

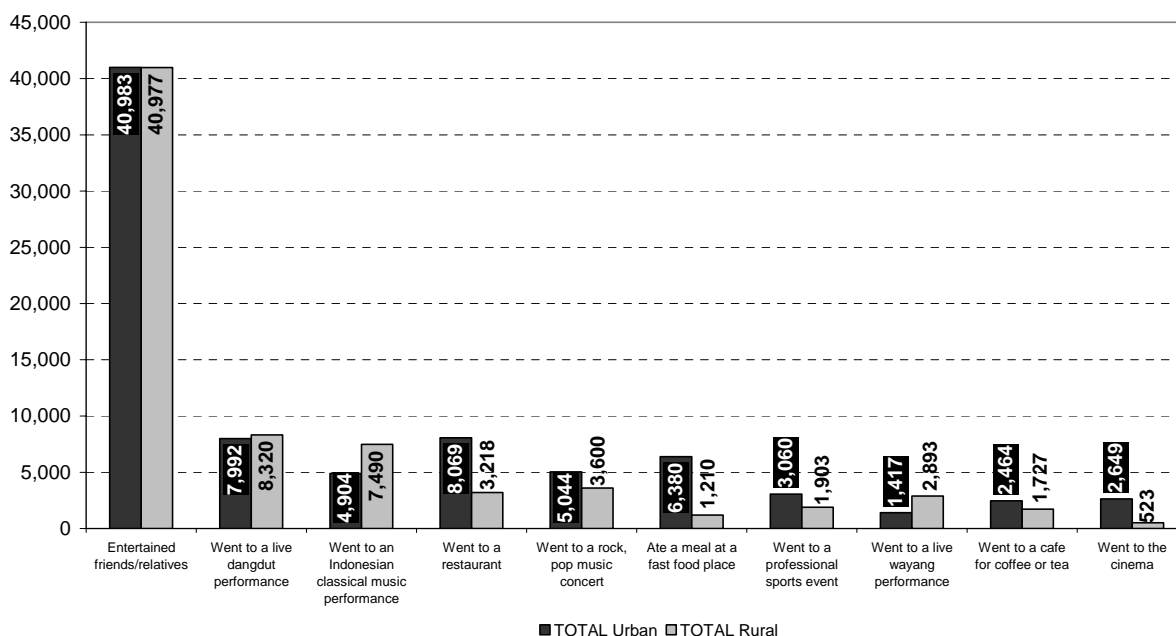
## Nation looks to simple pleasures, as should marketers

As we saw in last week's update, more Indonesians are spending more time doing more things at home. What is everybody doing for entertainment, other than watching TV, shopping or pursuing their hobbies at home? Urban or rural, old or young, man or woman, over 80 million people like entertaining their friends and relatives at home more than anything else. Food and music follow, at a distance. Every other pastime outside the home pales in comparison. That's probably the lingering effect from a year of counting the pennies, ever since the second fuel price hike in 2005.

These observations are based on Roy Morgan Single Source, Indonesia's largest syndicated survey now expanding to include over 27,000 respondents annually, projected to reflect 90% of the population over the age of 14. Being welcomed to a cosy meal at home by my Indonesian friends has always been a special treat. The conversations have been enriching, exchanging views and learning of each other's way of life, sharing concerns and joys. That's in sharp contrast with the idle banter at Jakarta's party circuits with hordes of people, hobnobbing. But that's just a personal observation.

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**Top 10 Entertainment Activities in Last 3 Months  
(Number of people in thousand)**

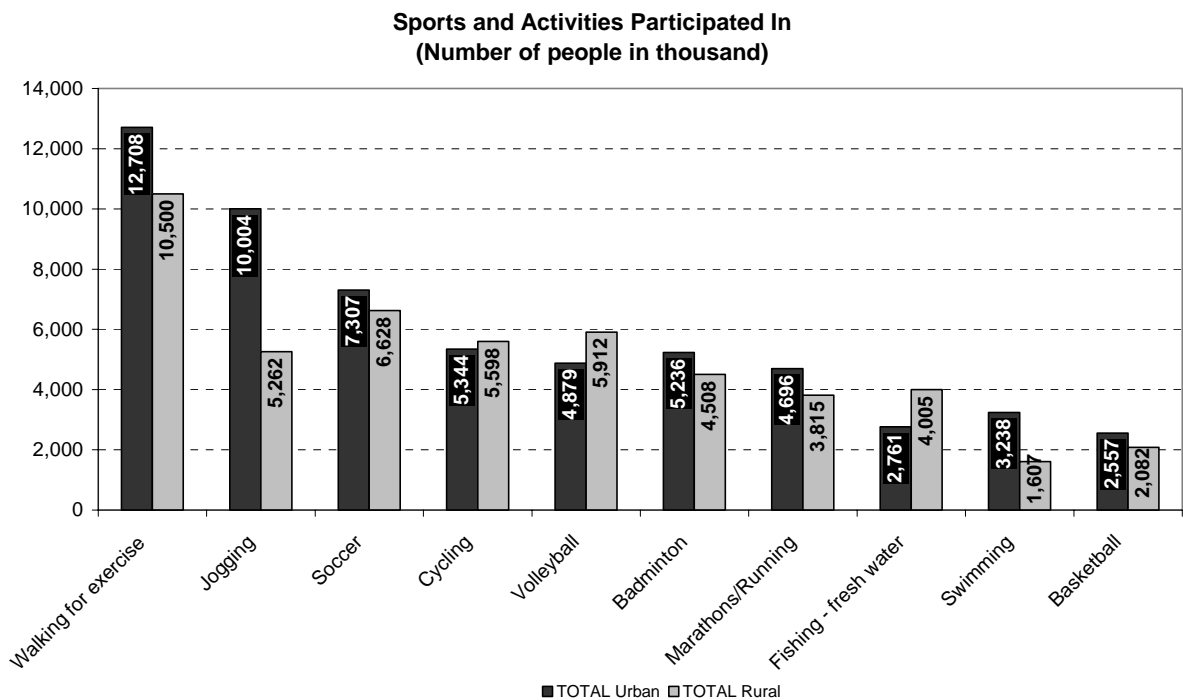


Marketers eager to understand preferences and habits, entrepreneurs in the entertainment arena, restaurateurs and budding franchisors would be happy to know that Music is alive and well, in many of its forms. *Dangdut* (Indonesian pop) reigns supreme, in the city and the village. Inul's rise from humble beginning to national icon is easy to understand, her influence deep and wide. That traditional Indonesian music is appreciated by 7.5 million rural folk, will come as a pleasant surprise to many. Another 5 million aficionados of the gamelan and the flute are keeping ancient traditions alive even in the cities of Indonesia. Over 4 million have been to a live *wayang* (puppet) show,

keeping that cultural tradition alive, with three out of four fans hailing from the villages. Almost another 9 million people went to a live concert of pop or rock music in the last three months, with a predictably younger profile of enthusiasts. Less than two million people went to nightclub or disco during the same period, some often, some not.

Eating out is also popular, witness the mushrooming of restaurants and cafes across urban Indonesia. Without including the working meal at a *warung*, over 11 million have been to a *restaurant* recently, two out of three of patrons being residents of cities and towns. Many of them are among the 7 million who visited a fast-food restaurant and the 4 million who visited a café for a coffee or tea during the same period. The number of people who fill the bars and pubs around the country usually hovers at just above a million people, many of them regular visitors in all likelihood. Visits to the movies had hit a plateau for some time but recently the big screen is losing even more ground, despite of the increase of “Made in Indonesia” film.

There’s more to living the good life than just eating, drinking, listening to music and enjoying the company of friends. What do Indonesians do way of sports and leisure?



One out of seven people appear to be walking regularly, for exercise, making it the nation’s No 1. There are over 15 million joggers, almost 14 million soccer players, over 10 million cyclists. Are marketers and agencies working these opportunities to the common gain of brand, consumer and country? Judging by the conversations I often have with self-proclaimed pundits who actually live in ignorant bliss, these opportunities are both under-estimated and under-valued. This is equally true of media owners who fail to appreciate the damage they are doing to the social fabric of Indonesia by blindly promoting a culture of meaningless glitz to the minority, almost to the exception of anything that’s mentally stimulating. Television content promoting shallow values endlessly triggers the rejection of the pseudo-culture it represents, by the growing numbers of conservatives across the country.

If the marketing and media fraternities, hand in hand, continue to view Indonesia through the narrow prism of the Top 10 cities, they will be contributing to the social divide, not the social development of Indonesia as a whole. After all, those cities are home to less than 20 per cent of the population. If not for their country but for their wallets, they would be serving their shareholders better by simply getting their facts right, to begin with.

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