

Not Just Men's Game: Female Football Spectators' Motives

Arif Yüce and Hakan Katırcı

Abstract—Nowadays, women interest for football is increased. As FA's president, Sepp Blatter, declared that "the future of football is feminine". In this context, knowing the motivation of female football spectators is so important.

This study has been conducted among young female university students who like watching football match in stadium (N=591). The purpose of this study is to determine the factors which are affecting watching competitions in stadium atmosphere for young female football spectators. As a result of this study; reducing violence/security (32.6%), stadium atmosphere (22.2%), removal of e-ticket (15.8%), time problems (19.5%) are the most important three factors which are affecting female participation in football competitions.

Keywords—Football Industry, Female Football Spectator

I. INTRODUCTION

SPORT has become a major attraction in community life, especially in industrialized societies. The behavioral involvement in sport can take active and passive participation in these societies [1].

Passive participation represents a dominant form of leisure behavior in today's society. A large number of people attend sports events and think of themselves as sport spectator or fans [2]. Until recently, female football fans and players have been quite invisible [3], [4] but nowadays female football fans and players numbers are growing day by day. The increases seen in the number of registered female players. 2014-2015 football season there has been a 4% increase in the number of registered female players, with the total rising by 46,244 to stand at 1,208,558 in the world [5].

Generally football game is characterized as a masculine domain [6], [7], but from the middle of nineteenth century some noticeable changes began to emerge in the status of the young generation of women [8]. As an example of women interest in football is increasing of stadium female spectator numbers. For example total female attendance at matches at premier league in 2004-2005 football season is 2.33 million.

Encouraging female participation in football competitions is one of the important issues that modern football management concern. Factors affecting spectators in sports activities have been discussed by several researchers at many points. Factors such as seeking out entertainment [9], escaping from daily routine [10], factors related to stadium [11]-[14], commitment and interest in sports [15], [16] basking in reflected glory-cutting off reflected failure [16] -[18] and socialization [19] affect passive participant's watching competitions in stadium atmosphere.

II. METHOD

This research has been conducted outside of a stadium atmosphere and especially with young female. The main purpose of this study is to determine the factors which are affecting motivations of educated and young female, who like watching football match 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 female 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 and who like watching football match in stadium are included in the study. It is supposed that reasons of this decrease could be found with this method.

This research was carried out in Eskişehir with 591 young female 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 907 subjects. Subjects who aren't like watching football match in stadium and have been to two or more than two competitions were left out of the research. After this selection 591 subjects were included in this study. 501 subjects (84.78%) have never been to a competition and 90 (15.22%) subjects have been to only one competition.

A. Participants

Participants in this study included 591 undergraduate female university students which are educated at Anadolu University and Osmangazi University in Turkey/Eskişehir. The biggest age group was 21-23 age group (51.6%).

B. Instruments and Statistical Analysis

In the research the data have been collected through two section evaluation forms. In the first section the subjects were

Arif Yüce is with the Anadolu University Faculty of Sport Sciences, Eskişehir, 26470 TR

Hakan Katırcı is with the Department of Sport Management, Anadolu University, Eskişehir, 26470 TR

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 may be briefly defined as the systematic, objective, quantitative analysis of message characteristics [20]. This 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 [21]. It is a method used to reduce many words of text into fewer content categories with particular focus based on explicit rules of coding [22], [23].

Thirty 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 $\alpha=0.89$) and "the reason to go to stadium" themes (Krippendorff $\alpha=0.93$). After reliability was established, 591 survey context were divided among the three coders.

The coders trained by researchers, following the guidelines recommended by Kolpe and Burnett [24]. 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 I and table II). 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 [25], [26], in this research Krippendorff's alpha was used [22]. All the reliability coefficients, which exceeded ranged from 0.67 to 1.00

TABLE I
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 II
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 prefer and not prefer going to a stadium for watching a football match. Violence (40.5%), stadium atmosphere (38.0%) and time problems (19.5%) are three main reasons which are affect not going to stadium for female spectator. Subjects state that some elements such as fights in and outside of stadium, rudeness of sports fans, lack of crowd management etc. affect to not going to stadium. In addition, negative stadium atmosphere elements like abundance of

using abusive language while cheering and poor facility conditions are affect not going to stadium for female spectator. Time problems like as intense homework and part time working are another reason for females to not go to match in stadium (see table III).

TABLE III

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

Reason	n	%
e-ticket (passolig)	65	14,7
Violence	179	40,5
stadium atmosphere	168	38,0
perceptions of ticket prices	21	4,8
climate conditions	6	1,7
not loving football	31	7,0
time problems	86	19,5
sympathy/curiosity about guest team	8	1,8
not being fan of home team	47	10,6
accessibility	24	5,4
physical properties of stadium	18	4,1
financial problems	9	2,0
managers and their behaviors	2	0,5
attraction of media follow-up	0	0,0
characteristics of home team	7	1,6
lack of communication	24	5,4
personal reasons	7	1,6

Main elements which ensure that subjects will watch a competition in a stadium seem related with providing security with suppressing violence (32.6%), stadium atmosphere (22.2%), and not using e-ticket (15.8%). These factors are three main factors which are affected to go to football matches in stadium (see table IV).

TABLE IV

THE REASONS OF GOING TO STADIUM ACCORDING TO FEMALE SPECTATORS WHO LIKE WATCHING COMPETITION IN STADIUM ATMOSPHERE

Reason	n	%
stadium atmosphere	98	22,2
belonging the home team	17	3,8
removal of e-ticket (passolig)	70	15,8
pleasure of football	7	1,6
physical properties of stadium	54	12,2
sympathy/curiosity about guest team	45	10,2
reducing violence/security	144	32,6
none of any reason	14	3,2
ticket prices	47	10,6
personal reasons	16	3,6
socialization	23	5,2
climate conditions	3	,7
accessibility	15	3,4
characteristics of home team	17	3,8
communication/PR	21	4,8

IV. DISCUSSION

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 and female 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. 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 female individuals' preference about watching a competition in stadium is to reduce violence in stadiums (32.6%). It has been revealed that elimination of violence is an important factor for females spectators. 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 [27]. 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.

B. Stadium atmosphere

Stadium atmosphere is one of the most important reason why people attend sport events [28]. 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 [29] noted that stadium design may influence how spectators feel about their experience at the stadium. Kelley and Turley [30] defined that sport setting such as cheerleaders and mascots affects stadium atmosphere. Otherwise, Westerbeek and Shilbury [31] noted that. shared rituals of fans, the roar of the crowd, applause and booing, the welcoming of players, and terrace songs affected stadium attend. For female (22.2%) participants, stadium atmosphere is the second main reason for going to a stadium. Findings obtained have parallels with studies of Wakefield and Sloan [11] and Melnick [29].

The findings provide support for the idea that females enjoy stadium characteristics like atmosphere and physical properties. As James and Ridinger [2] mentioned, drama and action are motives that are highly motivated female spectators. At football game, drama and action occur in stadium. So stadium atmosphere and physical properties are important for action and drama.

C. 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 female spectators (14.7%).

D. Time Problems

Sportive activities become one of the favorite spare time activities in most of society. Leisure constraints are affecting spare time activities. Physical or environmental factors like as financial resources, season, climate, the scheduling of work time that prevented an individual from leisure participation [32].

Crawford and Godbey [33] divided leisure constraints into three categories. One of the categories is structural factors like as time problem and the scheduling of games are affect negatively to sport participation. In this study female subjects (19.5%) defined that time limitation is one of the constraints of to go to stadium.

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