

AN INVESTIGATION ON REASONS OF THE DECREASE IN NUMBER OF SPECTATORS IN 2014-2015 TURKISH FOOTBALL LEAGUE SEASON FROM THE PERSPECTIVES OF SPECTATORS

Caner ÖZGEN¹

Velittin BALCI²

ABSTRACH

Sustainable sportive success of football clubs depends on their being economically strong and thus having maintainable incomes in industrial football. Economic pressure experienced in recent years have shown that it would be impossible for football industry to continue its development without spectators. Data gathered from statistical reports in recent years revealed that there was a significant decrease in the number of spectators in Turkish Football Super League in 2014 –2015 season compared to previous years. The purpose of this study is to investigate the reasons of decrease of football spectators in 2014-2015 Turkish super league according to spectator's perspective. The sampling of this study consist of 818 spectators which were chosen by quota sampling method. To collect the data, a questionnaire was developed consisting of 27 items. To develop the questionnaire, focus group interviews were conducted after a literature review according to the subject and suggestions of four academicians, who were experts in the fields of sports sciences. Chi square and descriptive analysis were conducted by using SPSS. After analyzing the data, it revealed that "passolig application", "reaction towards the policies of Turkish Football Federation" and perception of unfair referees are the main reasons that reduction of the spectators in 2014-2015 Turkish Football Super League season according to spectators.

Received: 19.01.2017

Accepted: 21.09.2017

Keywords: Football, Spectators, Turkish Football Super League

2014-2015 SEZONUNDA TÜRKİYE FUTBOL SÜPER LİGİNDE SEYİRCİ AZALMASININ NEDENLERİNİN SEYİRCİ GÖRÜŞLERİNE GÖRE İNCELENMESİ

ÖZ

Endüstriyel futbol çağında kulüplerin sürdürülebilir sportif başarı elde edebilmeleri ekonomik olarak güçlü olmalarına ve dolayısı ile sürdürülebilir gelirler elde etmelerine bağlıdır. Yaşanan bu ekonomik baskılar, futbol endüstrisinin seyirci olmaksızın gelişimine devam edemeyeceğini göstermektedir. Son yılların istatistik raporlarından elde edilen verilere göre, 2014-2015 sezonunda Türkiye Futbol Süper Liginde oynan maçlardaki seyirci sayılarında, geçmiş yıllara kıyasla önemli oranda azalma meydana geldiği tespit edilmiştir. Bu doğrultuda bu araştırmanın amacı 2014 – 2015 sezonunda Türkiye Futbol Süper Liginde yaşanan seyirci azalmasının nedenleri seyirci görüşlerine göre incelemektir. Kota örnekleme yöntemiyle seçilmiş 818 futbol seyircisi araştırmanın örneklemini oluşturmuştur. Araştırma verilerinin toplanması için, 27 madden oluşan bir anket formu geliştirilmiştir. Anket formunun geliştirilmesi için literatür taraması ve odak grup çalışması yapılarak spor bilimleri alanında uzman beş akademisyenin görüşlerinden yararlanılmıştır. Araştırmadan elde edilen verilere SPSS 22 paket programı ile tanımlayıcı istatistikler ve ki-kare analizi uygulanmıştır. Araştırmadan elde edilen verilerin analiz edilmesi sonucunda, "passolig uygulaması", "Türkiye Futbol Federasyonunun politikalarına karşı tepki", "hakemlerin taraflı yönetim gösterdiği algısı" seyirciler tarafından, 2014-2015 sezonunda Türkiye Futbol Süper Liginde yaşanan seyirci azalmasına ilişkin en önemli nedenler olarak gösterilmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Futbol, Seyirci, Türkiye Futbol Süper Ligi

¹ Anadolu University, Faculty of Sports Sciences; Eskisehir, TURKEY

² Ankara University, Faculty of Sports Sciences; Ankara, TURKEY

*This study was presented as an Oral presentation and awarded the best paper on the sport management field in the "14th International Sport Science Congress" in 2016 Antalya/Turkey.

*This study is from a masters' thesis study.

INTRODUCTION

Modern football has demonstrated a important evolution from past to present making it a means of show, and this characteristic has turned it into a big industry. Sustainable sportive success of football clubs depends on their being economically strong and thus having maintainable incomes in industrial football age. Football spectators have become customers of football clubs to create new incomes in football industry.

Globalization has affected football as well as all other sectors in the world. This process has turned football into a meta and a subject of business in a huge industry¹⁰. Earning money from football started in 1930s, and this caused various problems under the conditions of the period. This situation was claimed to be against the amateur spirit of sports, thus, football. In the ongoing process players created a show resulting with strict training and exercise programs and earning high amounts of money. In order to identify the rules of the market clearly, all conditions were gathered. As a result of this development, better players became valuable in the market, and serious economical distinctions appeared between them and ordinary players. As a result of this, wars of taking the most talented players started among clubs and club managers. Prices paid for “the best” players increased more than before. All these developments had football become an important business which affected various other sectors²⁴.

Unlike other sectors, it is impossible for the sectors that were created by football to survive under a competition environment which terminates the other rivals. On the contrary to the rules suggested by the science of economics, the clubs need to have rivals in order to grow in the industry. For this reason, in order to create a product through football, clubs need to come together by forming a

league and seek for their success under some rules and a fixture in the framework of a collective competition. Sustainability and continuation of developmental trends in football sector depends on providing this competition environment. Spectators who are in the position of customers of the clubs in the industry sustain their brand loyalty independent from the quality of the service they receive. Spectators who continue supporting their teams even though their teams relegate can be an example for this³.

In the broadest sense, football industry can be defined as a sector providing entertainment for the fans of sports clubs. However, there is a basic difference between football and other entertainment sectors (such as cinema, theatre and opera): Football spectators’ desire for winning rather than enjoying. Namely, without a winning, there cannot be entertainment¹⁸. The magic of collecting thousands of people on stadium indiscriminately for a single aim is the most important reason of football’s turning into an industry. This is because football puts all distinctions such as race, religion, language, occupation and economic level aside for a while, and makes it possible for contemporary human to be together⁷.

Gathering the spectators for every game has turned into an issue for modern football. Due to some factors such as economic problems, comfort of watching matches on TV, and having too many matches, the number of spectators watching matches at stadiums has started to decrease the number of the spectators in stadiums. This causes the spread of a pessimism in football world⁸. For these reasons, match day incomes have become one of the hidden purposes of the clubs. It can be seen that significant part of the budgets of many leading clubs in the world consists of broadcasting rights and advertisements¹⁶.

In addition to increasing ticket prices and building new skyboxes, clubs have diversified entertainment facilities. This caused serious increases in match day incomes. Furthermore, seat and catering sales for institutional customers facilitated clubs receive much higher incomes than normal ticket sales. For example, Arsenal increased its match day incomes to 135 million Euros from 66 million after building Emirates Stadium²¹. Football industry has made a significant progress in Turkey in recent the 10 years³. Stadium incomes of the clubs are aimed to be increased through high capacity and UEFA-standard stadiums that have been built in metropolitan cities such as İstanbul, Kayseri and Konya. Meanwhile there are various stadium constructions and projects in many other cities of Turkey. Their completion will increase the incomes of clubs as well. Leading clubs that have noticed this industrial transformation and made investments in accordance with it in Turkey are some stronger super league clubs which always struggle for championship and mainly focus on football in their operations.

Economic pressures experienced in recent years have shown that it would be impossible for football industry to continue its development without spectators. Incomes of a football league are directly related to its rating, and the numbers of the spectators in matches reflect the economic position of the clubs. Keeping stadiums full will not only help clubs get match day incomes but also will help them increase their commercial incomes, and together with this, they will have a chance to increase broadcasting rights incomes as a result of the interest provided by spectators. Therefore, stadium occupancy rates have a vital role in sustainable sportive and economic success of the teams in Turkish Football Super League. Decrease in the interest of spectators who are in the position of customers of football product is thought to drag clubs into a great economic

deadlock. Data gathered from statistical reports in recent years revealed that there was a significant decrease in the number of spectators in Turkish Football Super League in 2014 –2015 season compared to previous years. According to the up-to-date researches of Transfermarkt.com (2014) occupancy rate of the stadiums in Turkish Football Super League matches was 46,7% in 2013 – 2014 season, and this rate decreased to 28,9% in 2014 – 2015 season. Moreover, the average number of spectators per week decreased to 140.570 from 216.596³⁰. As it can be understood from the statistics, the number of spectators in Turkish Football Super League in 2014 – 2015 seasons decreased dramatically which had been already low. In the light of this information the purpose of this study is to examine the reasons of decrease in number of spectators in Turkish Football Super League in 2014 – 2015 seasons regarding the opinions of spectators.

Football Spectatorship

Spectators can be shown as the main resource in consumption of sports and products related to sports and motivation in production of sports¹⁴. Football spectators usually affect even the formation of policies of football clubs. Club administrations have usually been observed to try to meet the expectations of spectators in hiring players and trainers¹⁷. Just after the first England cup in 1871 and foundation of the first football league in 1888, number of spectators sharing the same class with players and thus supporting them started to increase rapidly. These first spectators had all the characteristics of modern football spectators. These groups consisted of people who went to away games, wore the colors of their team while watching a match, and were fond of violence and alcohol²⁰.

Spectators were defined and classified considering their behavior types in

various periods in different studies. Hunt, et al., (1987) defined sports spectatorship as feeling of admiration to various consumable objects (such as athletes, teams, league, sports branch) related to sports. Arslanoğlu, (2005) defined sports spectator as a person who followed sportive events directly or through communication tools; and sports fan as a person who was directly interested in sports teams or some specific athletes, who had positive feelings towards them, and supported them. As it can be understood from the difference between these two definitions, although all fans could be accepted as spectators, all spectators might not be fans. In other words, there is a considerable amount of people who follow sportive activities without supporting an athlete or a team. As for another group, they not only watch matches of their teams but also others' but they are considered in just one sports spectator category. What's more, every fan might not be a spectator. There is a great amount of fans who don't go to the matches of their team, and even don't watch the matches on TV. Sutton et al. (1997) classified fans into three levels such as low, medium and high in terms of their identification levels with their teams. Wann and Branscombe (1990) examined spectators in two groups. These are die-hard fans and fair-weather fans. Die-hard fans are always with their team regardless to the success or failure. Fair-weather fans are defined as the ones who supported their teams when it is successful and aren't interested in it when it is not. Giulianotti (2002) classified spectators into four groups such as loyal spectators, follower spectators, fans and flaneurs.

Identity formation is one of the self-protection against the attacks an individual encounters in his/her society. Accomplishing this protection mechanism within a group will be more advantageous than personal attempts. The individual will feel him/herself secure when s/he is

together with people sharing same ideals, and will be able to struggle against the negative effects of outside world with the support of the group. Spectatorship can be considered as an identity formation phenomenon, and it does not require hard efforts to form this identity in this framework²⁶. According to some studies based on the results of the studies conducted with spectators, the most common reason to be the fan of a team was shown to be father's, or even mother's being the supporter of that team. The second most common reason was physical appearance and superior ability of one or more players. Geographical reasons such as being the supporter of the team of the city the individual lived in followed them. On the other hand, the effect of peers was almost the same as geographical reasons. The reasons listed so far were stated as the reasons for supporting a team. As for the biggest reason to continue supporting the same team, it was shown as the success of the team^{24, 25}. One of the important reasons to support a team is regionalism. Individuals support the team of the region he or she was born in and grew up, and by this way he or she gets rid of the feeling of betraying his or her hometown. On the contrary to the examples all around the world, there is a distinction between local teams and national team in Turkey. A great majority of spectators in Turkey primarily support one of the "three bigs" (Besiktas, Fenerbahce, Galatasaray), and then they support regional teams. From this framework, regionalism can be accepted as an insignificant factor to affect Turkish spectators⁹.

Passolig

Passolig is started to be used after the promulgation of the legal regulation on 14th April 2014. This application obliged the Passolig Cards in order to spectate

the Super League and PTT 1st. League matches in stadiums. To acquire Passolig Card, besides paying 15-25 TL per year depending on the team they support, all fans have to pay 2 TL to the Passolig system for each ticket sold at the home games. In addition to that, 7.95 TL of the annual card fees are transferred to the financial institution that printed the cards²⁰. With relevant to this subject Akşar (2014) stated that Passolig application is going to do nothing more than causing the bleachers to be empty in our league which has low spectating rates, is unable to draw the audience the bleachers, has a stadium occupancy rate that is lagged behind Europe. Besides Katırcı and Yüce (2016) stated that because of the anxiety of being blacklisted, fans have a negative attitude towards Passolig Cards.

Method

Sampling

Study was based on the evaluation of the opinions of football spectators who watched at least one match of Turkish Football Super League in 2014 – 2015 season. Total number of spectators in Turkish Football Super League in 2014 – 2015 season was 2.389.711³¹. Announced official “Passolig” sales figures were 979,126. Thus, the population of the study was accepted as “979,126” people.

Sampling of the study was constructed through the quota method, a stratified non-random sampling method⁶. In order to form quota sampling method, general population was divided into two groups such as spectators of Besiktas, Fenerbahce, Galatasaray and Trabzonspor that are called “big fours” and spectators of other 14 clubs. Population of “big fours” regarding “Passolig” sales figures were 604.201 people, and population of other teams were 374.925 people. In order to identify the sampling in the study, “Sample Size

for Different Sized Universes” table² was used, and sampling error was accepted as 5% within 95% reliability level, appropriate sample number was identified to be 384 for both groups. Within the light of this information, sampling of the study consisted of 401 “big fours” spectators and 417 spectators of other teams, which made 818 people. In short words the sampling of the study is consist of 401 “big fours” spectators and 417 others team spectators which is 818 football spectators in total.

Data Collection Tool

The study was designed as descriptive research in order to describe reduction reasons of the football spectators. Cause-effect relationship between variables is not sought in descriptive studies. A descriptive study collects data in order to find out current status of the subject. In the light of foregoing, we did not develop any scale which carried out reliability and validity statistically. We used questionnaire which was developed for the purpose of the study.

Questionnaire of the study had two sections. First section included demographic questions related to age, gender, education level, occupation, frequency of watching matches in a season, the team they supported, and whether they were subscriber of “Lig TV” or not. These variables were prepared to find out whether there was a significant difference among items and get demographic information about participants.

As for the second part of the data collection tool, it included 27 items aiming to find out the reasons of decrease in spectator numbers in Turkish Football Super League in 2014 – 2015 season. Items were prepared as five-point Likert scale, and they included expressions referring to participation levels. In order to identify the items that would be put in data collection tool, related literature was

reviewed, pieces of national and international press and visual media news were searched since the issue was up-to-date, and a focus group study was conducted with 11 people who were in the population of the study lasting for one hour 45 minutes. The study was based on the question, "What can be the reasons of decrease in the number of spectators in Turkish Football Super League in 2014 – 2015 season?" As a result of all these processes, an item pool consisting of 54 items was developed. The items were prepared conscientiously to be simple and understandable, and not to include more than one judgement, idea or perception. Limitations and significance of items were shown as strongly disagree 1.00-1.79, disagree 1.80-2.59, neutral 2.60-3.39, agree 3.40-4.19, totally agree 4.20-5.00 to be suitable for five-point Likert-type scale. To provide content validity, the number of the items was decreased to 27 from 54 in accordance with the suggestions of four academicians, who were experts in the fields of sports sciences and

measurement and evaluation, as they either overlapped each other or were not directly related with the target constructs of the study.

Data Collection and Analysis

The questionnaire was applied to participants through the electronic forms and traditional methods. Social media accounts of various fan clubs were reached, and 1205 members of these sites who were randomly chosen were initially informed about the aim of the study and then survey was sent to them. 714 of those 1205 people answered the survey and sent it back. Moreover, five surveyors delivered the questionnaire to the spectators prior to eight football matches of various clubs playing at Turkish Football Super League, and 104 of those spectators answered the questionnaire. The data were criticized according to their mean, standard deviation, percentage values and chi square by using SPSS 20.0 packet program.

RESULTS

Participants

The participants are composed of 94,7% men and 5,3% women. A majority of all participants are 21 to 30 age range (54%), 10,9% are 31 to 40 years age

range, 9,2% are between 41 years old and above. Considering the education status of the participants 13,6% are primary school and high school graduate, 55,4% are undergraduate and 13,1% are post graduate.

Table1. Distribution of Questionnaire score

Order	Items	Mean	SD
1	Passolig application	4.21	1.292
2	Reaction to the policies of Turkish Football Federation (TFF)	3.96	1.296
3	Perception of unfair referees	3.77	1.362
4	TFF's Lack of policies to popularize football	3.72	1.324
5	Perception of existence of match-fixing in the league	3.67	1.47
6	Lack of administration in football clubs	3.63	1.354
7	Lack of quality in football	3.47	1.406
8	High prices of tickets	3.45	1.409
9	Media broadcastings which contain violence	3.41	1.436
10	Lack of qualified players to excite the spectators	3.19	1.317
11	Negative ovations in stadiums	3.15	1.514
12	Problems experienced at away games	3.08	1.379
13	Lack of advertising activities of the league	3.01	1.412
14	Poor conditions of stadiums	2.89	1.38
15	Implementation of sports violence laws	2.87	1.494
16	Lack of a settled football culture in the country	2.84	1.503
17	Frequent punishments of playing matches without spectators	2.83	1.456
18	Insufficient economic situation of spectators	2.8	1.484
19	Stressful atmosphere created by players and trainers in the pitch	2.78	1.428
20	Comfort of following matches through communication tools (such as TV. Internet. etc.)	2.77	1.396
21	Inappropriateness of football programs (match day and hours).	2.72	1.285
22	Inconvenience of e-ticket system	2.67	1.569
23	Violence in stadiums	2.65	1.367
24	Reaction of the spectators against their teams	2.64	1.313
25	Football becoming more boring day by day	2.57	1.364
26	Indoor sports becoming more attractive	2.52	1.424
27	Clubs' being unable to create a sense of belonging	2.18	1.286

Note: 1.80-2.59= Disagree (shown in green); 2.60-3.39 Neutral (shown in yellow); 3.40-4.19 Agree (shown in orange); 4.20-5.00 Totally Agree (shown in red)

The participants' responses of decrease in number of spectators are listed in order of importance and are shown in Table-1. Accordingly to table-1 "Passolig application" ($\bar{x}=4.21$) item is the most important reason for the decrease in number of spectators, it is in the expression range of "Totally Agree". Items such as "Reaction to the policies of TFF" ($\bar{x}=3.96$), "Perception of unfair referees" ($\bar{x}=3.77$), "High prices of tickets" ($\bar{x}=3.45$) are other reasons considered important by the participants, and these items are included in the expression range of "Totally Agree". Items such as

"Lack of qualified players to excite the spectators" ($\bar{x}=3.19$), "Poor conditions of stadiums" ($\bar{x}=2.89$), "Violence in stadiums" ($\bar{x}=2.65$) have not been shown by the participants as important reasons for the decrease in number of spectators and these items are included in the expression range of "Neutral". Items such as "Football becoming more boring day by day" ($\bar{x}=2.57$), "Indoor sports becoming more attractive" ($\bar{x}=2.52$), "Clubs' being unable to create a sense of belonging" ($\bar{x}=2.18$) have not been shown by the participants as important reasons for the decrease in number of spectators and these items are included in the expression range of "Disagree" ($\bar{x}=2.18$).

Table 2. Distribution of Chi squares according to “age”

The items that had significant relationship	X ²	Sd	P
Violence in stadiums	36.216	12	.000**
Lack of quality in football	21.120	12	.049*
Passolig application	22.462	12	.033*
Poor conditions of stadiums	28.594	12	.005**
High prices of tickets	39.257	12	.000**
Negative ovations in stadiums	16.020	12	.005*
Indoor sports becoming more attractive	33.795	12	.001*
Clubs' being unable to create a sense of belonging	39.779	12	.000*
Football becoming more boring day by day	28.398	12	.005*
Insufficient economic situation of spectators	34.914	12	.000*
Implementation of sports violence laws	30.791	12	.002*
Perception of unfair referees	22.552	12	.032*
TFF's lack of policies to popularize football	26.785	12	.008*

*p≤.05 **p≤.01

According to the results of Chi squares in terms of the items that had significant relationship with “age” variable, only 13

out of 27 items the participants replied had significant relationship (Table-2).

Table 3. Distribution of Chi squares according to “being LİG TV subscriber”

The items that had significant relationship	X ²	Sd	P
Passolig application.	10.069	12	.044*
Lack of administration in football clubs	10.176	12	.038*
Media broadcastings which contain violence	10.505	12	.033*

*p≤.05 **p≤.01

According to the results of Chi squares in terms of the items that had significant relationship with “being Lig TV

subscriber” variable, only 3 out of 27 items the participants replied had significant relationship (Table-3).

Table 4. Distribution of Chi squares according to “education level”

The items that had significant relationship	X ²	Sd	P
Violence in stadiums	59.057	12	.000**
Lack of quality in football	34.139	12	.001**
Comfort of following match through communication tools.	24.188	12	.019*
Poor conditions of stadiums	27.289	12	.007**
High prices of tickets	39.257	12	.000**
Problems experienced at away matches	28.851	12	.004**
Frequent punishments of playing matches without spectators	29.030	12	.004**
Reaction of the spectators against their teams	23.476	12	.024*
Negative ovations in stadiums	26.379	12	.009**
Insufficient economic situation of spectators	34.914	12	.000**
Clubs' being unable to create a sense of belonging	44.880	12	.000**
Football becoming more boring day by day	26.426	12	.009**
Lack of advertising activities of the league	26.785	12	.009**
Implementation of sports violence laws	23.698	12	.022*
Lack of a settled football culture in the country	21.884	12	.039*
Stressful atmosphere created by players and trainers in the pitch	35.667	12	.000**
Perception of unfair referees	25.402	12	.013*
Perception of existence of match-fixing in the league	21.181	12	.048*

*p≤.05 **p≤.01

According to the results of Chi squares in terms of the items that had significant relationship with “education level”

variable, 18 out of 27 items the participants replied had significant relationship (Table-4).

Table 5. Distribution of Chi squares according to “occupation”

The items that had significant relationship	X ²	Sd	P
Violence in stadiums	36.931	4	.000**
Passolig application.	11.404	4	.022*
Comfort of following match through communication tools.	10.427	4	.034*
Problems experienced at away matches	12.804	4	.012*
High prices of tickets	10.759	4	.029*
Problems experienced at away matches	28.851	4	.004**
Reaction to the policies of Turkish Football Federation	21.049	4	.000**
Reaction of the spectators against their teams.	10.367	4	.035*
Clubs' being unable to create a sense of belonging	32.371	4	.000**
Insufficient economic situation of spectators	34.914	4	.000**
Football's becoming more boring day by day	14.571	4	.006**
Insufficient economic situation of spectators	15.309	4	.004**
Lack of advertising activities of the league	26.785	4	.009**
Being insufficient in making e-ticket applications widespread.	20.033	4	.000**
Lack of a settled football culture in the country	11.953	4	.018*
Stressful atmosphere created by players and trainers in the pitch	9.807	4	.044*
Perception of unfair referees	13.165	4	.010*

*p≤.05 **p≤.01

According to the results of Chi squares in terms of the items that had significant relationship with “occupation” variable, 17

out of 27 items the participants replied had significant relationship (Table-5).

Table 6. Distribution of Chi squares according to “frequency of watching matches”

The items that had significant relationship	X ²	Sd	P
Violence in stadium	108.801	12	.000**
Passolig application.	31.351	12	.002**
Comfort of following match through communication tools.	61.895	12	.000**
Problems experienced at away games	33.988	12	.001**
High prices of tickets	10.759	12	.029*
Problems experienced at away games	28.851	12	.004**
Frequent punishment of playing matches without spectators	22.642	12	.031*
High prices of tickets	56.082	12	.000**
Reaction to the policies of Turkish Football Federation	52.774	12	.000**
Reaction of the spectators against their teams	34.914	12	.000**
Negative ovations in stadiums	51.669	12	.000**
Indoor sports becoming more attractive	39.870	12	.000**
Lack of advertising activities of the league	26.785	12	.009**
Clubs' being unable to create a sense of belonging	34.932	12	.000**
Lack of a settled football culture in the country	11.953	12	.018*
Football's becoming more boring day by day	39.179	12	.000**
Insufficient economic situation of spectators	48.881	12	.000**
Lack of qualified players to excite the spectators	27.604	12	.006**
Implementation of sports violence laws	33.311	12	.001**
Inconvenience of e-ticket system	62.065	12	.000**

*p≤.05 **p≤.01

According to the results of Chi squares in terms of the items that had significant relationship with “frequency of watching

matches” variable, 20 out of 27 items the participants replied had significant relationship (Table-6).

Table 7. Distribution of Chi squares according to “the team supported by participants”

The items that had significant relationship	X ²	Sd	P
Violence in stadium	108.78	4	.000**
Passolig application	26.392	4	.000**
Inappropriateness of football programs (match day and hours)	15.192	4	.004**
Comfort of following match through communication tools	26.785	4	.000**
Poor conditions of stadiums	9.737	4	.045*
Frequent punishment of playing matches without spectators	10.455	4	.031*
Problems experienced at away games	15.707	4	.003**
High prices of tickets	86.425	4	.000**
Reaction to the policies of Turkish Football Federation	30.774	4	.000**
Reaction of the spectators against their teams	30.517	4	.000**
Indoor sports becoming more attractive	39.870	4	.000**
Negative ovations in stadiums	35.606	4	.000**
Clubs' being unable to create a sense of belonging	68.625	4	.000**
Football's becoming more boring day by day	22.383	4	.000**
Insufficient economic situation of spectators	48.504	4	.000**
Lack of qualified players to excite the spectators	20.940	4	.000**
Implementation of sports violence laws	33.462	4	.000**
Inconvenience of e-ticket system	49.725	4	.000**
Football becoming more boring day by day	22.383	4	.000**
Not having a settled football culture in our country	15.852	4	.003**
Stressful atmosphere created by players and trainers in the pitch	37.366	4	.000**
Perception of unfair referees	35.403	4	.000**
Lack of administration in football clubs	10.701	4	.030*
Violence-supporting broadcasts of media	11.896	4	.018*
Perception of existence of match-fixing in the league	13.370	4	.010*

*p≤,05 **p≤,01

According to the results of Chi squares in terms of the items that had significant relationship with “the team they

supported” variable, 25 out of 27 items the participants replied had significant relationship (Table-7).

DISCUSSION

The most significant results obtained from the study is related to passolig application. The results showed that the most important reason of decrease of spectators was passolig. This situation was anticipated at the beginning of the study. This situation has been repeatedly expressed by the football community. Regarding the subject, Akşar (2014) stated that passolig application would decrease the rate of the league's watch. Passolig application has been perceived negatively by the public opinion because of the concerns that fans might get blacklisted¹⁵. Another important conclusion derived from these studies is reaction of the spectators against the policies of Turkish Football Federation. This issue is actually thought to be

closely associated with Passolig application. TFF have been intensively criticized about the Passolig application. Despite all the criticism of the Passolig application, TFF stated that they would not give up the Passolig application. TFF (2015), stated that passolig application was not a reason why spectator decreased; the main reason was poor performance of the Turkish super league clubs. Despite the failure of Passolig application, TFF's insistence caused negative reactions of spectators²⁹.

Perception of unfair referees and perception of existence of match-fixing in the league was seen as one of the most important causes of the decrease in the number of spectators. Acet (2001), claims that spectators get upset by wrong decisions of the referees. Zelyurt (2014),

found that wrong referee decisions made the spectators lose their tempers. Match-fixing incidents which have taken place in media since 2011 have shook confidence of football spectators. Thus, these incidents have caused spectators lose their interests in following the games. Perception of existence of match-fixing has brought down the uncertainty of football games. Along with this perception, spectators have left the seats empty in stadiums. Another important conclusion of this study is lack of administration in football clubs. Despondingly, Sönmezoğlu and Çoknaz (2013) stated that existence of

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, we have found out important reasons of decrease in number of football spectators in Turkish football Super League but also expected some other important reasons such as violence. According to spectators who took place in this study, violence was not found as important as other issues. We can come to a conclusion that violence has always been a part of football not only for the 2014-15 football season but also in the past seasons.

Limitations and Future Studies

administrational problems occurred by institutional structures and lack of professional employees in administrative positions leded football clubs to this collapse. Moreover, Akşar and Merih (2008) mentioned that administrative problems blocked the rise of football and made Turkish clubs fall behind the European football clubs. The problems occurred by wrong administration of the clubs cause the interest in football go down day by day. In addition to this, empty seats, lack of joy and transfers that make clubs' debts bigger are the other reasons of losing trust and interest in football in Turkey.

First, data which were collected in this study were only for one football season. Future studies can be conducted including more football seasons. Second, a questionnaire was used to collect data. By generating a new scale for this subject, researchers can gather more reliable results for future studies. Descriptive statistics were used in this study. Relational statistics can be used to identify other relations for different conclusions. Research data were collected through the electronic forms in this study. Results can be more reliable if data is collected by traditional methods.

REFERENCES

1. Acet, M., "Futbol Seyircisini Fanatik ve Saldırgan Olmaya Yönelten Faktörler" Gazi Üniversitesi Sağlık Bilimleri Enstitüsü, 2001. [In Turkish]
2. Anderson, G., Fundamentals of Educational Research, The Farmer Press, London, 1998.
3. Akşar, T., Krizdeki Futbol, Literatür Yayınları, İstanbul, 2013. [In Turkish]
4. Akşar, T., and Merih, K., Futbol Ekonomisi, Literatür Yayıncılık, İstanbul, 2006. [In Turkish]
5. Arslanoğlu, K., Futbolun Psikiyatrisi, İthaki Yayınları, İstanbul, 2004. [In Turkish]
6. Balcı, A., Sosyal Bilimlerde Araştırma Yöntem, Teknik ve İlkeler, Pegem Akademi Yayıncılık, Ankara, 2004. [In Turkish]
7. Bora, T., and Yüksel, T., Çizgi Açığı, İstanbul, İletişim Yayınları, 2015. [In Turkish]
8. Calzada, E., Paradan Haber Ver, NTV Yayınları, İstanbul, 2013. [In Turkish]
9. Dever, A., Spor Sosyolojisi, Başlık Yayın Grubu, İstanbul, 2010. [In Turkish]
10. Doğru, C., "Futbol Endüstrisinde Rekabetçi Dengenin Oluşturulmasına Matematiksel Bir Yaklaşım: Ücret tavanı modeli". International Journal of Economic and Administrative Studies.19.pp. 110-127, 2010. [In Turkish]
11. Coates, D., and Humphreys, B. R., "Ticket Prices, Concessions and Attendance at Professional Sporting Events" International Journal of Sport Finance.3.pp.161-170, 2007.
12. Giulianotti, R., "Supporters, Followers, Fans, and a Taxonomy of Spectator Identities in Football" Journal of Sport and Social Issues.26.pp.25-46, 2002.
13. Hunt, K. A., Bristol, T., and Bashaw, R. E., A conceptual approach to classifying sports fans. Journal of Services Marketing.13.pp. 439-452,1987.
14. Katırcı, H., "Türk Spor Kulüplerinde İletişim Yönetimi: Türkiye Profesyonel Futbol Liglerinde Yer Alan Spor Kulüplerinin İletişim Uygulamalarına Yönelik Bir Araştırma" Anadolu üniversitesi spor bilimleri dergisi.9.pp.149-168, 2009. [In Turkish]
15. Katırcı, H., and Yüce, A., "What A Football Spectator Wants: Male Perspective" International journal of humanities and management sciences (IJMS).10.pp.76-79, 2016.
16. Klose, A., Futbol ve Kültürü, İletişim Yayınlar, İstanbul, 2001. [In Turkish]
17. Kuper, S., and Szymanski, S., Futbolun Şifreleri, İthaki Yayınları, İstanbul, 2010. [In Turkish]
18. Soriano, F., Gol: Top Ağlarla Şans Eseri Buluşmuyor, NTV Yayınları, İstanbul, 2012. [In Turkish]
19. Sönmezöğlü, U., and Çoknaz, D., Yönetici Bakış Açısıyla Spor Kulüplerinde Kurumsallaşma (Spor Toto Süper Lig Örneği). E-Journal of New World Sciences Academy.9.pp.1-21, 2013. [In Turkish]
20. Stemmler, T., Futbolun Kısa Tarihi, Dost Kitapevi Yayınları, Ankara, 2000.
21. Wahl, A., Ayaktopu Futbolun Öyküsü, Yapıkeredi Yayınları, 2005. [In Turkish]
22. Sutton, W. A., McDonald, M. A., Milne, G. R., and Cimperman, J., "Creating and fostering fan identification in professional sports" Sport Marketing Quarterly.6.pp.15-22,1997.
23. Wann, D. L., and Branscombe, N. R. "Die-Hard and Fair-Weather Fans: Effects of Identification on BIRGing and CORFing Tendencies" Journal of Sport and Social Issues.14.pp.103-117,1990.
24. Wann, D. L., and Branscombe, N. R., "Sports fans: Measuring degree of identification with their team" International Journal of Sport Psychology.24.pp.1-17,1993
25. Wann, D. L., Tucker, K. B., and Schrader, M. P., "An exploratory examination of the factors influencing the origination, continuation, and cessation of identification with sports teams" Perceptual and motor skills.82.pp.995-1001, 1996.
26. Talimciler, A., Türkiye'de Futbol Fanatizmi ve Medya İlişkisi, Bağlam Yayınları, Ankara, 2014. [In Turkish]
27. Zelyurt, M. K., Türkiyede Futbol Şiddetinin Sosyolojik Açısından İncelenmesi ve Çözüm Önerileri. Marmara Üniversitesi. Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, 2014. [In Turkish]
28. <http://www.futbolekonomi.com/index.php/haberler-makaleler/genel/122-tugrul-aksar/3060-passo-lig-passo-eziyetpassoligkart-e-bileteticketing-futbol-.html> (2014),e.t. (Nisan 10, 2015) [In Turkish]
29. <http://spor.internethaber.com/spor/spor-gundemi/tff-passoligde-neden-cark-etti-206030> (2015),e.t. (Ocak 8, 2017) [In Turkish]
30. <http://www.passolig.com.tr/nedir> (2017),e.t. (Nisan 11, 2015) [In Turkish]
31. http://www.transfermarkt.com.tr/superlig/besuc-herzahlen/wettbewerb/TR1/saison_id/2014/plus/1 (2015),e.t. (Mayıs 31, 2015). [In Turkish]