



Taraftar kulüp imaj algılarının ve taraftar grubu üyelik statülerinin spor tüketim davranışlarına etkisinin incelenmesi

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Özet

Bu araştırma, Ankaragücü ve Gençlerbirliği taraftarlarının kulüp imajı algılarının ve taraftar grubuna üye olma durumunun spor tüketicisi davranışlarını nasıl etkilediğinin incelenmesi amacıyla gerçekleştirilmiştir. Nicel olan bu çalışmada, genel amaçla tutarlı olarak ilişkisel tarama modeli kullanılmıştır. Araştırmanın çalışma grubunu, 122 Ankaragücü ve 71 Gençlerbirliği taraftarı olmak üzere 193 katılımcı oluşturmaktadır. Örneklem yöntemi olarak olasılığa dayalı olmayan örneklem yaklaşımlarından kolayda örneklem kullanılmıştır. Ayrıca veri toplama aracı olarak üç bölümden oluşan bir anket formu kullanılmıştır. Anket formunun birinci bölümü “Kişisel Bilgi Formu”ndan, ikinci bölümü “Spor Tüketim Davranışları Ölçeği”nden ve üçüncü bölümü “Kulüp İmaj Ölçeği”nden oluşmaktadır. İstatistiksel değerlendirme için regresyon analizi kullanılmıştır. Bulgular, bir taraftar grubunun parçası olmanın spor tüketim davranışı bileşenlerinden olan “katılım niyeti” ve “medya tüketim niyeti” üzerinde pozitif yönde anlamlı etkilere sahip olduğunu, ancak “lisanslı ürünleri tüketim niyeti” üzerinde anlamlı bir etkiye sahip olmadığını ortaya koymuştur. Ayrıca bu araştırma, kulüp imajının spor tüketim davranışları üzerinde anlamlı bir etkiye sahip olmadığını ortaya koymuştur. Sonuç olarak taraftar grubuna üye olmanın hem maçlara gitme niyetini hem de medya tüketim niyetini olumlu yönde etkilediği söylenebilmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Futbol, tüketici davranışı, imaj

Investigation of the effects of fans' club image perceptions and fan group membership status on sports consumption behaviors

Abstract

This research was carried out to examine how Ankaragücü and Gençlerbirliği fans' perceptions of club image and being a member of a fan group affect their sports consumer behavior. This quantitative investigation employed the correlational research model in accordance with the general purpose of the research. The study group of the research consists of 193 participants, 122 of which are Ankaragücü fans and 71 Gençlerbirliği fans. Convenience sampling, one of the non-probabilistic sampling methods, was used as a sampling method. Further, a scale form that comprised three parts was used as the data collection tool. The first part of the scale form was the “Personal Information Form,” the second part comprised the “Sports Consumption Behaviors Scale,” and the third part involved the “Club Image Scale.” A regression analysis was used for a statistical evaluation. The results established that being part of a fans' group have significant positive effects on the “intention to attend matches” and “media consumption intention” as well as on components of sports consumption behaviour but did not have a significant effect on the “intention to consume licensed products.” In addition, the present study found that club image did not have a significant effect on sports consumption behaviors. It can be said that being a member of a fan group influences on both the intention to attend the matches and the media consumption intention.

Keywords: Football, consumer behavior, image

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Genişletilmiş Türkçe Özet, makalenin sonunda yer almaktadır

INTRODUCTION

Sports and sports-related activities have a prominent place in people's lives. Currently, it has become relatively difficult to come across a person who is not somewhat interested in sports. However, this interest is not sufficient for institutions and businesses in the sports sector to maintain their existence and development. The improvement and effective management of such interest is essential for sports organizations to maintain their competitive advantages (Kiremitçi et al., 2014). Moreover, football teams are at the centre of fans' interest in sports (Silva, 2020; Koronios et al., 2016), and fan interest constitutes the basis for their consumption habits (Kim & Trail, 2011). The creation and development of consumption communities of sports fans is a strategy that can be employed by sports organizations to interact with consumers (Hedlund, 2014). Consumer behavior can be defined as the process that individuals, groups, or organizations use to select, secure, use, and dispose of products, services, experiences, or ideas to meet their needs. (Hawkins et al., 2004). Consumer behavior is an issue that needs to be dwelled on and explored in the field of sports, as in every other field.

Behaviors related to sports consumption can be segregated into three categories: participation, media consumption, and the consumption of licensed products. It is important for each sports team to create a fan base that purchases licensed products or services and is willing to attend matches (Yoshida et al., 2015). Going to matches is by far one of the most popular activities among fans around the world (Silva, 2020). However, sports consumers have different characteristics. Some consumers are loyal supporters of a team and go to all the matches of their team, whereas others may have a less pronounced interest (Enginkaya, 2014). The attendance of fans at matches is a considerably important source of income for every sports team. However, another cash-making component for football clubs is media consumption.

Media consumption is a basic element of sports consumption behavior; watching matches on the television, the internet, or other media platforms and getting information about a team or player are considered forms of sports media consumption behavior (Eddy et al., 2016; Kim et al., 2019; Wheaton & Thorpe 2019; Chiua & Won, 2022). In modern society, the consumption of sports media has become more common owing to rapidly advancing information technologies (Chiua & Won, 2022), and watching matches on different media platforms is becoming more accessible to sports fans around the world (Rowe & Gilmour 2010; Chiua & Won, 2022). More consumption by the fans through various media communication platforms entails more profits for clubs or businesses. In addition, apart from media consumption, another vital source of income for clubs is the consumption of licensed products.

Licensed products, which have a significant share in the budgets of sports organizations, are appealing to clubs and sports organizations because they promote brand awareness (Carenys & Sales, 2012; Kiremitçi et al., 2014). The importance of licensed products is based on the emotional relationship that exists between sports organizations and fans. These products allow sports consumers to identify themselves as supporters of a particular team or player, cultivate feelings of pride and loyalty, carry reminders of unique experiences and valuable relationships, and/or make a fashion statement (Mullin et al. 2007; Apostolopoulou et al. 2012). From this perspective, licensed products constitute a valuable source of income for sports teams across the world (Apostolopoulou & Papadimitriou, 2018). Moreover, the sustainability of the existence of sports organizations in a competitive sports industry is closely related to the willingness of fans to attend matches, consume sport-related media content, and purchase licensed products (Kiremitçi et al., 2014). In this respect, the consumption trends of football fans, who are a large consumer group in the sports industry, are important for football clubs and businesses that produce sports products (Yurtsızoğlu & Gül, 2022). Both supporters' groups and the image of a club play a key role in the maintenance and cultivation of the bond between sports clubs and their fans.

The concept of image has an important effect on consumer behavior as well as in terms of attracting consumers. For this reason, this concept is seen as a marketing and management strategy for businesses (Flavia'n et al., 2005; Sönmezoğlu et al., 2016). Sports clubs have recently been acting more like businesses. Thus, it is important for sports clubs to build a formidable image of the team for their stakeholders, their sponsors, their members, or the entire public (Kargün et al., 2017; Altın et al., 2020). Team image comprises all the brand associations in the mind of the consumer (Keller, 1993; Gladden & Funk, 2001; Ross et al., 2006; Yun et al., 2021), such as product-related (e.g., the coach, achievements, and star players) and non-product-related attributes (e.g., the logo and colors, club history and tradition, and modern stadium) (Parganas et al., 2017; ShuvAmi et al., 2018).

Team image is built upon the concept of brand image (Bauer et al., 2008; Jian & Li, 2011; Chien Chen et al., 2017), which is, conversely, an aspect of brand value (Beccarini & Ferrand, 2006). Brand image is defined as the sum of logical or emotional perceptions that consumers attribute to certain brands (Dobni & Zinkhan, 1990 as cited: Arai et al., 2014) and constitutes a consumer's perception of a particular brand as reflected by the brand associations that are held in the memory of the consumer (Keller, 1993; Arai et al., 2014). Brand image can affect customer satisfaction and contribute to brand loyalty as consumers tend to select brands with a

strong and positive brand image as their primary choice during their decision-making processes (Da Silva & Alwi, 2008; Richard & Zhang, 2012; Yun et al., 2021).

A survey of the existing literature reveals that no research has investigated the effects of club image and being a member of a supporters' group on sports consumption behaviors. Thus, this is where the strength of the present study lies. This study will provide directions for future research in this field and make significant contributions to the current body of literature. Specifically, the aim of the study is to investigate the effect of the club perceptions of the supporters of Ankaragücü and Gençlerbirliği, two of the oldest clubs in Ankara, Turkey, and of being a member of a supporters' group on sports consumption behaviors. In this context, an answer to the following basic problem has been sought.

Do the fans' perceptions of the club image and their membership in the fan group influence their sports consumption behavior?

Literature review

Beccarini and Ferrand (2006) found that a relationship between club image, the willingness of fans to attend matches, season ticket sales, and the satisfaction levels of the fans. Their results indicate that both club image and team motivation lead to higher satisfaction among fans holding season tickets. Further, Polat et al. (2019) studied fans' perception of clubs, team loyalty, and the degree to which the fans identified with their teams. The aforementioned authors concluded that fans going to the matches had higher levels of behavioral loyalty and attitudinal loyalty, had more positive perceptions of their clubs, and identified more with their teams. In addition, Bauer et al. (2008) argued that brand image was better served if fans identified more with their teams. In another study, Yun, Rosenberger, and Sweeney (2020) found that brand image affected fan satisfaction and had a direct impact on attitudinal and behavioral loyalty. Moreover, among the findings of a study conducted by Altın et al. (2020) was the fact that an improved club image translated into increased loyalty, leading fans to identify more with the club, which, in turn, reflected positively on their purchase intentions. Phua (2010) investigated and concluded that media consumption had a significant impact on self-esteem and fan identity. In addition, Kim and Mao (2021) stated that many studies indicate that emotional ups and downs depend on the outcome of the matches of their favorite teams. Koronios et al. (2020) revealed that internal and external motivations such as team commitment, success, social, drama, role model and promotion have a significant effect on the consumption intentions of the participants.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Research model

In this quantitative study, a correlational research model, which is consistent with the general purpose of the study, was used. In addition, the study adopted a multi-factor and predictive correlational design. Specifically, three research models were designed, which are illustrated as follows (Figure 1).

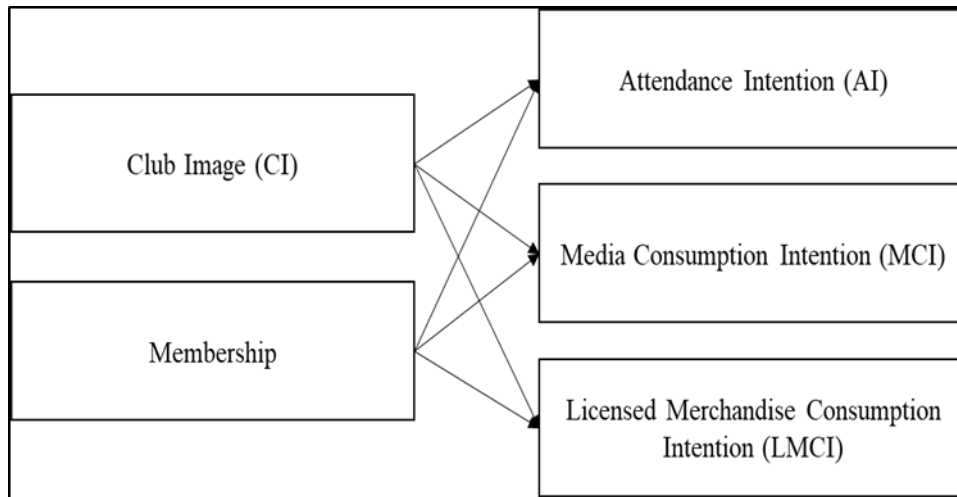


Figure 1. Research Models

As can be inferred from the research models, club image and being a member of a supporters' group comprised the explanatory variables of the models; the intention to attend matches, the media consumption intention, and the licensed product consumption intention were the explained variables of the models. In this context, a dummy variable was created for being part of a supporters' group. In the dummy variable of these models, not being part of a supporters' group was the reference variable.

Participants

The sample comprised 193 participants, 122 of whom were supporters of the Ankaragücü Club, while the remaining 71 supported the Gençlerbirliği Club. The convenience sampling method, which is a non-probabilistic sampling approach, was used to select the participants, all of whom were voluntary fans.

Procedure

Questions in the scale form were prepared in accordance with the research objectives and put to the participants in the sample online. During the utilization of the data collection tools, the necessary explanations were given to the participants, and it was ensured that the participants answered the questions in the scale form correctly. The scale form consisted of

three parts: the “Personal Information Form,” the “Sports Consumption Behaviors Scale,” and the “Club Image Scale.”

Personal information form

The Personal Information Form had questions that were designed to elicit information about the participants’ sex, age, education level, perceived personal income level, the club that they supported, and whether they were part of a supporters’ group.

Sports consumption behaviors scale

To measure the sports consumption behaviors of the participants, the Sports Consumption Behaviors Scale, which was developed by Kim and Trail (2011) and localized by Kiremitçi et al. (2014), was used. Data on the location process were acquired from 694 spectators of three different professional football teams. The five-point Likert scale consists of nine items. Furthermore, the scale has three subsets, namely, the intention to attend matches, media consumption intention, and licensed product consumption intention. The internal consistency coefficients (Cronbach’s alpha) of the localized scale showed that the subsets “intention to attend matches” ($\alpha = 0.81$), media consumption intention ($\alpha = 0.80$), and licensed product consumption intention ($\alpha = 0.87$) were relatively reliable (Kiremitci et al., 2014)

Club image scale

The Club Image Scale, which was developed by Jung (2012) to evaluate football fans’ perceptions of clubs, was localized, and translated into Turkish by Sönmezoğlu et al. (2016). The data regarding the localization process were obtained from 250 spectators of a sports club competing in the Beko Basketball League. This one-dimensional, seven-point Likert scale consists of six items. The internal consistency coefficient (Cronbach’s alpha) of the localized scale was 0.84 (Sönmezoğlu et al., 2016).

Statistical analysis

IBM SPSS 23.0 and AMOS version 15.0 were used for the analysis of the data. By examining the skewness and kurtosis values, whether the data exhibited a normal distribution or not was determined. For the generated raw data in the form of scales that were transferred to the software, the frequency, percentage, average, standard deviation, etc., were calculated by taking the data type into consideration; these calculations were then put into a tabular format. Subsequently, the validity and reliability of the scales that were related to the data obtained were examined with a regression analysis, which was employed for a statistical evaluation.

RESULTS

Table 1. Frequency and percentages of variables

Variable	Group	f	%
Club	Ankaragücü	122	63.2
	Gençlerbirliği	71	36.8
Gender	Female	7	3.6
	Male	186	96.4
Level of Education	Primary education	2	1.0
	High school	55	28.5
	University	136	70.5
Perceived Level of Personal Income	Low	32	16.6
	Middle	137	71.0
	High	24	12.4
Membership in a Supporters' Group	Yes	70	36.3
	No	123	63.7
Total		193	100.0

According to Table 1, most of the fans were supporters of Ankaragücü, were male, were university graduates, and had a medium level of personal income. In addition, fans who were not part of a supporters' group were approximately 1.75 times more common than those who were.

Table 2. Descriptive statistics of the age variable

Variable	N	Mean	Median	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Age	193	33.238	32.000	11.02	16.0	68.0

Table 2 shows that the mean age variable of the participants was 33.238 and that the standard deviation was 11.02. Moreover, the minimum age of respondents was 16, while the maximum was 68. This evinces that the present research findings originate from a large cross-section of the population. Together, Tables 1 and 2 indicate that the research sample was heterogeneous and differed from the respondents involved in the localization of the scales. Thus, a reevaluation of the validity and reliability of the research scales for these participants was performed.

The factor structure of the Sports Consumption Behaviors Scale, which consists of three subsets and nine items, was tested using the AMOS 15 program. Accordingly, the covariance matrix was created by using the maximum likelihood calculation method because the data collected from the 193 participants were accepted as being normally distributed.

The model comprising three subsets and nine items was subjected to a CFA, and the fit indices obtained were examined. The goodness-of-fit values that were obtained from the CFA ($\chi^2(24, N=193) = 51.033$; $p < 0.05$; $\chi^2/sd = 2.126$; $RMSEA = 0.077$; $CFI = 0.968$; $GFI = 0.948$) indicated that the suggested three-factor model was compatible with the data and thus highly

acceptable. Therefore, because the goodness fit indices were within the appropriate range, no modification was required. In addition, the standardized coefficients, which provide information about the relationships between the factor and the item, ranged from 0.321 to 0.987, all of which were significant at the 0.01 level. These results show that the data that were obtained from the present investigation are compatible with the predicted theoretical structure (three-factor model) of the Sports Consumption Behaviors Scale. In addition, the reliability of the scale was examined using the internal consistency method. The internal consistency coefficient (Cronbach's alpha) was 0.691 for the "intention to attend matches" subset, 0.729 for the "media consumption intention" subset, and 0.903 for the "licensed product consumption intention" subset. This indicates that the Sports Consumption Behaviors Scale is a reliable measurement tool.

The factor structure of the Club Image Scale, which consists of one subset and six items, was tested using the AMOS 15 program. Accordingly, the covariance matrix was created by using the maximum likelihood calculation method because the data that were collected from the 193 participants were accepted as being normally distributed.

The model consisting of one subset and six items was subjected to a CFA, and the fit indices obtained were examined. Because the goodness fit indices that were obtained were not in an appropriate value range, the proposed modification indices were examined, and the error covariance between "CI5 and CI6" was released. Following the modification, the program was run again, and the data were reanalyzed. The goodness-of-fit values obtained from the CFA ($\chi^2(8, N= 193) = 8.160; p > 0.05; \chi^2/sd = 1.020; RMSEA = 0.010; CFI = 1.000; GFI = 0.987$) showed that the suggested one-factor model was perfectly compatible with the data. In addition, the standardized coefficients, which give information about the relationships between the factor and the item, ranged from 0.426 to 0.774, and all of them were significant at the 0.01 level. These results show that the data that were obtained from the study agree with the predicted theoretical structure of the Club Image Scale (single factor model). In addition, the reliability of the scale was examined using the internal consistency method. The internal consistency coefficient (Cronbach's alpha) was 0.849, which indicates that the Club Image Scale is a reliable measurement tool.

As Table 3 shows, the mean score of the subset "intention to attend matches" in the context of the sports consumption behavior scale was 4.58, and the standard deviation was 0.51; the mean score of the subset "media consumption intention" was 4.30, while the standard

deviation was 0.81; and the mean score of the subset “licensed product consumption intention” was 4.59, and the standard deviation was 0.61. In the context of the Club Image Scale, the mean score was 4.54; the standard deviation is 1.36. Furthermore, an analysis of the skewness and kurtosis values of the data set showed that the data set exhibited a normal distribution (see Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013).

Table 3. Descriptive statistics on scales

Dimension	N	Mean	Median	s.d.	Minimum	Maximum	Skewness	Kurtosis
Attendance Intention (AI)	193	4.58	4.66	0.51	2.67	5.00	-1.067	0.317
Media Consumption Intention (MCI)	193	4.30	4.66	0.81	1.33	5.00	-1.265	1.093
Licensed Merchandise Consumption Intention (LMCI)	193	4.59	5.00	0.61	2.67	5.00	-1.506	1.257
Club Image (CI)	193	4.54	4.50	1.36	1.00	7.00	-0.057	-0.533

As Table 3 shows, the mean score of the subset “intention to attend matches” in the context of the sports consumption behavior scale was 4.5838, and the standard deviation was 0.51; the mean score of the subset “media consumption intention” was 4.30, while the standard deviation was 0.81; and the mean score of the subset “licensed product consumption intention” was 4.59, and the standard deviation was 0.61. In the context of the Club Image Scale, the mean score was 4.54; the standard deviation is 1.36. Furthermore, an analysis of the skewness and kurtosis values of the data set showed that the data set exhibited a normal distribution (see Tabachnick and Fidell, 2013).

Table 4. Correlation analysis results between club image and membership in a fan club

Variable	CI	
Membership	r	0.010
	p	0.890
	N	193

Moreover, as Table 4 shows, there was no statistically significant relationship between membership in a fan group and the club image ($p = 0.890$, $p > 0.05$), the explanatory variables of the research models. This provides information regarding the absence of multicollinearity problem in the model.

Table 5. Multiple linear regression analysis results on the effects of club image and membership variables on the intention to attend matches

Predictors	B	Std. Error	Beta (β)	t	p	Zero-order r	partial r
Constant	4,384	.131	-	33,527	0.000	-	-
CI	0.031	.027	0.083	1,162	0.247	0.085	0.084
Membership	0.159	.076	0.149	2,084	0.039	0.150	0.149
R = 0.171		R ² = 0.029					
F ₍₂₋₁₉₀₎ = 2,870		p = 0.059					
Dependent Variable: AI							

As Table 5 indicates, the multiple linear regression analysis, which was carried out to determine how the club image and membership variables—thought to have an effect on the intention to attend matches—predict the intention to attend matches, club image, and membership variables together, did not evince a statistically significant relationship between the club image and membership variables ($R = 0.171$; $R^2 = 0.029$) with the intention to attend matches ($F_{(2-190)} = 2.870$; $p = 0.059$ ($p > 0.05$)). According to the standardized regression coefficients, the relative impact of the predictor variables on the intention to attend matches is led by membership ($\beta = 0.149$), followed by club image ($\beta = 0.083$).

Given the significance tests of the regression coefficients of the predictor variables, membership ($t = 2.084$; $p < 0.05$) is a statistically significant predictor of the intention to attend matches, while club image ($t = 1.162$; $p > 0.05$) is a statistically insignificant variable. On this basis, it can be inferred that individuals who are members of a supporters' group have higher intentions to participate than those who are not. When the relationship between membership in a fan club and the intention to attend matches is examined and the effect of the other explanatory variable is analyzed, it is evident that there is a low level of a statistically significant relationship in a positive direction ($r = 0.149$).

Table 6. Multiple linear regression analysis results on the effects of club image and membership variables on media consumption intention

Predictors	B	Std. Error	Beta (β)	t	p	Zero-order r	partial r
Constant	3,942	0.207	-	19,052	0.000	-	-
CI	0.055	0.043	0.092	1,291	0.198	0.094	0.093
Membership	0.296	0.121	0.175	2,454	0.015	0.175	0.175
R = 0.198		R ² = 0.039					
F ₍₂₋₁₉₀₎ = 3.876		p = 0.022					
Dependent Variable: MCI							

As per Table 6, in accordance with the multiple linear regression analysis carried out to determine how the club image and membership variables—thought to have an effect on media consumption intention—predict media consumption intention, the club image and membership variables together exhibit a statistically significant relationship ($R = 0.198$; $R^2 = 0.039$) with

media consumption intention ($F_{(2-190)} = 3.876$; $p = 0.022$ ($p < 0.05$)). According to the standardized regression coefficients, the relative impact of the predictor variables on the media consumption intention is led by membership ($\beta = 0.175$) and then club image ($\beta = 0.092$). Considering the significance tests of the regression coefficients of the predictor variables, membership ($t = 2.454$; $p < 0.05$) is a statistically significant predictor of the media consumption intention, whereas club image ($t = 1.291$; $p > 0.05$) is a statistically insignificant variable. Thus, it can be inferred that those who are members of a supporters' group have higher media consumption intentions than those who are not. When the relationship between membership in a fan club and media consumption intention is examined and the effect of the other explanatory variable is analyzed, it can be seen that there is a low level of a statistically significant relationship in a positive direction ($r = 0.175$).

Table 7. Multiple linear regression analysis results on the effects of club image and membership status variables on licensed product consumption intention

Predictors	B	Std. Error	Beta (β)	t	p	Zero-order r	partial r
Constant	4,286	0.157	-	27,225	0.000	-	-
CI	0.057	0.033	0.125	1,752	0.081	0.126	0.126
Membership	0.144	0.092	0.112	1,568	0.119	0.113	0.113
R = 0.169		R ² = 0.029					
F ₍₂₋₁₉₀₎ = 2.792		p = 0.064					
Dependent Variable: LMCI							

Finally, as Table 7 shows, as per the multiple linear regression analysis carried out to determine how the club image and membership variables—thought to have an effect on licensed product consumption intention—predict licensed product consumption intention, the club image and membership variables together do not exhibit a statistically significant relationship ($R = 0.169$; $R^2 = 0.029$) with licensed product consumption intention ($F_{(2-190)} = 2.792$; $p = 0.064$ ($p > 0.05$)). According to the standardized regression coefficients, the relative impact of the predictor variables on the licensed product consumption intention is led by membership ($\beta = 0.125$) and followed by club image ($\beta = 0.112$). Given the significance tests of the regression coefficients of the predictor variables, membership ($t = 1.568$; $p > 0.05$) and club image ($t = 1.568$; $p > 0.05$) are explanatory variables that are not statistically significant.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Sports consumer behavior research primarily focuses on understanding and retaining existing consumers as opposed to acquiring new consumers as the intended goal of marketing, advertising, and promotional efforts (Mullin et al., 2007; Hedlund, 2014). This is because maintaining the loyalty of existing consumers is less costly than acquiring new consumers. One method to build consumer or fan loyalty for sports teams is to bring more members into the fan

club. When consumers are members of their team's fan club, this might have an impact on their consumption intentions. The current study found that sports consumers' membership in a fan club influences their willingness to attend matches as well as on their media consumption intentions.

According to the research findings, it has been determined that the effect of club image on sports consumption behaviors is statistically insignificant. However, Beccarini and Ferrand (2006) found that the perception of club image has a positive effect on season ticket sales and satisfaction; thus, it can be concluded that club image might have an impact on the willingness of fans to buy season tickets and attend matches. In other words, it can be said that fans who buy season tickets are more likely to attend matches. Altın et al. (2020) concluded that club image influences purchasing intention and also stated that if the image of the club is improved, this might translate into greater loyalty on the side of the fans. Fans with a high sense of loyalty are expected to be members of clubs' fan groups. Lenneis and Pfister (2015) stated that being a football fan means not only being interested in football but also spending time, energy, and money to support a football club. In addition, fans who belong to official and unofficial groups emphasized that they share their love of football, their loyalty to their clubs, and a remarkable consumption of their teams' merchandise. Therefore, in this context, it can be argued that supporters who are members of a fan group feel a deeper sense of loyalty and are thus more likely to purchase their team's merchandise.

As mentioned earlier, sports media consumption is an important sports consumer behavior. The media consumption of sports consumers has important implications for the financial success of a sports organization (Meek, 1997; Chiua & Won, 2022). Unsurprisingly, many researchers have thus shown an increasing interest in the media consumption behavior of sports fans (Chiua & Won, 2022). Media consumption behavior may cause sports consumers to become more deeply attached to a team (Mullin et al., 2007), which ultimately determines fan loyalty (Wu et al., 2012; Chiua & Won, 2022). Fans may wish to reinforce these feelings of loyalty by being a member of a particular fan group. From this perspective, it can be concluded that being a member of a fan group is an important variable for the media consumption intention. Moreover, it can be said that being a member of a fan group has an effect on both the intention to attend matches and the media consumption intention.

Future research and implications

To conclude, the present study found new data that will contribute to the existing literature. This study emphasized that being a member of a fan group has a positive effect on the intention to attend matches as well on as the media consumption intention- both being sports consumption behaviors. Therefore, it is recommended that clubs mentioned herein increase their fan base to make more supporters attend matches and thus bolster media consumption intentions. In this context, more importance should be given to efforts to create more members for fan clubs. However, the results of the analysis in this research are based on a limited number of participants because of a limited access to the group under investigation. Thus, similar studies should be carried out in which the same model is examined using a larger data set, namely, by expanding the sample size and covering all age and gender groups. In addition, research results can be diversified by conducting mixed and experimental studies on study groups that share similar characteristics. This may help generate alternative outcomes that can prove beneficial for the current body of knowledge.

GENİŞLETİLMİŞ ÖZET

GİRİŞ

Sporun ve sporla ilgili etkinliklerin insanların yaşamlarında belirgin bir yeri bulunmaktadır. Günümüzde, spora ilgisi olmayan bir kişiye rastlamak neredeyse imkânsız hale gelmiştir. Ancak spor sektöründeki kurumların, işletmelerin varlıklarını ve gelişimlerini sürdürmeleri için bu ilgi yeterli değildir. Bu ilginin iyileştirilmesi ve etkin yönetimi, spor organizasyonlarının rekabet avantajlarını sürdürmeleri için gereklidir (Kiremitçi ve ark. 2014). Futbol takımları da taraftarların spora olan bu ilgisinin merkezindedir (Silva, 2020; Koronios ve ark., 2016). Tüketici davranışı, bireylerin, grupların veya kuruluşların, ihtiyaçlarını karşılamak için ürünleri, hizmetleri, deneyimleri veya fikirleri seçmek, güvenceye almak, kullanmak ve elden çıkarmak için kullandıkları süreç olarak tanımlanabilir (Hawkins ve ark., 2004).

İmaj kavramı tüketici davranışları üzerinde ve tüketiciyi cezbetme noktasında önemli bir etkiye sahiptir. Bu nedenle işletmeler için bu kavram bir pazarlama ve yönetim stratejisi olarak görülmektedir (Flavia'n ve ark., 2005; Sönmezoğlu ve ark., 2016). Özellikle son yıllarda, spor kulüpleri de bir işletme olarak hareket etmektedirler. Bu nedenle, spor kulüplerinin paydaşları, sponsorları, üyeleri veya tüm kamuoyu için etkili bir imaj oluşturabilmesi, kulüpler açısından önem arz etmektedir (Kargün ve ark., 2017; Altın ve ark., 2020).

YÖNTEM

Araştırmanın çalışma grubunu, 122 Ankaragücü Kulübü taraftarı ve 71 Gençlerbirliği Kulübü taraftarı olmak üzere toplam 193 kişi oluşturmaktadır. Çalışma grubu seçiminde amaçlı örnekleme

yaklaşımlarından kolay ulaşılabilir örnekleme yönteminden faydalanılmıştır. Çalışma grubunda yer alan taraftarlara araştırmanın amaçlarına uygun olarak hazırlanan ölçek formu gönüllülük esasıyla gözetilerek internet üzerinden uygulanmıştır. Ölçek formu üç bölümden oluşmaktadır. Ölçek formunun: birinci bölümünde “Kişisel Bilgi Formu”; ikinci bölümünde “Spor Tüketim Davranışları Ölçeği” ve üçüncü bölümünde ise “Kulüp İmajı Ölçeği” yer almaktadır.

BULGULAR

Üç boyut ve 9 maddeden oluşan model doğrulayıcı faktör analizine tabi tutularak elde edilen uyum indeksleri incelenmiştir. Doğrulayıcı faktör analizi elde edilen uyum iyiliği değerleri (χ^2 [24, n=193] = 51,033; $p < 0,05$; $\chi^2/sd=2,126$; RMSEA=0,077; CFI=0,968; GFI=0,948) önerilen üç faktörlü modelin veri ile uyumlu ve kabul edilebilir olduğunu göstermektedir. Bundan dolayı, elde edilen iyilik uyum indeksleri uygun değer aralığında bulunduğundan, herhangi bir modifikasyona ihtiyaç duyulmamıştır. Ayrıca ölçeğin güvenilirliği, iç tutarlık yöntemiyle incelenmiştir. Buna göre iç tutarlık katsayısı (Cronbach's Alpha), “katılım niyeti” alt boyutu için 0.691; “medya tüketim niyeti” alt boyutu için 0,729 ve “lisanslı ürün tüketim niyeti” alt boyutu için 0.903 olarak bulunmuştur. Bu durum, Spor Tüketim Davranışları Ölçeği'nin güvenilir bir ölçme aracı olduğu şeklinde yorumlanabilmektedir.

Tek boyut ve 6 maddeden oluşan Kulüp İmajı Ölçeği'nin faktör yapısı AMOS 15 (Analysis of Moment Structures) programı kullanılarak test edilmiştir. Bu doğrultuda 193 katılımcıdan toplanan verilerin normal dağıldığının kabul edilmesi nedeniyle Maximum Likelihood Hesaplama Yöntemi kullanılarak kovaryans matrisi oluşturulmuştur.

TARTIŞMA VE SONUÇ

Tüketicilerin destekledikleri takımın taraftar grubuna üye olmaları tüketim niyetleri üzerinde etkili olabilir. Bu çalışmada, spor tüketicilerinin taraftar grubuna üye olmaları, müsabakalara katılım niyeti ve medya tüketim niyeti üzerinde etkisinin olduğu sonucuna ulaşılmıştır.

Beccarini ve Ferrand (2006) tarafından yapılan çalışmada kulüp imajı algısının sezonluk kombine bilet satışı ve memnuniyet üzerinde olumlu etkisinin olduğu sonucuna ulaşılmıştır. Bu bulgu ile kulüp imajının, sezonluk bilet satın alarak müsabakalara katılım üzerinde etkili olabileceği sonucuna varılabilir. Başka bir ifadeyle, sezonluk bilet satın alan taraftarların müsabakalara katılım niyetinin yüksek olduğu söylenebilir. Altın ve ark. (2020) yaptıkları çalışmada kulüp imajının satın alma niyeti üzerinde etkisinin olduğu sonucuna ulaşmışlardır. Ayrıca kulüp imajının artırılması durumunda taraftarların sadakatlerinin artacağını ifade etmişlerdir. Sadakat duygusu yüksek olan taraftarların, kulüplerin taraftar gruplarına üye olması beklenmektedir. Lenneis ve Pfister, (2015), bir futbol taraftarı olmanın sadece futbolla ilgilenmek değil, aynı zamanda bir futbol kulübüne destek için zaman ayırmak, enerji ve para harcamak anlamına da geldiğini ifade etmişlerdir. Bunun yanında, resmi ve resmi olmayan gruplara aidiyeti olan taraftarlar futbol sevgisi, kulüplerine olan bağlılıkları ve dikkat çeken bir

taraftarlık tüketimini paylaştıklarını vurgulamışlardır. Bu bağlamda taraftar grubuna üye olmanın takıma karşı aidiyet hissederek tüketim niyetini arttırdığını söylenebilir.

Daha önce de belirtildiği gibi, spor medya tüketimi, önemli spor tüketici davranışlarından biridir. Spor tüketicilerinin medya tüketimi, bir spor organizasyonunun finansal başarısı için önemli etkilere sahiptir (Meek, 1997; Tice, 1998; Chiua & Won, 2020). Bu nedenle, birçok bilim insanının, spor taraftarlarının medya tüketim davranışlarına artan bir ilgi göstermesi şaşırtıcı değildir (Chiua & Won, 2020). Teads (2016) tarafından yapılan çalışmada, futbol taraftarlarının %60'ından fazlası düzenli olarak TV, tablet ve mobil cihazlar aracılığıyla müsabakaları canlı olarak izledikleri ifade edilmiştir. Maçları canlı izlemeyenler (veya izleyemeyenler) takımları veya maçları ile ilgili güncellemeleri ve haberleri TV haberleri, spor siteleri, sosyal medya, futbol siteleri ve gazete siteleri gibi çeşitli medya platformları üzerinden takip ettikleri vurgulanmıştır.

Medya tüketim davranışı, spor tüketicilerinin bir takıma daha derinden bağlanmasına neden olabilir (Mullin ve ark., 2007) ve bu durum nihayetinde taraftar sadakatinin belirleyicisidir (Wu ve ark., 2012; Chiua & Won, 2020). Taraftarlar belirli bir taraftar grubuna üye olarak bu sadakat duygularını pekiştirmek isteyebilirler. Buradan hareketle medya tüketim niyetinde taraftar grubuna üye olma durumunun önemli bir değişken olduğu sonucuna varılabilir. Sonuç olarak taraftar grubuna üye olmanın hem müsabakalara katılım niyeti üzerinde hem de medya tüketim niyeti üzerinde etkisinin olduğu söylenebilir.

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KATKI ORANI CONTRIBUTION RATE	AÇIKLAMA EXPLANATION	KATKIDA BULUNANLAR CONTRIBUTORS
Fikir ve Kavramsal Örgü <i>Idea or Notion</i>	Araştırma hipotezini veya fikrini oluşturmak <i>Form the research hypothesis or idea</i>	Sercan KURAL İsmail KARATAŞ
Tasarım <i>Design</i>	Yöntem ve araştırma desenini tasarlamak <i>To design the method and research design.</i>	Sercan KURAL İsmail KARATAŞ
Literatür Tarama <i>Literature Review</i>	Çalışma için gerekli literatürü taramak <i>Review the literature required for the study</i>	Sercan KURAL
Veri Toplama ve İşleme <i>Data Collecting and Processing</i>	Verileri toplamak, düzenlemek ve raporlaştırmak <i>Collecting, organizing and reporting data</i>	Sercan KURAL İsmail KARATAŞ
Tartışma ve Yorum <i>Discussion and Commentary</i>	Elde edilen bulguların Değerlendirilmesi <i>Evaluation of the obtained finding</i>	Sercan KURAL
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