

What A Football Spectator Wants: Male Perspective

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Abstract—Nowadays football game is subjected to open market norm and rules like any commercial sector in all over the world. The sport clubs which aren't have economic and executive arrangement can't transfer their assets to future in football world. In this context, knowing the motivation of the football spectators which are one of the key stakeholders of sport clubs is so important.

This study has been conducted among male university students (N=957) who are one of the shareholders of Eskişehirspor, which take part in Turkish Spor Toto Super League in 2014-2015 football season. The purpose of this study is to determine the factors which are affecting watching competitions in stadium atmosphere for young male football spectators. e-ticket (passolig) (26.9%), violence/security (22.9%), and stadium atmosphere (19.6%) are the most important three factors which are affecting participation in football competitions.

Keywords—Football industry, football spectator, passive sport participation

I. INTRODUCTION

INDUSTRIALIZATION of football's entertaining quality has turned football into a business line. With the effects of globalization, this qualitative change has resulted in emerging of a new concept that is called industrial football [1]. In this context, sports clubs have to know their shareholders' characteristics, requests and demands. The most important shareholders of the sports clubs are the spectators [2].

Spectators are consumers who derive their benefit from the observation of the event. The sport industry, as we know it, would not exist without spectators. Generally spectators observe the sporting event in two ways [3]:

- They attend the sport event (spectator) or
- they experience the sport event via one of several sports broadcast media (audience)

Encouraging participation in football competitions and ensuring this participation for the future is one of the important issues that modern football administrations concern. Factors affecting passive participation in sports activities have been discussed by several researchers at many points. Factors such as seeking out entertainment [4], escaping from daily routine [5], factors related to stadium [6]–[8], [3], commitment and interest in sports [9], [10] basking in reflected glory–cutting off reflected failure [10]–[12] and socialization [13] affect passive participant's watching competitions in stadium atmosphere.

When it comes to game and entertainment, sports activities offer unique opportunities. It is surely beyond doubt that football is the favorite sports activity in Europe. According to Global Sports Media Consumption Report [14] data, football is the most popular sports branch in Spain (67%), Italy (61%), Germany (54%), England (41%) and France (31%). In Turkey, football, which has been played for more than a century and is followed by crowds, is one of the most watched sports activities. It would not be wrong if football is called “Turkish national sport” [15]. However, as of 2010-2011 football season, it is observed that there has been a dramatic fall of number of stadium spectators in Turkish Super League. Especially when Europe's five major leagues are taken into consideration, average number of people in Turkish Super League is pretty low in 2014-2015 football season (Table I).

TABLE I
2014 – 2015 FOOTBALL SEASON STADIUM OCCUPANCY RATE OF EUROPEAN LEAGUES

League	Occupancy Rate
premier league	94.4%
bundesliga	93.4%
la liga	71.1%
ligue 1	69.2%
seria a	47.5%
turkish super league	29%

Source: (transfermarkt.com, 2014-2015 number of spectators)

II. METHOD

This research has been conducted outside of a stadium atmosphere and especially with young male people. The main purpose of this is to reveal factors affecting motivations of educated and young people, forming the large majority of Turkish society (34.5%) according to TUIK [16], watching competitions in stadium atmosphere.

There is a decrease of stadium spectators in 2014-2015 football season in Turkey. On the last three seasons of Super League (between 2012 and 2015), the occupancy rate of stadiums fall from 39.30% to 26.10%. This decrease of number of spectators in stadiums causes to reconsideration of spectators' requests and demands.

Because of this dramatic fall of spectators, young male people who have never been to a competition or been once in 2014-2015 football season between Spor Toto Super League's 5th and 8th week are included in the study. It is supposed that reasons of this decrease could be found with this method.

This research, called “what a spectator wants”, which was conducted in order to find answers to recently discussed issue of “decrease in football spectators' number”, was carried out in Eskişehir with 957 young male people in 2014-2015 football season between Spor Toto Super League's 5th and 8th week (October 6-November 4 2014). In this period of time, Eskişehirspor participated in 8 competitions (4 home and 4 away games). Evaluation form that has been prepared by researchers was distributed to 1010 subjects. Subjects who have been to two or more than two competitions were left out

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of the research. 890 (93%) subjects who have never been to a competition and 67 (7%) subjects who have been to only one competition were included in the research thus, the research was conducted with 957 people.

A. Participants

Participants in this study included 957 undergraduate male university students which are educated at Anadolu University and Osmangazi University in Turkey/Eskişehir. The biggest age group was 21-23 age group (42.3%).

B. Instruments and Statistical Analysis

In the research the data have been collected through distributed evaluation forms. This form has two sections. In the first section the subjects were asked 5 questions regarding personal information (age, sex, and university), whether they like watching competitions at stadiums and how many competitions of Eskişehirspor in 2014-2015 football season they had seen at a stadium. In the second section they were asked open-ended questions regarding reasons of watching and not watching competitions at stadiums.

The reason for these questions to be open-ended is not to manipulate subjects and not to put any limitation on their answers. It was supposed that with this method the reasons of watching and not watching competitions in a stadium atmosphere would be understood clearly.

Collected data (age, sex, university, watching competition in a stadium atmosphere, and data about watched competitions) through survey has been transferred to a computer by using SPSS 20.0 packaged software and analyzed. Frequency and percentage techniques have been used to analyze the data. Answers to open-ended questions have been analyzed by using content analysis technique.

Content analysis is one of the most important research techniques in the social sciences, especially in communication texts. It is basically described as the analysis of written contents of a communication [17]. Krippendorff [18] defined content analysis as "... is a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from texts (or other meaningful matter) to the contexts of their use". It is a method used to reduce many words of text into fewer content categories with particular focus based on explicit rules of coding [19], [20].

Fifty survey's context were used for training, and reliability with Krippendorff's α was calculated for "the reason to not to go stadium" themes (Krippendorff's $\alpha=0.86$) and "the reason to go to stadium" themes (Krippendorff $\alpha=0.89$). After reliability was established, 957 survey context were divided among the three coders.

The coders trained by researchers, following the guidelines recommended by Kolpe and Burnett [21]. Three undergraduate student coders coded the entire sample. A coding scheme and themes were developed and the coders coded the surveys with these scheme (See table II and table III). Before coding, four training sessions were conducted, such that the coders practiced coding and contributed to the coding surveys. While there is little agreement on which intercoder reliability is the best [22], [23], in this research Krippendorff's alpha was used [19]. All the reliability coefficients, which exceeded ranged from 0.67 to 1.00

TABLE II
THE CODING SCHEME FOR GOING TO STADIUM

Reason	Yes	No
e-ticket (passolig)		
violence		
stadium atmosphere		
perceptions of ticket prices		
climate conditions		
not loving football		
time problems		
sympathy/curiosity about guest team		
not being fan of home team		
accessibility		
physical properties of stadium		
financial problems		
managers and their behaviors		
attraction of media follow-up		
characteristics of home team		
lack of communication		
personal reasons		

TABLE III
THE CODING SCHEME FOR NOT GOING TO STADIUM

Reason	Yes	No
stadium atmosphere		
belonging the home team		
removal of e-ticket (passolig)		
pleasure of football		
physical properties of stadium		
sympathy/curiosity about guest team		
reducing violence/security		
none of any reason		
ticket prices		
personal reasons		
socialization		
climate conditions		
accessibility		
characteristics of home team		
communication/PR		

III. RESULTS

Subjects were asked that in what kind of situations they do not prefer going to a stadium for watching a competition. Stadium atmosphere and violence are the two main reasons for subject group. Subjects state that some elements such as abundance of using abusive language while cheering, rudeness of sports fans, lack of crowd management etc. affect to not going to stadium. Besides, in 2014-2015 football season, starting to use e-ticket application in Turkish Super League is another element for male subjects not to watch a match in stadium (see table IV).

TABLE IV
THE REASONS TO NOT TO GO STADIUM

Reason	n	%
e-ticket (passolig)	352	36.8
violence	233	24.3
stadium atmosphere	275	28.7
perceptions of ticket prices	82	8.6
climate conditions	25	2.6
not loving football	82	8.6
time problems	133	13.9
sympathy/curiosity about guest team	30	3.1
not being fan of home team	90	9.4
accessibility	34	3.6
physical properties of stadium	73	7.6
financial problems	41	4.3
managers and their behaviors	22	2.3
attraction of media follow-up	13	1.4
characteristics of home team	87	9.1
lack of communication	8	0.8
personal reasons	5	0.5

Main elements which ensure that subjects will watch a competition in a stadium seem related with stadium atmosphere, not using e-ticket, improvement of stadiums' general features, providing security with suppressing violence (see table V).

It can be said that the subjects participating in research like watching a competition in a stadium atmosphere. 81.4% of participants like watching a competition in stadium.

TABLE V
THE REASONS TO GO TO STADIUM

Reason	n	%
stadium atmosphere	188	19.6
belonging the home team	21	2.2
removal of e-ticket (passolig)	257	26.9
pleasure of football	48	5.0
physical properties of stadium	116	12.1
sympathy/curiosity about guest team	61	6.4
reducing violence/security	219	22.9
none of any reason	63	6.6
ticket prices	161	16.8
personal reasons	26	2.7
socialization	25	2.6
climate conditions	6	0.6
accessibility	45	4.7
characteristics of home team	133	13.9
communication/PR	26	2.7

The subjects who generally like watching competitions in a stadium did not watch matches in stadium in 2014-2015 football season. That is because of the problems related with e-ticket, stadium atmosphere and violence. This is a strange discovery that a considerable part of the subjects (41.3%) do not go to stadiums because of this e-ticket application (see table VI).

TABLE VI
THE REASONS OF NOT GOING TO STADIUM ACCORDING TO MALE SPECTATORS WHO LIKE WATCHING COMPETITION IN STADIUM ATMOSPHERE

Reason	n	%
e-ticket (passolig)	322	41.3
violence	186	23.9
stadium atmosphere	214	27.5
perceptions of ticket prices	74	9.5
climate conditions	23	3.0
not loving football	27	3.5
time problems	115	14.8
sympathy/curiosity about guest team	27	3.5
not being fan of home team	81	10.4
accessibility	32	4.1
physical properties of stadium	62	8.0
financial problems	37	4.7
managers and their behaviors	20	2.6
attraction of media follow-up	7	0.9
characteristics of home team	80	10.3
lack of communication	6	0.8
personal reasons	4	0.5

Individuals enjoying watching a competition in a stadium environment express that they will go to competitions if e-ticket application is suppressed, stadium atmosphere is improved and security is provided (see table VII).

TABLE VII
THE REASONS OF GOING TO STADIUM ACCORDING TO MALE SPECTATORS WHO LIKE WATCHING COMPETITION IN STADIUM ATMOSPHERE

Reason	n	%
stadium atmosphere	151	19.4
belonging the home team	21	2.7
removal of e-ticket (passolig)	232	29.8
pleasure of football	41	5.3
physical properties of stadium	96	12.3
sympathy/curiosity about guest team	50	6.4
reducing violence/security	185	23.7
none of any reason	24	3.1
ticket prices	137	17.6
personal reasons	22	2.8
socialization	18	2.3
climate conditions	5	0.6
accessibility	40	5.1
characteristics of home team	115	14.8
communication/PR	23	3

IV. DISCUSSION

Today, football is one of the most popular sport branches around the world. According to Boniface [24], football is the last phase of globalization and there is no more global phenomenon than football in the world. Globalization of football changes characteristics and qualifications of football consumers. As in other sport branches [25] increasing the number of spectators is one of the key objectives in football management.

Since 2010-2011 season, there is a dramatic decrease in the number of spectators in Turkish football. Being aware of the reasons of this decline is important for both sport managers and sport marketers. Findings obtained in this research reveal reasons of going or not going to stadiums for young male individuals, who like watching competitions in a stadium atmosphere. These reasons are collected under seventeen headings. Three major reasons with the largest denominator can be handled as follows:

A. E-Ticket

e-ticket application has started on 14 April 2014 in Turkish football. This implication which gets through paper tickets has entered into force as a requirement of the Violence and Disorder in Sports, Law No. 6222. This implication has been perceived negatively by the public opinion and it has been suggested that football spectators are "blacklisted". Findings obtained show that this e-ticket application is the most significant factor for not going to stadiums for male spectators (36.8%).

B. Stadium Atmosphere

Stadium atmosphere is one of the most important reason why people attend sport events [26]. The findings of this research showed that the stadium environment include entertainment like as marching band, facility aesthetic and scoreboard quality. These factors are affect game attendance positively. Melnick [27] noted that stadium design may influence how spectators feel about their experience at the stadium. Kelley and Turley [28] defined that sport setting such as cheerleaders and mascots affects stadium atmosphere. Otherwise, Westerbeek and Shilbury [29] noted that. shared rituals of fans, the roar of the crowd, applause and boing, the welcoming of players, and terrace songs affected stadium

attend. For male (28.7%) participants, stadium atmosphere is the second main reason for going to a stadium. Findings obtained have parallels with studies of Wakefield and Sloan [6] and Melnick [27].

C. Violence

Violence in football can be mentioned as a problematic issue wherever football competitions take place. The most important factor that affect individuals' preferences attending the research about watching the competition in stadium or in their home is related with violent behaviors in stadiums. The most important factor that affects young male individuals' preference about watching a competition in stadium is to reduce violence in stadiums (22.9%). It has been revealed that elimination of violence is an important factor for males. In recent years, tendency to violent behaviors in stadiums has increased in Turkey. In 2013-2014 football season, in Super Toto Super League, spectators were banned from the stadium for 39 competitions (12.74% of all competitions) because of stadium ban which can be shown as an example of this increase (Sabah, 2014). In the light of all of these, it can be stated that one of the main task of football managers is to put into practice a kind of implementation which will help to decrease violent behaviors in stadiums and to actualize necessary regulations about crowd management.

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