

A Document Analysis of VAR Implementation and Referee Decision-Making in Malaysian Professional Football

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ABSTRACT

Football is one of the most widely followed sports in the world, and decisions made by referees directly influence match results, perceptions of fairness, and the credibility of officiating. The Video Assistant Referee (VAR) system was introduced to improve decision-making accuracy and fairness by assisting referees in cases of clear and obvious errors. However, despite its implementation in Malaysian professional football, concerns persist regarding the consistency of decisions, referee authority, and the effectiveness of VAR procedures. This study aims to examine VAR implementation in Malaysian professional football by analysing official documents, including match reports, VAR records, regulations, and governing guidelines. The analysis focuses exclusively on secondary data sources, including official match reports, VAR review records, regulatory documents, and officiating guidelines related to VAR implementation in Malaysian professional football. This study employs document analysis as the primary research instrument. The instruments consist of a structured document analysis checklist and coding framework developed to systematically examine VAR implementation and referee decision-making in Malaysian professional football. Official match reports issued by the Malaysian Football League (MFL) for the 2024/25 and 2025/26 Malaysia League seasons, which typically range from 2 to 5 pages per match and provide formal records of match incidents, disciplinary actions, and referee decisions. In addition, VAR review records and post-match referee assessment reports produced by the Football Association of Malaysia (FAM) were examined to evaluate decision outcomes, review processes, and referee performance feedback. Data analysis in this study involves a systematic review of selected documents related to VAR implementation and referee decision-making in Malaysian professional football. Official match reports, VAR records, referee assessment reports, and competition regulations are analysed using a structured document analysis checklist and coding framework based on the Laws of the Game and VAR protocol. VAR incidents are coded by incident type, review procedure, nature of the decision, and final outcome, enabling the identification of patterns and the evaluation of decision consistency and procedural alignment. *Keywords:* Video Assistant Referee (VAR), decision making, Laws of the Game

How to Cite

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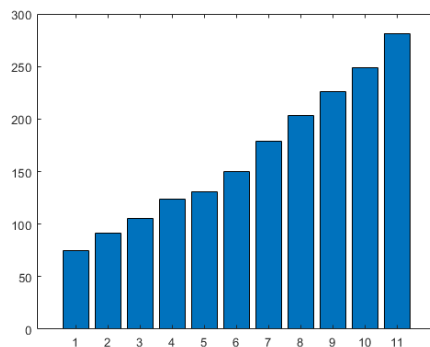


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FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

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CONCLUSION

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in the paper.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT

Author's name 1- contribution

Author's name 2- contribution

Author's name 3- contribution

Author's name 4- contribution

Example

Author 1 contributed to the conceptualization, research design, and writing of the original draft.
Author 2 was responsible for data collection, analysis, and validation of the results.
Author 3 provided supervision, critical review, and editing of the final manuscript.
All authors have read and approved the final version of the manuscript.

ETHICS STATEMENT

This research was conducted in accordance with the ethical standards of [Name of Institution] and adhered to the principles outlined in the Declaration of Helsinki. Ethical approval was obtained from the [Institutional Ethics Committee/Review Board] under reference number [Approval Number, if applicable]. All participants were informed about the purpose of the study and provided written informed consent prior to participation. Participants' privacy and confidentiality were strictly maintained, and data collected were used solely for academic purposes.

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