

The Big Three: Examining the Relationship Between Fanaticism, Sports Team Evangelism and Hooliganism

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Öz

The aim of this study is to determine the levels of fanaticism, sports team evangelism and hooliganism of football fans living in Erzurum and to examine the relationship between these concepts. The research group consists of fans residing in Erzurum and aged 18 and over. "Personal Information Form" was used to determine the demographic information of the fans, "Sports Team Emotional Attachment Scale" was used to determine the levels of fanaticism, "Sports Team Evangelism Scale" was used to determine the levels of sports team evangelism, and "Aggression Scale in Sports" was used to determine the levels of hooliganism. After the normality analyses of the data, t-test was applied in paired group comparisons, Anova test was applied in multiple group comparisons, and Pearson correlation analysis was applied to determine the relationships between the variables. There was a high positive relationship between fanaticism and sports team evangelism; It was found that there was a positive and low-level relationship between fanaticism and hooliganism and a positive and low level relationship between sports team evangelism and hooliganism. As a result, it was concluded that fans with high levels of fanaticism had a low level of hooliganism attitude, while fans with high levels of sports team evangelism had a low level of hooliganism attitude. However, it was determined that sports team evangelist fans have a higher level of hooliganistic attitude compared to fanatic fans.

Keywords: Fanaticism, Sports team evangelism, Hooliganism

Üç Büyükler: Fanatizm, Spor Takımı Evangelizmi ve Holiganizm Arasındaki İlişkinin İncelenmesi

Abstract

Bu çalışmanın amacı, Erzurum'da yaşayan futbol taraftarlarının fanatizm, spor takımı evangelizmi ve holiganizm düzeylerini belirleyerek, bu kavramlar arasındaki ilişkiyi incelemektir. Araştırma grubunu Erzurum'da ikamet eden, 18 yaş ve üzeri taraftarlar oluşturmaktadır. Taraftarların demografik bilgilerini belirlemek için "Kişisel Bilgi Formu", fanatizm düzeylerini belirlemek için "Spor Takımına Duygusal Bağlılık Ölçeği", spor takımı evangelizmi düzeylerini belirlemek için "Spor Takımı Evangelizmi Ölçeği", holiganizm düzeylerini belirlemek için "Sporda Saldırganlık Ölçeği" kullanılmıştır. Verilerin normallik analizleri yapıldıktan sonra ikili grup karşılaştırmalarında t-testi, çoklu grup karşılaştırmalarında Anova testi, değişkenler arasındaki ilişkileri saptamak için Pearson korelasyon analizi uygulanmıştır. Fanatizm ve spor takımı evangelizmi arasında pozitif yönde yüksek düzeyde ($r=0.720$; $p<0.001$); fanatizm ile holiganizm arasında pozitif yönde düşük düzeyde; spor takımı evangelizmi ile holiganizm arasında ise pozitif yönde düşük düzeyde bir ilişki olduğu tespit edilmiştir. Sonuç olarak fanatizm düzeyi yüksek olan taraftarların düşük seviyede holiganizm tutumuna sahip olduğu gözlenmiştir. Benzer şekilde spor takımı evangelizmi düzeyi yüksek olan taraftarların da düşük seviyede holiganizm tutumuna sahip olduğu sonucuna ulaşılmıştır. Buna rağmen, spor takımı evangelisti olanların fanatiklere göre daha yüksek holiganistik tutuma sahip olduğu belirlenmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Fanatizm, Spor takımı evangelizmi, Holiganizm

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INTRODUCTION

There are various dimensions of fandom in sports. These dimensions are related to the attitudes and behaviors of the fans before, during and after the match. The behavior of supporters in the form of love, defensiveness and violence are some of the problems of the contemporary world that need to be examined (Tietjen, 2023). The concept of fanaticism is expressed as a passionate attachment to individuals, groups or teams in areas such as politics, entertainment and sports (Eker, 2010). Concepts such as loyalty, commitment, passion and enthusiasm are commonly used to describe fanaticism. Many authors argue that this type of commitment and enthusiasm often brings new consumers and fans to the product or brand (Pimentel & Reynolds, 2004). Emotional attachment to a brand's products, such as computers, bags, etc., also overlaps with fanaticism (Luedicke et al., 2010; Thompson et al., 2016). Loyalty and enthusiasm for the team you support is important for being called a fanatic (Passmore, 1990). Fanaticism is respected in sports that are watched with high interest by spectators. People who travel from city to city to be part of the action are the ones who are the real fans (Clotfelter, 2015). In the world of the 21st century, the concept of fanaticism is more prevalent in football than in any other sport (Eker, 2010).

Another type of fan behavior worthy of study is the sports team evangelism. Sports team evangelism (eFangelism) stems from the concept of evangelism (Dwyer et al., 2015). Evangelism is defined as the process of spreading one's positive beliefs to others, encouraging them to interact with their favorite objects (Matzler et al., 2007). There are many definitions of evangelism in many fields. In Christianity, evangelism is defined as "attracting the attention of non-believers, persuading, encouraging and reporting good events" (Anggraini, 2018). Evangelism in marketing is defined as "a concept that allows a positive view and strategy to gain strength or facilitates the achievement of the goal" (Collins et al., 2015). Brand evangelism is defined as "attempts to positively influence and persuade purchase intentions, in addition to spreading positive thoughts about the brand by word of mouth" (Pimentel & Reynolds, 2004). Evangelism in sports (eFangelism) is defined as "a concept used by those who follow sports with interest to see the teams they support as higher than other teams, to promote their teams, to advocate for them, to encourage others to support them and to indicate their belonging to their teams." (Dwyer et al., 2015). Social media allows fans to exhibit evangelistic behavior thanks to its sharing and promotion features. The pervasive nature of social media parallels evangelism and plays a mediating role in the increase of sports team evangelists.

Attending matches with the intention of engaging in violent behavior with supporters of another team is called hooliganism (Rookwood & Pearson, 2010). Hooliganism is considered to be violent acts by sports fans, both individually and collectively (Kossakowski, 2017). Harrington (1968) proposed a number of dimensions of hooliganism: rioting at football matches, bullying, threatening behavior and abusive support. The term hooliganism began to be associated with violent and disruptive events in sports, particularly by football club supporters' groups in England in the late 1950s and 1960s. During this period, incidents of social unrest and violence involving football fans led to the recognition of hooliganism in connection with sports (Dunning et al., 1982). After the 1960s, fan hooliganism became a worrying phenomenon in European countries (Kerr & De Kock, 2002).

Hooliganism is also on the rise in Latin American countries. Brazil is known to have the highest number of deaths from spectator aggression (Brandão et al., 2020). Social factors in the emergence of violent approaches are thought to be effective (Spaaij, 2014). Many factors, such as political and economic events, social variables and technological developments, influence the development of hooliganism (Armstrong, 1998; Karababa et al., 2024). Hooliganism is not perceived in the same way everywhere and is difficult to compare, as can be seen from the reflections on hooliganism in different countries. Hooliganism in different leagues, geographical regions and clubs within a country can manifest itself in different ways. This diversity makes it more difficult to combat hooliganism in sport. It also makes it more complex (Spaaij, 2005).

The loyalty that sports fans feel towards their teams creates different dimensions of the concept of fandom through different behaviors and approaches. These dimensions range from love and passion for the team to advocacy, advertising, and even violence (Dwyer et al., 2015). Fans who are deeply devoted to their team, attend matches regularly and sincerely support their team's successes can generally be described as "fanatics". However, this commitment is not limited to individual spectatorship; individuals who love their team and instill this in others, encouraging others to support their team, advertising their team and trying to spread the ideology of fandom can be called "sports team evangelists". These people share their love and passion for their team with their social circles, bringing the culture of fandom and loyalty to a wider audience (Crawford, 2003). Individuals who overstep the boundaries of love and passion, display a more aggressive attitude and express their loyalty to their team through violent behavior can be defined as "hooligans". Hooligans do not limit their fan identity to support but may also harbor violent hostility towards opposing teams and their fans, and demonstrate this through physical action (Spaaij, 2014). The violent dimension of hooliganism, perceived as fan aggression, can disrupt the orderly conduct of sport, which can threaten the safety and sustainability of sport at an organizational level.

In the world of sports, positive fan approaches such as fanaticism and sports team evangelism can have significant positive effects in areas such as sports branding, sports marketing and sports advertising. This type of fandom can contribute to the economic and cultural development of the sports industry. It can also increase brand value and strengthen fan loyalty. Fandom with a bad reputation, such as hooliganism, have the potential to cause violence and chaos and threaten the safety and effectiveness of sports organizations. This situation not only prevents sporting activities from being conducted in a healthy manner but can also have a negative impact on the reputation and financial structure of the sports industry.

In light of the growing importance of understanding different dimensions of fandom in sports, this study aims to explore the interrelations among fanaticism, sports team evangelism, and hooliganism. Drawing on the reviewed literature, the study proposes that while both fanaticism and evangelism represent strong forms of team loyalty, they may lead to diverging behavioral outcomes. To empirically test these assumptions, the following hypotheses are formulated: (H1), (H2), and (H3).

To better understand how different fan behaviors manifest and interact, this study investigates the relationships between fanaticism, sports team evangelism, and hooliganism. Based on the literature reviewed, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H₁: There is a positive relationship between fanaticism and sports team evangelism.

(Justification: Fanatics are more likely to promote their team and attempt to convert others into fans, aligning with the definition of evangelism.)

H₂: There is a positive relationship between fanaticism and hooliganism.

(Justification: Intense emotional attachment may, in some individuals, lead to aggressive behaviors toward rival teams and their supporters.)

H₃: There is a negative relationship between sports team evangelism and hooliganism.

(Justification: Evangelism focuses on positive advocacy and persuasion rather than aggression.)

METHOD

Study Design

This research was conducted using the Relational Survey Model. This model, which is a quantitative research method, aims to systematically analyze the relationships between two or more variables. It is defined as an approach that aims to identify interactions, trends and tendencies that increase or decrease together between variables. This model provides insight into possible cause-and-effect relationships by examining the relationships between variables using statistical methods. Researchers can make various scientific inferences by evaluating the correlations between the variables determined by this method (Büyüköztürk et al., 2024; Christensen et al., 2015; Karasar, 2021).

Participants

The universe of the study group consists of sports fans living in Erzurum province in 2025. The sample group of the study consists of a total of 837 participants, 417 females and 420 males, who were determined using the convenience sampling method and participated in the study voluntarily.

Table 1. Personal information of the participants

Variable	Group	N	%
Gender	Female	417	49.8
	Male	420	50.2
Age	Ages 18-22	531	63.4
	Ages 23-30	161	19.2
	Ages 31 or over	145	17.4
Marital Status	Single	648	77.4
	Married	189	22.6
Income Status	22.104 ₺ or less	487	58.2
	22.105-30.000 ₺	129	15.5
	30.001 ₺ or above	221	26.3
Supported Team	Beşiktaş	144	17.2
	Fenerbahçe	213	25.4
	Galatasaray	333	39.8
	Trabzonspor	38	4.5
	Erzurumspor	51	6.1
	Other Teams	58	6.9
Watching the Match in the Stadium	Yes, I went.	299	35.7
	No, I never went.	538	64.3
Watching Matches on TV or Smart Device	I watch all their matches without missing any.	257	30.7
	I only watch derbies or European matches.	185	22.1
	When I have free time, I sometimes watch it.	214	25.6
	I never watch the matches.	181	21.6
Purchasing Licensed Products	Yes, I'm buying it.	431	51.5
	No, I'm not buying it.	406	48.5
TOTAL		837	100.0

Table 1 shows that 49.8% (417 people) of the participants were female and 50.2% (420 people) were male. 63.4% (531 people) of the participants are 18-22 years old, 19.2% (161 people) are 23-30 years old, 17.4% (145 people) are 31 years old or older. 77.4% (648 people) of the participants are single, 22.6% (189 people) are married. 58.2% (487 people) of the participants have an income of 22.104 TL or less, 15.5% (129 people) have an income between 22.105-30.000 TL, and 26.3% (221 people) have an income of 30.001 TL or more. 17.2% (144 people) support Beşiktaş, 25.4% (213 people) Fenerbahçe, 39.8% (333 people) Galatasaray, 4.5% (38 people) Trabzonspor, 6.1% (51 people) Erzurumspor and 6.9% (58 people) support other teams.

It is seen that 35.7% (299 people) of the participants go to the stadium to watch a match, 64.3% (538 people) never go to the stadium to watch a match; 30.7% (257 people) watch all of their team's matches, 22.1% (185 people) only watch derby or European matches, 25.6% (214 people) occasionally watch their team's matches on TV or smart devices if they have free time, and 21.6% (181 people) never watch their team's matches on TV or smart devices. 51.5% (431 people) of the participants purchased licensed products, while 48.5% (406 people) did not purchase licensed products.

Data Collection Tools

Personal Information Form: This form was designed by the researchers to determine the demographic information of the research group (gender, age, marital status, income status, team supported, watching matches in the stadium, watching matches on TV or smart device, and purchasing licensed products).

Emotional Commitment to the Sports Team Scale (ECSTS): The scale, developed by Dwyer et al. (2015) and adapted to Turkish by Erdoğan and Şirin (2021), consists of 7 items and 2 sub-dimensions (Cognitive Investment and Emotional Investment). The scale is a 7-point Likert type and has the evaluation as “1: I completely disagree; 7: I completely agree.” In the reliability analysis conducted by Erdoğan and Şirin (2021) during the adaptation process, the Cronbach alpha (a) reliability value was calculated as 0.94 for the Cognitive Investment sub-dimension; 0.95 for the Emotional Investment sub-dimension and 0.97 for the total of the scale. The AVE values were found to be 0.87 for the Cognitive Investment sub-dimension and 0.85 for the Emotional Investment sub-dimension. The CR values were reported to be 0.95 for the Cognitive Investment sub-dimension and 0.96 for the Emotional Investment sub-dimension. In the reliability analysis carried out in the light of the data obtained within the scope of this study, the Cronbach alpha (a) reliability value was calculated as 0.89 for the Cognitive Investment sub-dimension; 0.96 for the Emotional Investment sub-dimension and 0.95 for the total of the scale. The increase in the average score obtained from the scale indicates an increase in the level of emotional commitment to the sports team.

Sport Evangelism Scale (SES): The scale, developed by Dwyer et al. (2015) and adapted to Turkish by Yüksekbiçgili (2017), consists of 12 items and 4 sub-dimensions (Advocate, Advertise, Antagonize and Assimilate). The scale is a 5-point Likert type and has the evaluation as “1: I strongly disagree; 5: I strongly agree.”. In the reliability analysis conducted by Yüksekbiçgili (2017) during the adaptation process, the Cronbach alpha (a) reliability value was calculated as 0.830 for the Advocate sub-dimension; 0.882 for the Advertise sub-dimension; 0.826 for the Antagonize sub-dimension; 0.823 for the Assimilate sub-dimension and 0.936 for the total of the scale. It was reported that all items were above the threshold load value (0.40). In addition, the total variance explained by the unidimensional scale was found to be 58.501%. In the reliability analysis conducted in light of the data obtained within the scope of this study, the Cronbach alpha (a) reliability value was calculated as 0.801 for the Advocate sub-dimension; 0.864 for the Advertise sub-dimension; 0.879 for the Antagonize sub-dimension; 0.806 for the Assimilate sub-dimension and 0.937 for the total of the scale. The increase in the average score obtained from the scale indicates an increase in the level of sports team evangelism.

Aggression Scale in Sports (ASS): Based on the Spectator Aggression and Violence Scale in Sports developed by Şanlı and Güçlü (2015), the scale was re-evaluated by Güçlü et al. (2022) with new structural items and presented as a reliable and usable measurement tool. The Spectator Aggression in Sports Scale consists of 18 items and 3 sub-dimensions (Physical Aggression, Verbal Aggression and Provocation). The scale is a 5-point Likert type and has the evaluation as “1: I completely disagree; 5: I completely agree.”. In the reliability analysis conducted by Güçlü et al. (2022) during the adaptation process, the Cronbach alpha (a) reliability value was calculated as 0.93 for the Physical Aggression sub-dimension; 0.92 for the Verbal Aggression sub-dimension; 0.90 for the Provocation sub-dimension and 0.94 for the total of the scale. When the Average Variance Explained (AVE) and Composite Reliability (CR) values of the scale sub-dimensions were examined, the AVE value of the Physical Aggression sub-dimension was 0.718 and CR value was 0.947; the AVE value of the Verbal Aggression sub-dimension was 0.714 and CR value was 0.937; and the AVE value of the

Provocation sub-dimension was 0.781 and CR value was 0.934. In the reliability analysis carried out in the light of the data obtained within the scope of this study, the Cronbach alpha (a) reliability value was calculated as 0.94 for the Physical Aggression sub-dimension; 0.94 for the Verbal Aggression sub-dimension; 0.92 for the Provocation sub-dimension and 0.96 for the total of the scale. The increase in the average score obtained from the scale indicates an increase in the level of spectator aggression in sports.

Ethical Approval

Ethics committee approval was received for this study from the Sub-Ethics Committee of Atatürk University Faculty of Sport Sciences (Date: January 23, 2025; Document No: E-70400699-050.02.04-2500021495; File No: 2025/01; Decision No: 7).

Data Collection

The research data was collected using two different methods: online and face-to-face via Google Forms. The data were collected in March 2025. In the online survey form, all questions were mandatory to ensure data integrity and to prevent incomplete answers. The aim was to obtain more consistent and complete data by ensuring that participants answered every question. In addition, the necessary technical measures have been taken to prevent the same person from completing the form more than once. During the face-to-face data collection process, direct interaction with the participants was provided to encourage better understanding of the questions and correct answers. The use of these two different methods together was adopted as a strategic approach to increase the reliability of the data and the representativeness of the research.

Analysis of Data

As a result of the skewness and kurtosis tests performed to determine the distribution of the data, it was determined that the research data had a distribution between -1.5 and +1.5, meeting the criteria for normal distribution, and there were no data that could create an extreme value problem (Table 2). According to Tabachnick et al. (2013), skewness and kurtosis values between -1.5 and +1.5 are acceptable criteria for normality of data.

Table 2. Normality test results for scale scores

Scale	N	\bar{X}	S	Min.	Max.	Skewness	Kurtosis
ECSTS	837	5.12	1.65	1	7	-0.826	-0.181
SES	837	3.29	1.01	1	5	-0.245	-0.573
ASS	837	1.87	0.98	1	5	1.205	0.840

When Table 2 is examined, it is seen that the skewness value of ECSTS is -.826 and the kurtosis value is -0.181; the skewness value of SES is -0.245 and the kurtosis value is -0.573; the skewness value of ASS is 1.205 and the kurtosis value is 0.840. Since the mentioned values are distributed between -1.5 and +1.5, it can be said that the normality assumption is met and the data belonging to the three scales show a normal distribution (Tabachnick et al., 2013). For this reason, Independent Samples t-Test was used for two group comparisons, One-Way ANOVA was used for three or more group comparisons, and Pearson Correlation Test

was used to examine the relationship between variables. Tukey test, one of the Post Hoc tests, was chosen to determine the difference between the groups.

FINDINGS

Table 3. Comparison of the participants' scores on ECSTS, SES, ASS and the sub-dimensions of these scales according to gender

Scale	Sub-dimensions	Gender	N	\bar{X}	S	t	p
ECSTS	Cognitive Investment	Female	417	4.73	1.70	-5.09	0.000***
		Male	420	5.34	1.73		
	Emotional Investment	Female	417	5.00	1.69	-3.22	0.001**
		Male	420	5.38	1.71		
	ECSTS Total	Female	417	4.89	1.61	-4.21	0.000***
		Male	420	5.36	1.65		
SES	Advocate	Female	417	3.31	1.00	-6.13	0.000***
		Male	420	3.74	1.04		
	Advertise	Female	417	2.82	1.13	-6.49	0.000***
		Male	420	3.33	1.12		
	Antagonize	Female	417	3.01	1.20	-5.20	0.000***
		Male	420	3.44	1.17		
	Assimilate	Female	417	3.25	1.15	-4.78	0.000***
		Male	420	3.63	1.18		
	SES Total	Female	417	3.06	0.99	-6.55	0.000***
		Male	420	3.51	0.98		
ASS	Physical Aggression	Female	417	1.45	0.79	-4.84	0.000***
		Male	420	1.76	1.03		
	Verbal Aggression	Female	417	1.68	0.96	-6.68	0.000***
		Male	420	2.20	1.24		
	Provocation	Female	417	1.91	1.03	-6.02	0.000***
		Male	420	2.39	1.26		
	ASS Total	Female	417	1.66	0.84	-6.36	0.000***
		Male	420	2.08	1.07		

p< 0.01, * p< 0.001

Looking at Table 3, a statistically significant difference was found in the comparison of the average scores of ECSTS, SES and ASS and the average scores of all sub-dimensions of all three scales according to the gender variable of the participants ($p < 0.01$). Men had higher mean scores than women across all three scales and their sub-dimensions.

Table 4. Comparison of the participants' scores on ECSTS, SES, ASS and the sub-dimensions of these scales according to marital status

Scale	Sub-dimensions	Marital Status	N	\bar{X}	S	t	p
ECSTS	Cognitive Investment	Single	648	5.16	1.70	-3.81	0.000***
		Married	189	4.61	1.82		
	Emotional Investment	Single	648	5.26	1.69	-2.13	0.033*
		Married	189	4.96	1.75		
	ECSTS TOTAL	Single	648	5.22	1.62	-2.99	0.003**
		Married	189	4.81	1.70		
SES	Advocate	Single	648	3.58	1.03	-2.65	0.008**
		Married	189	3.35	1.06		
	Advertise	Single	648	3.13	1.13	-2.51	0.012*
		Married	189	2.89	1.20		
	Antagonize	Single	648	3.31	1.17	-3.63	0.000***
		Married	189	2.95	1.27		

Table 4. Continue...

Scale	Sub-dimensions	Marital Status	N	\bar{X}	<i>S</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
SES	Assimilate	Single	648	3.54	1.15	-4.60	0.000***
		Married	189	3.10	1.22		
	SES TOTAL	Single	648	3.36	0.99	-3,61	0.000***
		Married	189	3.05	1.08		
ASS	Physical Aggression	Single	648	1.68	0.96	-4.28	0.000***
		Married	189	1.36	0.76		
	Verbal Aggression	Single	648	2.06	1.18	-5.65	0.000***
		Married	189	1.53	0.87		
	Provocation	Single	648	2.28	1.20	-6.14	0.000***
		Married	189	1.70	0.95		
	ASS TOTAL	Single	648	1.97	1.02	-5.97	0.000***
		Married	189	1.51	0.77		

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

When Table 4 is examined, statistically significant differences are observed in the mean scores of the ECSTS, SES, and ASS scales, as well as in all sub-dimensions of these scales, according to the marital status variable of the participants ($p < 0.05$).

In all dimensions, the mean scores of single participants are higher than those of married participants. This situation is consistent across the cognitive and emotional sub-dimensions of ECSTS, the advocate, advertise, antagonize, and assimilate sub-dimensions of SES, and the physical aggression, verbal aggression, and provocation sub-dimensions of ASS. Accordingly, the overall total scores of each of the three scales also differ significantly in favor of single participants.

These findings show that the difference between the groups is statistically significant in all measured areas, and that this significance is consistent across the general and sub-dimensional levels of all three scales.

Table 5. Comparison of the participants' scores from ECSTS, SES, ASS and the sub-dimensions of these scales according to the variable of watching the match in the stadium

Scale	Sub-dimensions	Watching the Match in the Stadium	N	\bar{X}	<i>S</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
ECSTS	Cognitive Investment	No, I never went.	538	4.73	1.79	-7.05	0.000***
		Yes, I went.	299	5.59	1.51		
	Emotional Investment	No, I never went.	538	4.94	1.79	-5.77	0.000***
		Yes, I went.	299	5.64	1.46		
	ECSTS TOTAL	No, I never went.	538	4.85	1.71	-6.63	0.000***
		Yes, I went.	299	5.62	1.40		
SES	Advocate	No, I never went.	538	3.32	1.04	-7.88	0.000***
		Yes, I went.	299	3.90	0.95		
	Advertise	No, I never went.	538	2.83	1.10	-8.55	0.000***
		Yes, I went.	299	3.52	1.11		
	Antagonize	No, I never went.	538	3.00	1.19	-7.43	0.000***
		Yes, I went.	299	3.63	1.12		
	Assimilate	No, I never went.	538	3.21	1.18	-7.74	0.000***
		Yes, I went.	299	3.85	1.06		
	SES TOTAL	No, I never went.	538	3.06	0.99	-9.08	0.000***
		Yes, I went.	299	3.70	0.92		

Table 5. Continue...

Scale	Sub-dimensions	Watching the Match in the Stadium	N	\bar{X}	S	t	p
ASS	Physical Aggression	No, I never went.	538	1.46	0.74	-6.19	0.000***
		Yes, I went.	299	1.87	1.15		
	Verbal Aggression	No, I never went.	538	1.71	0.96	-8.05	0.000***
		Yes, I went.	299	2.35	1.31		
	Provocation	No, I never went.	538	1.95	1.05	-6.96	0.000***
		Yes, I went.	299	2.52	1.29		
	ASS TOTAL	No, I never went.	538	1.68	0.82	-7.71	0.000***
		Yes, I went.	299	2.21	1.15		

*** p<0.001

As shown in Table 3, significant differences were found across all three scales and their sub-dimensions according to whether participants watched a match at the stadium ($p < 0.001$). Participants who had attended a match in a stadium had higher mean scores across all three scales and their sub-dimensions than those who had never attended a match.

Table 6. Comparison of the participants' scores from ECSTS, SES, ASS and the sub-dimensions of these scales according to the variable of watching matches on TV or smart device

Scale	Sub-dimensions	TV	N	\bar{X}	S	F	p	Tukey
ECSTS	Cognitive Investment	^a 1	257	6.14	1.24	98.73	0.000***	a>b,c>d
		^b 2	185	4.90	1.44			
		^c 3	214	5.01	1.53			
		^d 4	181	3.64	1.83			
	Emotional Investment	^a 1	257	6.07	1.28	77.75	0.000***	a>b,c>d
		^b 2	185	5.24	1.47			
		^c 3	214	5.24	1.48			
		^d 4	181	3.83	1.86			
	ECSTS TOTAL	^a 1	257	6.10	1.18	96.65	0.000***	a>b,c>d
		^b 2	185	5.10	1.37			
		^c 3	214	5.14	1.39			
		^d 4	181	3.75	1.79			
SES	Advocate	^a 1	257	4.17	0.79	103.43	0.000***	a>b,c>d
		^b 2	185	3.49	0.87			
		^c 3	214	3.53	0.89			
		^d 4	181	2.64	1.04			
	Advertise	^a 1	257	3.71	1.00	65.39	0.000***	a>b,c>d
		^b 2	185	3.00	1.06			
		^c 3	214	3.04	1.10			
		^d 4	181	2.30	1.00			
	Antagonize	^a 1	257	3.84	1.01	58.34	0.000***	a>b,c>d
		^b 2	185	3.20	1.11			
		^c 3	214	3.19	1.14			
		^d 4	181	2.42	1.14			
	Assimilate	^a 1	257	4.12	0.89	84.78	0.000***	a>b,c>d
		^b 2	185	3.47	1.05			
		^c 3	214	3.39	1.08			
		^d 4	181	2.51	1.15			
	SES TOTAL	^a 1	257	3.93	0.78	101.42	0.000***	a>b,c>d
		^b 2	185	3.25	0.86			
		^c 3	214	3.26	0.90			
		^d 4	181	2.45	0.95			

Table 6. Continue...

Scale	Sub-dimensions	TV	N	\bar{X}	S	F	p	Tukey
ASS	Physical Aggression	^a 1	257	1.84	1.11	9.71	0.000***	a>b,c,d b>d
		^b 2	185	1.60	0.90			
		^c 3	214	1.52	0.85			
		^d 4	181	1.39	0.66			
	Verbal Aggression	^a 1	257	2.43	1.30	29.50	0.000***	a>b,c,d b>d c>d
		^b 2	185	1.86	1.04			
		^c 3	214	1.78	1.06			
		^d 4	181	1.49	0.79			
	Provocation	^a 1	257	2.69	1.29	32.64	0.000***	a>b,c,d b>d c>d
		^b 2	185	2.05	1.07			
		^c 3	214	1.99	1.11			
		^d 4	181	1.68	0.84			
	ASS TOTAL	^a 1	257	2.28	1.12	26.28	0.000***	a>b,c,d b>d c>d
		^b 2	185	1.81	0.92			
		^c 3	214	1.74	0.92			
		^d 4	181	1.50	0.68			

*** p< 0.001, 1: I watch all their matches without missing any., 2: I only watch derbies or European matches., 3: When I have free time, I sometimes watch it., 4: I never watch the matches.

Looking at Table 6, a significant difference was found when comparing the mean scores of ECSTS, SES and ASS and the mean scores of all sub-dimensions of all three scales according to whether participants watched their team's matches on television or smart devices (p< 0.001). It was found that participants who watched all their team's matches without missing any had higher average scores on the ECSTS and its sub-dimensions and the SES and all its sub-dimensions than those who only watched derby or European matches, watched occasionally in their free time and did not watch at all. It was also found that participants who only watched their team's derby or European matches and participants who watched occasionally when they had free time had higher average scores than participants who never watched.

In addition, in all of the ASS and its sub-dimensions, it is seen that participants who watch all of their team's matches without missing them have a higher average score than participants who only watch derbies or European matches, occasionally watch when they have free time, and never watch. It has been found that participants who only watch their team's derby or European matches have a higher average score than participants who do not watch any. It is seen that participants who watch occasionally when they have free time have higher average scores than participants who never watch.

Table 7. Comparison of the participants' scores from ECSTS, SES, ASS and the sub-dimensions of these scales according to the variable of watching matches on TV or smart device

Scale	Sub-dimensions	Purchasing Licensed Products	N	\bar{X}	S	t	p
ECSTS	Cognitive Investment	No, I'm not buying it.	406	4.41	1.81	-10.72	0.000***
		Yes, I'm buying it.	431	5.63	1.46		
	Emotional Investment	No, I'm not buying it.	406	4.61	1.82	-10.02	0.000***
		Yes, I'm buying it.	431	5.74	1.39		
	ECSTS TOTAL	No, I'm not buying it.	406	4.53	1.74	-10.87	0.000***
		Yes, I'm buying it.	431	5.69	1.33		
SES	Advocate	No, I'm not buying it.	406	3.15	1.07	-10.83	0.000***
		Yes, I'm buying it.	431	3.88	0.89		
	Advertise	No, I'm not buying it.	406	2.63	1.11	-11.77	0.000***
		Yes, I'm buying it.	431	3.50	1.02		
	Antagonize	No, I'm not buying it.	406	2.88	1.20	-8.46	0.000***
		Yes, I'm buying it.	431	3.55	1.11		
ASS	Assimilate	No, I'm not buying it.	406	2.97	1.19	-12.22	0.000***
		Yes, I'm buying it.	431	3.89	0.99		
	SES TOTAL	No, I'm not buying it.	406	2.88	1.01	-12.34	0.000***
		Yes, I'm buying it.	431	3.67	0.85		
	Physical Aggression	No, I'm not buying it.	406	1.55	0.84	-1.74	0.081
		Yes, I'm buying it.	431	1.66	1.00		
ASS	Verbal Aggression	No, I'm not buying it.	406	1.76	1.00	-4.33	0.000***
		Yes, I'm buying it.	431	2.10	1.23		
	Provocation	No, I'm not buying it.	406	1.99	1.09	-3.97	0.000***
		Yes, I'm buying it.	431	2.31	1.23		
	ASS TOTAL	No, I'm not buying it.	406	1.74	0.89	-3.62	0.000***
		Yes, I'm buying it.	431	1.99	1.05		

*** p< 0.001

Looking at Table 7, a significant difference was found when comparing the mean scores of the ECSTS, SES and ASS and the mean scores of all three scales according to the variable of purchasing licensed products from the participants' teams (except for physical aggression, one of the ASS sub-dimensions) ($p < 0.001$). In the average score of all three scales and in the average score of all sub-dimensions of all three scales (except Physical Aggression from the ASS sub-dimensions), it is seen that the participants who purchased their teams' licensed products have higher average scores than the participants who did not purchase.

Table 8. Comparison of the participants' scores from ECSTS, SES, ASS and the sub-dimensions of these scales according to the variable of age

Scale	Sub-dimensions	Age	N	\bar{X}	S	F	p	Tukey
ECSTS	Cognitive Investment	^a 1	531	5.15	1.71	7.567	0.001**	a,b>c
		^b 2	161	5.14	1.70			
		^c 3	145	4.53	1.82			
	Emotional Investment	^a 1	531	5.27	1.69	4.444	0.012*	a,b>c
		^b 2	161	5.27	1.66			
		^c 3	145	4.81	1.79			
	ECSTS TOTAL	^a 1	531	5.22	1.62	6.241	0.002**	a,b>c
		^b 2	161	5.21	1.61			
		^c 3	145	4.69	1.73			

Table 8. Continue...

Scale	Sub-dimensions	Age	N	\bar{X}	S	F	p	Tukey
SES	Advocate	^a 1	531	3.56	1.02	4.053	0.018*	a,b>c
		^b 2	161	3.60	1.09			
		^c 3	145	3.30	1.06			
	Advertise	^a 1	531	3.13	1.12	3.307	0.037*	a,b>c
		^b 2	161	3.12	1.21			
		^c 3	145	2.85	1.19			
	Antagonize	^a 1	531	3.37	1.14	14.068	0.000***	a>b>c
		^b 2	161	3.11	1.27			
		^c 3	145	2.80	1.24			
	Assimilate	^a 1	531	3.60	1.11	18.212	0.000***	a>b>c
		^b 2	161	3.35	1.29			
		^c 3	145	2.96	1.18			
	SES TOTAL	^a 1	531	3.38	0.95	9.309	0.000***	a,b>c
		^b 2	161	3.28	1.10			
		^c 3	145	2.97	1.07			
ASS	Physical Aggression	^a 1	531	1.71	0.97	10.484	0.000***	a>b,c
		^b 2	161	1.51	0.89			
		^c 3	145	1.34	0.73			
	Verbal Aggression	^a 1	531	2.09	1.18	15.782	0.000***	a>b>c
		^b 2	161	1.82	1.13			
		^c 3	145	1.52	0.85			
	Provocation	^a 1	531	2.30	1.18	16.435	0.000***	a,b>c
		^b 2	161	2.10	1.26			
		^c 3	145	1.68	0.89			
	ASS TOTAL	^a 1	531	2.00	1.01	15.532	0.000***	a>b>c
		^b 2	161	1.78	0.98			
		^c 3	145	1.49	0.75			

*p< 0.05, **p< 0.01, *** p< 0.001, 1: Ages 18-22, 2: Ages 23-30, 3: Ages 31 or over

When Table 8 is examined, a significant difference was found in the comparison of the mean scores of ECSTS, SES and ASS and the mean scores of all sub-dimensions of all three scales according to the age variable of the participants (p< 0.05).

In all of the ECSTS and its sub-dimensions, participants aged 18-22 and 23-30 had significantly higher mean scores than participants aged 31 or over. Similarly, in SES and the “Advocate” and “Advertise” sub-dimensions of SES, it is seen that participants aged 18-22 and 23-30 have higher average scores than participants aged 31 or over. Moreover, in the “Antagonize” and “Assimilate” sub-dimensions, it is seen that participants aged 18-22 have higher average scores than participants aged 23-30 and 31 or older. In addition, it was determined that those aged 23-30 had a significantly higher average score than participants aged 31 or over. Furthermore, in the ASS and the “Verbal Aggression” sub-dimension of the ASS, it was found that participants aged 18-22 had significantly higher mean scores than participants aged 23-30 and 31 or older. Likewise, it was found that those aged 23-30 had significantly higher average scores than participants aged 31 or over. Additionally, in the “Physical Aggression” sub-dimension, participants aged 18-22 had significantly higher mean scores than participants aged 23-30 and 31 or older. Finally, in the “Provocation” sub-dimension, participants aged 18-22 and 23-30 had significantly higher mean scores than participants aged 31 or over.

Table 9. Relationship between ECSTS and its sub-dimensions, SES and its sub-dimensions, and ASS and its sub-dimensions

		ECSTS	ECSTS1	ECSTS2	SES	SES1	SES2	SES3	SES4	ASS	ASS1	ASS2	ASS3
ECSTS	r p	1											
ECSTS1	r p	.942 .000**	1										
ECSTS2	r p	.966 .000**	.824 .000**	1									
SES	r p	.720 .000**	.687 .000**	.689 .000**	1								
SES1	r p	.759 .000**	.714 .000**	.734 .000**	.865 .000**	1							
SES2	r p	.584 .000**	.552 .000**	.563 .000**	.907 .000**	.703 .000**	1						
SES3	r p	.582 .000**	.566 .000**	.548 .000**	.878 .000**	.671 .000**	.687 .000**	1					
SES4	r p	.667 .000**	.645 .000**	.632 .000**	.885 .000**	.726 .000**	.732 .000**	.758 .000**	1				
ASS	r p	.163 .000**	.187 .000**	.132 .000**	.328 .000**	.260 .000**	.310 .000**	.277 .000**	.316 .000**	1			
ASS1	r p	.065 .060	.076 .027*	.051 .138	.261 .000**	.167 .000**	.286 .000**	.223 .000**	.225 .000**	.905 .000**	1		
ASS2	r p	.172 .000**	.206 .000**	.132 .000**	.308 .000**	.262 .000**	.277 .000**	.257 .000**	.306 .000**	.956 .000**	.803 .000**	1	
ASS3	r p	.221 .000**	.242 .000**	.188 .000**	.343 .000**	.295 .000**	.298 .000**	.291 .000**	.349 .000**	.904 .000**	.688 .000**	.832 .000**	1

** p< 0.001 (Instead of ***, ** was deliberately used to preserve the aesthetic consistency of the table.), ECSTS1: Cognitive Investment, ECSTS2: Emotional Investment, SES1: Advocate, SES2: Advertise, SES3: Antagonize, SES4: Assimilate, ASS1: Physical Aggression, ASS2: Verbal Aggression, ASS3: Provocation

Table 9 shows the relationship between the participants' levels of fanaticism (ECSTS), sports team evangelism (SES) and hooliganism (ASS). According to Table 9, there was a high level of positive relationship between fanaticism and sports team evangelism ($r= 0.720$; $p< 0.001$); a low level of positive relationship between fanaticism and hooliganism ($r= 0.163$; $p< 0.001$); and a low level of positive relationship between sports team evangelism and hooliganism ($r= 0.328$; $p< 0.001$).

Table 10. Results of simple linear regression analysis predicting SES from ECSTS

Variable	b	SE	β	R	R ²	F	t	p
Constant	1.021	0.080	-	-	-	-	12.818	0.000***
ECSTS	0.443	0.015	0.720	0.720	0.518	897.897	29.965	0.000***

*** p< 0.001, Dependent Variable: SES

According to the regression analysis results in Table 10, fanaticism level (independent variable) has a significant and strong effect on sports team evangelism (dependent variable). The regression coefficient (b) of the level of fanaticism is 0.443, indicating that each unit increase in this variable leads to a 0.443 unit increase in sports team evangelism. When the explanatory power of the model is analyzed, the R^2 value is 0.518 and it is understood that the level of fanaticism explains 51.8% of the variance on sports team evangelism.

Table 11. Results of simple linear regression analysis predicting ASS from ECSTS

Variable	<i>b</i>	SE	β	R	R ²	F	t	p
Constant	1.373	0.110	-	-	-	-	12.465	0.000***
ECSTS	0.098	0.020	0.163	0.163	0.027	22.892	4.785	0.000***

*** $p < 0.001$, Dependent Variable: ASS

According to the regression analysis in Table 11, fanaticism level predicts hooliganism level significantly and positively ($b = 0.098$, $p < 0.001$). The model was statistically significant in general ($F(1,835) = 22.892$, $p < 0.001$). The standardized effect of fanaticism level on hooliganism level is significant ($b = 0.163$), although at a low level. The explanatory power of the model is low ($R^2 = 0.027$), indicating that the level of fanaticism explains only 2.7% of the total change in the level of hooliganism.

Table 12. Results of simple linear regression analysis predicting ASS from SES

Variable	<i>b</i>	SE	β	R	R ²	F	t	p
Constant	0.822	0.110	-	-	-	-	7.503	0.000***
SES	0.320	0.032	0.328	0.328	0.108	100.995	10.050	0.000***

*** $p < 0.001$, Dependent Variable: ASS

According to Table 12, sports team evangelism is a significant and positive predictor of hooliganism. The R value of the model is 0.328, indicating that there is a positive, low level relationship between the two variables. The R² value is 0.108, which means that evangelism explains 10.8% of the variance of hooliganism. The significance of the model is strongly supported by $F = 100.995$ and $p < 0.001$. The regression coefficient is 0.320 and the standard error is 0.032, indicating that evangelism has a direct and significant effect on hooliganism. The standardized Beta value of 0.328 reveals the strength of this effect. In short, as the individuals' evangelism for the sports team increases, their hooliganism levels also increase significantly.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This study examined the relationship between fanaticism, sports team evangelism and hooliganism among sports fans living in Erzurum and made comparisons with various variables. The ECSTS aims to reveal the level of participants' attitudes towards "fanaticism", the SES aims to reveal the level of attitudes towards "sports team evangelism", and the ASS aims to reveal the level of attitudes towards "hooliganism". In this context, when the means obtained from the scales show significant differences, an attempt has been made to interpret each scale in terms of the relevant concept with which it is associated.

Considering the mean scores of 837 participants determined by convenience sampling method within the framework of the universe-sample relationship within the scope of the research, it is seen that male participants have a significantly higher mean score than female participants in the total of ECSTS, SES and ASS and in all sub-dimensions of all three scales according to the gender variable. In this context, it can be said that male participants ($\bar{x}=5.36$,

$S=1.65$) have a higher level of fanatic attitude than female participants ($\bar{x}=4.89$, $S=1.61$). Again, it is seen that male participants ($\bar{x}=3.51$, $S=.98$) have a higher level of sports team evangelist attitude than female participants ($\bar{x}=3.06$, $S=.99$). Similarly, it can be said that men ($\bar{x}=2.08$, $S=1.07$) have a higher level of hooligan attitude than women ($\bar{x}=1.66$, $S=.84$). This situation can be explained by the importance and value men give to the team they support. Given that men in Türkiye are oriented towards team sports such as football from an early age and that sports culture is male-dominated, these results can be said to reflect social reality. It is seen that this result obtained from the study is similar to the results of various studies in the literature. For example, research conducted with the "Sports Team Identity Scale" developed by Wann and Branscombe (1993) revealed that men develop a stronger identification with sports teams than women and can exhibit more fanatic attitudes in this context. Similarly, Dietz-Uhler and Murrell (1999) noted that boys are more involved in sports, resulting in them developing higher levels of team commitment. The high proportion of men who follow sport, particularly team sports such as football, may lead them to develop a more emotional attachment to their teams and to develop fanatical or hooligan attitudes (Gantz & Wenner, 1995). Similar findings have been reached in studies conducted in Türkiye. In the study conducted by Güleç et al. (2024), it was concluded that men adopted a more fanatic attitude than women. Therefore, the findings obtained from the literature can be explained by the importance and value that men attach to sports teams, as well as gender-based sports socialization processes in society. Men's embrace of sport as a sign of identity can take team support to the level of fanaticism, evangelism and sometimes even hooliganism.

Another result obtained within the scope of the study is that, according to the marital status variable, single participants have a significantly higher average score than married participants in the total of ECSTS, SES and ASS and in all sub-dimensions of all three scales. In this context, it can be said that single participants ($\bar{x}=5.22$, $S=1.62$) have a higher level of fanatic attitude than married participants ($\bar{x}=4.81$, $S=1.70$). Again, singles ($\bar{x}=3.36$, $S=.99$) are seen to have a higher level of sports team evangelist attitude than marrieds ($\bar{x}=3.05$, $S=1.08$). Similarly, it can be said that single people ($\bar{x}=1.97$, $S=1.02$) have a higher level of hooligan attitude than married people ($\bar{x}=1.51$, $S=.77$). Married individuals spend more of their time on family and functional needs due to family responsibilities and obligations within the home, which may limit their level of participation in social activities. While sports hold an important place as a means of identity for men in the social context, the deprivation of married individuals from these social activities may affect their levels of fanaticism. This may lead married individuals to exhibit less fanatic behavior. Another reason why single participants exhibit more fanatic attitudes may be that emotional investment is directed more towards activities such as sports. Single individuals may experience a feeling of emotional emptiness and tend to fill this void with their loyalty to their team. Current research in the relevant literature shows that single individuals have higher levels of fanaticism than married individuals, and it can be said that these findings are parallel to the results of the current study. For example, in the study by Göksel and Kul (2023), it was found that single participants had higher levels of hatred towards their opponents than married participants, whereas married participants had higher levels of respect towards their opponents than single participants. Similarly, studies by Durmaz and Buran (2023), Galily et al. (2024) and Simmons et al. (2016) have shown that single

participants have higher levels of fanaticism than married participants. In addition, in the study conducted by Baić et al. (2017), higher levels of hooliganism were found in singles, and in the study conducted by Genç and Yıldırım (2022), higher levels of sports team evangelism were found. Single individuals have more free time and flexibility compared to married individuals, so they can devote more time to sports activities and teams. It is thought that this situation may increase their involvement in sport and lead to higher levels of attitudes such as fanaticism, hooliganism and sports team evangelism.

Another variable is watching a match in a stadium. According to the variable attending a match in a stadium, participants who attended a match in a stadium had significantly higher mean scores on the total ECSTS, SES and ASS and on all sub-dimensions of all three scales compared to participants who did not attend a match in a stadium. In this context, it can be said that the participants who went to watch the match at the stadium ($\bar{x}=5.62$, $S=1.40$) had a higher level of fanatic attitude than the participants who never went ($\bar{x}=4.85$, $S=1.71$). It is also seen that participants who went to watch the match at the stadium ($\bar{x}=3.70$, $S=.92$) had a higher level of sports team evangelist attitude than participants who never went ($\bar{x}=3.06$, $S=.99$). Similarly, it can be said that participants who went to watch a match at the stadium ($\bar{x}=2.21$, $S=1.15$) had a higher level of hooligan attitude than participants who never went ($\bar{x}=1.68$, $S=.82$). Higher levels of fanaticism, sports team evangelism, and hooliganism among stadium spectators may lead to stronger emotional attachments to their teams and more likely to exhibit extreme behaviors due to the influence of group dynamics in the stadium atmosphere. Watching live matches can make fans feel more connected to their team and have more intense emotional reactions to wins and losses. Additionally, interaction between fans in the stadium can trigger hooliganism through group pressure, which can lead to more extreme fanatic attitudes. In parallel with the findings of this study, in the study conducted by Durgutluoğlu (2020), it was found that those who watched all of their team's matches in the stadium had higher levels of fanaticism than those who did not watch any matches. In her thesis study, Özmen (2000) stated that football spectators' tendencies towards violence and hooliganism increased with the frequency of watching matches in the stadium. Kiełbasiński and Brzeziński (2020) underlined that football fans' tendencies towards violence and hooliganism increase with the frequency of watching matches in the stadium and that these tendencies are related to the match viewing experience.

According to the variable of watching their team's matches on television or any smart device, the participants who watched all their team's matches without missing any had a significantly higher average score in the total of ECSTS, SES and ASS and all sub-dimensions of all three scales compared to the participants in all other groups (Those who only watched derby or European matches, Those who watched occasionally if they had free time and Those who never watched). Another finding that should be taken into consideration in the study is that those who never watch their team's matches have a significantly lower average score in the total of ECSTS, SES and ASS and in all sub-dimensions of all three scales compared to participants in all other groups (Those who watch all matches without missing them, Those who only watch derby or European matches, and Those who watch occasionally if they have free time). In summary, it can be said that the frequency of following their team's matches is a determinant of the level of fanaticism, sports team evangelism and hooliganism. Fans who

follow their team's matches more frequently can trigger behaviors such as fanaticism and sports team evangelism by increasing their emotional attachment to their team with the enthusiasm and group effect experienced in each match. This intense emotional interaction can pave the way for fans to develop excessive expectations and loyalty towards their teams, thus increasing their tendency towards violence and hooliganism. Looking at the literature, studies on fanaticism, sports team evangelism and hooliganism emphasize that one of the triggering reasons for these attitudes is the frequency of watching/following the team's matches (Garcia-Zeferino et al., 2021; Koçer, 2012).

According to the variable of purchasing licensed products, participants who purchased licensed products had a significantly higher average score in the total of ECSTS, SES and ASS and in all sub-dimensions of all three scales compared to participants who did not purchase. In this context, it can be said that participants who purchased licensed products ($\bar{x}=5.69$, $S=1.33$) had a higher level of fanatic attitude than participants who did not purchase ($\bar{x}=4.53$, $S=1.74$). Again, participants who purchased licensed products ($\bar{x}=3.67$, $S=.85$) were found to have a higher level of sports team evangelist attitude than participants who did not purchase ($\bar{x}=2.88$, $S=1.01$). Similarly, it can be said that participants who purchased licensed products ($\bar{x}=1.99$, $S=1.05$) had a higher level of hooligan attitude than participants who did not purchase ($\bar{x}=1.74$, $S=.89$). Individuals who purchase licensed products make an investment that makes their loyalty to their team more tangible, which strengthens team identity and can increase fanaticism. Additionally, licensed products often reinforce the team's social status and sense of belonging, which leads to a desire to talk about and advocate for the team more intensely with other individuals. This process can also, over time, fuel sports team evangelism and hooliganism, as individuals come to embrace their teams as an identity, not just a personal passion. In many different studies in the literature, it has been emphasized that fanaticism has a positive effect on the intention to purchase licensed products (Avcı & Koroğlu, 2024; Avcı, 2024; Çakmak et al., 2022; Güler, 2020; Thorne & Bruner, 2006; Wang et al., 2012; Zheng & Xu, 2024).

According to the age variable, participants between the ages of 18-22 had a significantly higher average score in the total of ECSTS, SES and ASS and in all sub-dimensions of all three scales compared to participants in all other groups (those between the ages of 23-30 and those aged 31 or over). Another finding that should be considered in the study is that those aged 31 or over had a significantly lower mean score in the total of ECSTS, SES and ASS and in all sub-dimensions of all three scales compared to participants in all other groups (those aged 18-22 and those aged 23-30). These findings suggest that younger individuals (those aged 18-22) show higher emotional commitment, evangelism, and hooliganism tendencies toward sports teams, while these tendencies decrease with age. There are several studies in the literature supporting that older individuals tend to have lower levels of hatred, aggression and disapproval of aggressive behavior (Ickson et al., 2021; Toder-Alon et al., 2019). This situation may be explained by the identity formation processes and stronger sense of belonging of young individuals. On the other hand, the lower scores of individuals aged 31 and over suggest that emotional attachment to sports teams may weaken with age and the tendency to turn to different areas of interest may increase. This may also indicate that individuals develop a more rational and balanced understanding of fandom as they age. In parallel with the findings

of this study, the study conducted by Siyahtaş et al. (2020) concluded that as the age of the participants increased, their commitment to sports decreased. In the study conducted by Taşmektepligil et al. (2017), it was determined that the 13-30 age groups agreed more with the effect of TV programs on increasing violence than the 31-50 age groups. This shows that young individuals may be more prone to fanaticism and hooliganism through the media. These findings suggest that age is an important factor in levels of loyalty and fanaticism towards sports teams, and that younger individuals may exhibit higher tendencies towards fanaticism and hooliganism.

The results of the relationship between the concepts of fanaticism, sports team evangelism and hooliganism, which are discussed within the scope of the study, show that there are important and meaningful connections between these three variables. Accordingly;

The correlation table shows a strong relationship between level of fanaticism (ECSTS) and sports team evangelism (SES) ($r= 0.720$, $p= 0.000$). This suggests that individuals' fanatic devotion to their sports teams is directly related to their tendency to spread the word about their teams and influence others. Especially high correlations were observed between the sub-dimensions of SES (SES1, SES2, SES3, SES4) and ECSTS. This suggests that fanaticism about a team may increase an individual's desire to extend that loyalty to others. Therefore, H1 is supported, indicating that as fans become more fanatic, they are more likely to engage in evangelistic behaviors such as advocating for their team, encouraging others to support it, and actively promoting the team within their social circles. This finding aligns with previous research emphasizing the role of strong emotional attachment in motivating fans to act as ambassadors for their favorite teams (Amani, 2023; Dwyer et al., 2015; Pimentel & Reynolds, 2004). Consequently, understanding this link can help sports marketers and team managers leverage fanaticism to enhance fan engagement and expand the fan base through positive word-of-mouth promotion.

The correlation between the level of fanaticism (ECSTS) and hooliganism (ASS) was found to be low ($r= 0.163$, $p= 0.000$). This finding suggests that fanaticism does not directly lead to hooliganism, but in some cases fanatic commitment can trigger aggressive attitudes. The sub-dimensions of the ECSTS also show similarly low correlations with the ASS, suggesting that fanaticism does not always translate into violent or aggressive behavior, but may influence the tendency toward hooliganism in certain situations. Therefore, H2 is partially supported, indicating that while there is a statistically significant relationship between fanaticism and hooliganism, the strength of this association is weak. This implies that fanaticism alone is not a sufficient predictor of violent fan behavior, and other factors, such as social context or individual predispositions, may play a more critical role in the emergence of hooliganism. This nuanced relationship is consistent with previous literature emphasizing that not all highly devoted fans engage in aggressive or violent acts (Spaaij, 2014; Armstrong, 1998).

Correlations between sports team evangelism (SES) and hooliganism (ASS) were generally moderate or weak ($r = 0.328$, $p = 0.000$). The sub-dimensions of sports team evangelism (SES1, SES2, SES3, SES4) also appear to have a low-moderate relationship with ASS. This suggests that behaviors aimed at spreading team love do not have a strong direct

relationship with aggressive or violent hooligan behavior. However, the existence of a certain degree of connection may indicate that some evangelical supporters have contact with more aggressive supporter groups. Therefore, H3 is not supported as initially hypothesized, since the relationship is positive rather than negative. This unexpected finding implies that while evangelistic behaviors generally reflect positive advocacy and promotion, they can coexist with or even indirectly relate to more confrontational fan behaviors. This complexity highlights the need for further research to unpack the nuances of fan behavior, particularly in understanding how positive fandom expressions may intersect with aggressive tendencies in certain contexts (Dwyer et al., 2015; Spaaij, 2014).

These results support the idea that not every fanatic fan is a hooligan, but some fanatics may have the potential to engage in hooligan behavior. It can also be concluded that the vast majority of evangelical fans, whose aim is to spread team love, should not be directly associated with aggressive behavior. When looking at the literature, it is possible to see similar results (Genç and Yıldırım, 2022; Dwyer et al., 2015). Aydın and Kurudirek (2025) examined the relationship between sports team evangelism and media fanaticism levels of Atatürk University Faculty of Sport Sciences students. Results showed that as participants' levels of sports team evangelism increased, their motivation to follow their teams on social media also increased. This finding suggests a positive relationship between fanaticism and sports team evangelism. Similarly, Erdoğan et al. (2021) examined the relationship between sports team evangelism and the spectator, fan and fanatic attitudes of football viewers in their study on Beşiktaş, Fenerbahçe, Galatasaray and Trabzonspor fans. Results showed that fanatic fans had significantly higher levels of sports team evangelism than spectators and fans. Additionally, a positive relationship was found between sports team evangelism and football fan fanaticism sub-dimensions. A study by Milenković and Milenković (2022) found that violent and hooligan behavior among football fans is associated with fanaticism and that the media can play an important role in preventing such behavior.

Although the abundance of studies on fanaticism in the literature is striking, studies on sports team evangelism and hooliganism are relatively limited. In this context, understanding the differences between fanaticism and hooliganism is important in developing strategies to reduce violence in sports culture. In particular, the positive aspects of fanaticism (loyalty, team love) can be emphasized and its negative aspects (hooliganism, tendency to violence) can be limited. To ensure this, events can be organized to enable fanatic fans to channel their loyalty in positive directions. Mechanisms such as official fan clubs and reward systems can encourage fanaticism on a healthier level. In addition, by improving the communication skills of support groups, evangelism can be encouraged to become a strategy that promotes unity and solidarity rather than an aggressive or exclusionary attitude. Awareness campaigns can be organized to monitor fan groups on match days and reduce tendencies towards violence. Sports clubs should develop social media and communication strategies that will direct fan behavior in a positive direction. Digital campaigns can be run to encourage fans to avoid aggressive or polarizing rhetoric. Finally, clubs should not see fanatic fans as merely an economic mass, but should create programs that will manage their emotional bond correctly and preserve the competitive yet friendly nature of the sport.

Conflict of Interest: There is no conflict of interest.

Researchers' Statement of Contribution Rate: Research Design GA and GA, Statistical analysis GA and GA, Preparation of the article GA and GA, Data Collection was carried out by GA and GA.

Ethical Approval

Board Name: Chair of the Sub-Ethics Committee, Faculty of Sport Sciences, Atatürk University

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