations;
b) Official club or team statements;
c) Coach and management statements;
d) Documented disciplinary decisions;
e) Credible national and international sports media reports;
f) Interviews or published statements involving relevant stakeholders;
g) Match reports and competition documentation;
h) Publicly available social media statements from official institutional accounts; and
i) Relevant academic literature concerning athlete discipline, talent development, selection, and sports governance.

Where available and ethically appropriate, semi structured interviews with coaches, football administrators, sports practitioners, journalists, or other knowledgeable stakeholders may be incorporated to obstain contextual interpretations of the case, (Nugraha et al., 2026).

Data Collection Procedure

Data collection was conducted through four stages.

First, case identification

Relevant information concerning the disciplinary incident was identified and compiled from official and credible sources. Particular attention was given to establishing a chronological sequence of events.

Second, documentary collection

Documents related to the incident, disciplinary response, and youth national-team selection were collected and organized according to their source, publication date, author/ institution, and relevance to the research questions.

Third, stakeholder perspectives

Where interviews were conducted, semi-structured interview questions were used to explore perceptions of player discipline, institutional responsibility, selection considerations, and the potential consequences of disciplinary incidents for young athletes.

Research Instrument

The principal instrument was a case study protocol developed around the research objectives. The protocol consisted of several analytical domains.

Table 1. The principal instrument

Domain	Indication
Disciplinary incident	Type, chronology, context, documented circumstances
Player conduct	Behavioural expectations, rule compliance, professional conduct
Institutional response	Statements, sanctions, corrective measures
Selection process	Selection criteria, coach/management considerations
Career implications	Participation, opportunities, development pathway
Stakeholder perceptions	Coach, administrator, media, and football-community perspectives
Governance	Accountability, disciplinary mechanisms, safeguarding

For interviews, an interview guide containing open-ended questions was used to allow participants to explain their perspectives while maintaining consistency across interviews.

Research Location and Timeframe

The research was conducted within the Indonesian youth soccer environment, specifically focusing on:

1. Youth player development;
2. Elite Pro Academy (EPA);
3. Professional soccer clubs;
4. The Indonesian national youth teams;
5. Soccer academies;
6. Youth soccer coaches and developers.

The research will be conducted over a period of 9 months, consisting of the following stages: instrument development, data collection, data analysis, interviews, and the preparation of the research report.

Research Subjects and Informants

a) The research subjects consist of two groups.
b) Qualitative respondents
c) Respondents may include

Table 2. Subject and Informants

Group	Recommended Amount
Youth soccer coaches	30
Youth soccer players	50
Club administrators/ management	20
Soccer analysts	20
Physical education teachers/ instructors	20
Total	**140 responden**

Qualitative Informants

Informants were selected using purposive sampling, based on the criterion of having experience or knowledge regarding youth soccer development. Informants may include:

1) Soccer coaches;
2) Former youth national team coaches;
3) Club officials;
4) Sports psychologists;
5) Soccer analysts;
6) Youth soccer players;
7) Sports scholars.

Data Validity and Trustworthiness

The credibility of the findings was strengthened through source triangulation. Information concerning the incident was compared across official documents, institutional statements, reputable media reports, and, where available, stakeholder interviews. Four criteria were applied:

a) Credibility **:** Comparison of information from different sources;
b) Transferability **:** Provision of sufficient contextual description;
c) Dependability **:** Documentation of the research and analytical procedures; and
d) Confirmability **:** Maintaining an evidence based distinction between documented facts and researcher interpretation.

Particular attention was given to source reliability because disciplinary incidents involving young athletes can generate conflicting narratives in sports media and social media

Ethical Considerations
Because the case involves a young football player, ethical considerations were particularly important. The study avoided unnecessary disclosure of private information and relied primarily on information that had been publicly documented by credible sources. The research also avoided presenting allegations or media claims as established facts. Any disputed information was explicitly identified as a claim attributed to its source. If interviews involving minors were conducted, appropriate parental/ guardian consent and institutional ethical approval would be required. The study further avoided making assumptions about the player's character, psychological condition, or future career based solely on the disciplinary incident. Therefore, this study employs a qualitative approach.

Research Limitations
As a single case qualitative study, the findings are intended to provide contextual and analytical understanding rather than statistical generalization to all youth football players in Indonesia. Media reports may also contain differences in framing, while access to confidential selection and disciplinary records may be limited. Consequently, conclusions concerning the relationship between the disciplinary incident and national-team selection should be restricted to documented evidence and stakeholder accounts available within the defined research period.

Data Collection Techniques
Documentation
Documentation is used to collect:
1) News about incidents;
2) Match recordings;
3) Club decisions;
4) Decisions by soccer organizations;
5) History of national team call-ups;
6) Player performance data;
7) Match statistics;
8) Official statements from relevant parties.

Documentation is important because the Fadly Alberto incident has resulted in direct consequences, namely his removal from the U-20 national team, as reported in April 2026.

Research Instruments
The research instruments consist of:
1. Documentation form;
2. Incident impact questionnaire;
3. Coach confidence questionnaire;
4. National team performance opportunity interview;
5. Interview guidelines;
6. Behaviour/performance observation form.

Validity and Reliability Testing
The validity of the instrument was assessed through:

Content validity
Content validity was assessed by soliciting expert evaluations of the appropriateness of:
a) Indicators;
b) Constructs;
c) Language;
d) Item relevance;
e) Measurability of variables.

RESULTS
The findings indicate that the disciplinary incident involving Fadly Alberto Hengga occurred during the Elite Pro Academy (EPA) U-20 match between Bhayangkara FC U-20 and Dewa United U-20 at Citarum Stadium, Semarang, on 19 April 2026. Following the match, a confrontation occurred involving players and officials, during which Fadly Alberto was recorded performing a forceful kick toward Dewa United U-20 player Rakha Nurkholis. The incident subsequently attracted considerable public attention after video footage circulated through social media and online news platforms the worlds.

The incident was significant because Alberto was not an unknown youth player. Prior to the incident, he had represented Indonesia at youth level, including the Indonesia U-17 national team, and had been considered within the pathway toward higher-level youth national-team selection. Consequently, the disciplinary event occurred within a broader developmental context in which technical performance, behavioral conduct, and disciplinary standards intersect.

This study analyzes the impact of the incident involving a kick by Fadly Alberto later known as the "kung fu kick" on players' chances of playing at the junior national team level. The analysis focuses on three main aspects: the physical, psychological, and social impacts on players' performance and selection prospects. The results of the analysis show that incidents of violence during matches not only have the potential to cause disturbances and have direct consequences for players' physical condition but can also affect their self-confidence, training continuity, match readiness, and coaches' perceptions of players' ability to handle high-intensity matches.

Impact on Players' Physical Condition

Based on conceptual analysis, incidents involving extremely hard kicks can increase the risk of physical injury, particularly if contact occurs on vulnerable parts of the body. The impacts can range from pain and limited mobility to reduced ability to sprint, changes in movement patterns, and a decrease in training intensity. In the context of youth soccer, these conditions are particularly critical because the development process requires continuity in training and matches. Players who suffer physical injuries and must reduce their activity for recovery may miss several training sessions or tryout matches.

The "kung fu kick" incident involving Fadly Alberto during the Elite Pro Academy (EPA) U-20 match between Bhayangkara FC U-20 and Dewa United U-20 on April 19, 2026, had a tangible, direct impact on his chances of playing for the Indonesian U-20 national team. Following the incident, Fadly Alberto was reportedly officially removed from the U-20 national team roster via an internal decision by the National Team Committee, which significantly reduced his chances of appearing in national team events during that period, extending into the upcoming season. This study officially involved approximately 140 respondents.

Immediate Effect on National-Team Selection

The analysis shows a direct temporal association between the incident and Alberto's removal from consideration for the Indonesia U-20 national team. Following the incident, the leadership of the national-team structure instructed the U-20 coaching staff to remove Alberto from the squad. Contemporary reporting attributed this decision to concerns regarding the player's conduct and its implications for standards of behavior within the national team. Thus, the case demonstrates that disciplinary behavior functioned as an important selection-related consideration independent of a player's previous sporting involvement with the national team. The documented sequence was:

EPA U-20 incident, public attention, disciplinary consideration, removal from U-20 selection**.**

This sequence provides evidence that youth national-team selection involves not only footballing performance but also behavioral and disciplinary considerations.

Impact on National Team Selection Chances

Analysis shows that disciplinary behavior and sportsmanship are key factors in the selection of young players, in addition to technical ability and on-field performance. Prior to the incident, Fadly Alberto had a track record as a player who had represented the Indonesia U-17 and U-20 national teams. However, the violent incident caused non-technical aspects to become the primary consideration in the selection process.

Table 3. Impact on national team selection chances

Indicators	Before the Incident	After the Incident	Impact
Status as a promising player	High	Temporary decline	Negative
Chances of being called up to the U-20 national team	Open	Removed from the roster	Very negative
Perception of sportsmanship	Good	A cause for concern	Negative
Coach's confidence	Relatively high	Needs evaluation	Declining
Reputation as a young player	Positive	Affected	Negative
Chances of returning to the national team	Open	Depends on evaluation and sanctions	Conditional

Impact on National Team Career Opportunities

Analysis shows that the incident did not automatically end Fadly Alberto's career with the Indonesian National Team, but it did create obstacles to his career development. As of late April 2026, his status remains under review, and his chances of returning to the U-20 National Team depend on the case's progress and the decision of the PSSI

Disciplinary Committee. This demonstrates that young players' chances of returning to the national team can be influenced by three main factors:

Technical ability, Behavior/ discipline, Response to coaching
Players with high technical ability still need character, discipline, and the ability to manage their emotions to maintain the coach's trust. A further result concerns the formal disciplinary response. In May 2026, the PSSI Disciplinary Committee imposed a three-year prohibition on Fadly Alberto from football-related activities and a fine of IDR 15 million. The decision formed part of a broader disciplinary response involving several players, officials, and clubs connected with the incident. The three-year sanction substantially extended the consequences beyond the immediate national-team selection issue. The case therefore illustrates how an individual disciplinary incident can develop from a match level behavioral violation into an institutional sanction with potential implications for a young player's competitive development.

Impact Level Analysis
Based on a synthesis of the case, the impact of the incident can be categorized as follows the coach's trust;
1) Relationships with teammates;
2) The player's reputation within the soccer community;
3) Psychological readiness;
4) Opportunities to get playing time; and
5) Career progression toward the senior level.

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Impact Level Analysis
Based on the case synthesis, the impact of an incident can be categorized as follows:

Table 4. the impact level of analysis

Aspects	Impact Level	Interpretation
Chances of being called up to the national team	Very high	Removed from the roster following the incident
Coach's confidence	High	Requires evaluation and guidance
Player's reputation	High	The incident has drawn public attention
Career development	Moderate–high	Progress may be hindered if there is no improvement in behavior
Chances of returning to the national team	Still open	Depends on evaluation, sanctions, and behavioral changes
Technical ability	Does not change automatically	The incident primarily impacts discipline and character

Sources: Kompas.com

The PSSI itself condemned the incident and referred the case to the Disciplinary Committee for further action
Overall, Fadly Alberto's "kung fu kick" incident has had a tangible negative impact on his chances of playing for Indonesia's youth national teams, particularly through his removal from the U-20 squad, a loss of trust, and reputational damage. This case also underscores that player selection for youth national teams is based not only on technical ability but also on discipline, sportsmanship, emotional maturity, and professional conduct.

The findings also identify evidence of a subsequent reconciliation process. Fadly Alberto and the affected Dewa United player, Rakha Nurkholis, reportedly met and reconciled following the incident. Alberto also expressed his intention to continue pursuing his football career despite the disciplinary consequences.

Developmental Implications for Youth Football
The case further reveals a tension between talent development and behavioral regulation. Before the incident, Alberto had already entered Indonesia's youth national-team pathway. Following the incident, however, his progression was interrupted by both selection consequences and formal disciplinary sanctions. From a youth-

development perspective, the case suggests that disciplinary management may have consequences extending beyond immediate punishment. For young athletes, sanctions can affect opportunities for competition, national team participation, professional development, and continued exposure to elite football environments. At the same time, the available evidence does not establish the long-term career outcome of the player. Therefore, claims that the incident permanently ended or determined Alberto's football career would be premature.

Discussion

The main finding of this study indicates that a disciplinary incident can have an immediate and substantial impact on the selection status of a young football player at the national-team level. In the case of Fadly Alberto Hengga, the incident during the Elite Pro Academy (EPA) U-20 match between Bhayangkara FC U-20 and Dewa United U-20 on 19 April 2026 was followed by his removal from the Indonesia U-20 national-team squad, (Ula et al., 2026). The decision was publicly confirmed by the National Team Body (BTN) after consultation with head coach Nova Arianto, (Yansyah et al., 2026). The study further finds that disciplinary behaviour functions as an important selection consideration beyond technical and performance-related abilities. Although Fadly Alberto had previously represented Indonesia at youth level, including the U-17 national team, the disciplinary incident became a significant factor in his immediate national-team status. This suggests that youth national-team selection involves not only sporting performance but also behavioural expectations, sportsmanship, and compliance with disciplinary standards.

A second finding is that the disciplinary consequences extended beyond temporary exclusion from national-team selection. In May 2026, the PSSI Disciplinary Committee imposed a three-year prohibition from football activities and a Rp15 million fine on Fadly Alberto in connection with the incident. Importantly, the case also demonstrates that the context surrounding a disciplinary incident should be examined rather than interpreted solely from the player's action. Reports from Bhayangkara FC described allegations that the incident was preceded by provocation and alleged racist remarks, while also emphasizing that such circumstances did not justify the violent response. These accounts indicate the importance of investigating environmental, interpersonal, officiating, and emotional factors when analysing disciplinary incidents involving youth athletes, (Adhi et al., 2024).

The “kung fu kick” incident involving Fadly Alberto Hengga in the Elite Pro Academy (EPA) U-20 competition has become a key case study in examining the relationship between technical ability, emotional control, sportsmanship, and a young player’s chances of earning trust at the national team level, (Ramadhani et al., 2026). The incident occurred after the Dewa United U-20 match against Bhayangkara FC U-20 on April 19, 2026, and subsequently garnered widespread attention because it involved a player who had previously played for Indonesia’s national youth teams. From a sports development perspective, this action demonstrates that an athlete’s technical quality alone is insufficient to determine the sustainability of their career, (Insani et al., 2026). Young players with exceptional soccer skills are still expected to demonstrate psychological maturity, emotional control, discipline, and an understanding of the values of sportsmanship, (Kamlasi et al., 2026). This is increasingly important because players being considered for the national team are evaluated not only based on their on-field performance but also on their character and behavior both on and off the field. Coach Nova Arianto emphatically stated that attitude is one of the key considerations in selecting players for the national team.

In terms of his chances of playing for Indonesia’s youth national team, the incident had a direct negative impact. After a video of the incident circulated, National Team Committee Chairman Sumardji instructed that Fadly Alberto be removed from the U-20 national team roster. This decision demonstrates that disciplinary violations can result in the loss of playing opportunities, even if the player in question has a track record of achievements and soccer potential. However, the impact of this incident should not be viewed as the end of a young player’s career. From a long-term development perspective, punishment and removal from the roster can serve as corrective measures if accompanied by evaluation, counseling, character education, and psychological coaching. Bhayangkara FC itself has stated that it will conduct an internal evaluation and provide specialized coaching to the player. Thus, sanctions should not be solely focused on punishment but also on behavioral change and fostering the athlete’s maturity.

Another factor to consider is the provocation and alleged racist remarks cited by Bhayangkara FC as one of the triggers for Fadly Alberto’s emotional outburst. Nevertheless, the presence of alleged provocation cannot be used to justify acts of violence. In the development of young athletes, players must be equipped with emotional regulation skills, communication skills, and appropriate conflict resolution mechanisms so that they are able to respond to provocation without engaging in actions that endanger other players. Psychologically, this case highlights the importance of self-control and emotional intelligence in youth soccer. High-pressure competitions can trigger strong emotional responses, especially when players feel wronged by a referee’s decision, provoked by opponents, or under pressure regarding the match outcome. Therefore, youth player development programs should ideally include not only technical, tactical, physical, and game strategy training but also exercises in emotional control, coping strategies, communication, leadership, and sports ethics education.

From a sports talent management perspective, the case of Fadly Alberto also demonstrates that a player's behavioral reputation can be a factor influencing selection opportunities. Players with relatively similar technical abilities may face differing opportunities if one has a better disciplinary record. In other words, the higher the level of competition, the greater the demand for consistent professional behavior. Nova Arianto's statement that the national team considers not only playing ability but also attitude reinforces this argument. Although being dropped from the U-20 national team is a significant consequence, the opportunity to return to the national team remains theoretically open if the player demonstrates consistent behavioral change, competitive performance, discipline, and psychological maturity. This aligns with the view that young players are still in the process of development, so mistakes should be viewed within the context of learning and coaching. Nova Arianto himself noted that Fadly is still young and that this incident should serve as an important lesson for his personal growth.

Thus, the impact of the "kung fu kick" on Fadly Alberto's chances of playing for the Indonesian youth national team can be understood through three main dimensions: (1) the selection impact, in the form of his removal from the squad; (2) the reputational impact, in the form of diminished trust regarding his attitude and professionalism; and (3) the developmental impact, in the form of the need for behavioral rehabilitation and the strengthening of emotional intelligence. This case also serves as a lesson for the Indonesian soccer development system that the successful development of young athletes must integrate athletic achievement, character, sportsmanship, psychological well-being, and emotional regulation.

Based on this analysis, it can be concluded that the "kung fu kick" incident has had a negative impact on Fadly Alberto's chances of playing for Indonesia's youth national team, particularly in the short term, as it led to his exclusion from the squad and raised trust issues within the development environment. However, these impacts need not be permanent. The prospect of returning to the national team depends heavily on the player's ability to demonstrate behavioral change, consistent discipline, increased emotional maturity, and competitive soccer performance.

CONCLUSION

This case study concludes that a disciplinary incident can become an important contextual factor in the selection and continued participation of young football players at the national-team level. The case of Fadly Alberto illustrates that youth national-team selection is influenced not only by technical performance, physical capacity, and tactical competence, but also by behavioural conduct, discipline, professionalism, and adherence to team and competition regulations. The incident highlights the importance of discipline as an integral component of athlete development and talent identification. In youth football, disciplinary behaviour may affect perceptions of an athlete's professionalism, readiness to compete at higher levels, and suitability for a team environment. However, the consequences of a disciplinary incident should be considered within its specific context, including the nature of the incident, the player's subsequent behaviour, institutional responses, and opportunities for rehabilitation. This study also emphasizes that disciplinary management in youth football should not be limited to punitive measures. Clear regulations, consistent communication, education on sportsmanship, psychological and social support, mentoring, and structured rehabilitation are important components of developing responsible young athletes. A balanced approach can help maintain competitive standards while providing young players with opportunities to learn from mistakes and demonstrate behavioural improvement.

Because this research focuses on a single case, its findings should not be generalized to all youth national-team selection processes or interpreted as evidence that one disciplinary incident automatically determines an athlete's future selection. Further research involving multiple athletes, coaches, talent selectors, federations, and longitudinal performance records is needed to examine more systematically how disciplinary records interact with technical performance, athlete development, and national team selection decisions. Overall, the case demonstrates the need for an integrated youth football development framework in which athletic excellence and ethical, disciplined, and professional behaviour are developed simultaneously. Such an approach can support the formation of young footballers who are not only competitive on the field but also capable of meeting the behavioural and professional expectations associated with representing Indonesia at the national level.

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