



A decade of violence and empty stadiums in Egypt: When does emotion from the terraces affect behaviour on the pitch?

By [Carl Singleton](#), [J. James Reade](#), and Dominik Schreyer

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Department of Economics, University of Reading, Whiteknights, Reading, RG6 6EL, UK

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Non-Technical Summary

- In less than a decade, the Egyptian Premier League has experienced three distinct changes between periods of competition in either crowded or empty stadiums.
- We exploit this unique sequence of natural experiments, to answer two questions neglected by the still emerging literature on the effects of social pressure on behaviour and decision-making.
- First, does reinstating a supportive crowd after a long period of absence affect performances on the pitch?
- Second, is any reduced home advantage from competing in empty stadiums robust to repeating such an experiment?
- We find that eliminating social pressure from crowds decreased or even reversed home advantage after an incident of extreme crowd violence in 2012, but there were no significant effects when crowds were reinstated in 2018 and once more excluded in 2020.
- These results suggest that not all home crowds benefit the home team.
- Our findings add to the discussion of whether home advantage in football and other professional sports was eroded during COVID-19.
- While most previous studies have documented an often-substantial decline in home advantage after March 2020 across numerous European football competitions, the reported effect sizes tend to vary significantly.
- Our findings point to an explanation for some of the observed differences in the effects of empty stadiums - the potential for substantial variance in crowd composition, not only across leagues but also over time within leagues.

You can read the full paper [here](#).