



(ISSN: 2587-0238)

Aksoy, Y. & Çakıcı, H.A. (2023). The Relationship Between Emotional Attachments of Football Fans, Levels of Fanaticism and Perceptions of Club Image, *International Journal of Education Technology and Scientific Researches*, 8(24), 2823-2834.

DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.35826/ijetsar.639>

Article Type (Makale Türü): Research Article

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EMOTIONAL ATTACHMENTS OF FOOTBALL FANS, LEVELS OF FANATICISM AND PERCEPTIONS OF CLUB IMAGE

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Received: 06.08.2023

Accepted: 21.09.2023

Published: 01.10.2023

ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to examine the relationship between fanaticism levels, emotional attachments, and perceptions of club image among Samsunspor fans. A descriptive survey model was employed in the study. The population of the research consists of fans located in Turkey. The sample of the study consists of 219 fans supporting Samsunspor, selected through a random sampling method. Personal information form, football fan fanaticism scale, emotional attachment to the sports team scale, and club image scale were used as data collection tools. For binary comparisons of variables, Student's t-test was utilized, while for multiple comparisons, one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) and Tukey's multiple comparison tests were employed. Additionally, the relationships between fanaticism levels, emotional attachments, and scores on the club image perception scale were examined using Pearson correlation coefficient. In terms of variables related to education level and purchasing team-related products, significant differences were found in all sub-dimensions and total scores of the scales used in the study. On the other hand, gender, age, marital status, occupation, match-watching location, and season ticket ownership variables were seen to have significant differences in terms of tendencies towards violence and corporate belonging sub-dimensions, as well as total scores on the football fan fanaticism scale. Furthermore, there was no significant difference between fans' levels of fanaticism and their emotional attachments and perceptions of club image. However, a significant positive relationship was found between fans' emotional attachments and perceptions of club image. In the research, fans were found to have a moderate level of fanaticism. Additionally, a significant positive relationship was observed between fans' emotional attachments to their teams and their perceptions of the club image. High levels of fan fanaticism can sometimes tarnish the club's image. In this regard, it is recommended that fans display behaviors that support the club's image. Furthermore, the positive relationship between emotional attachment and club image can be interpreted as an expected outcome.

Keywords: Fan, fanaticism, emotional attachment, club image

INTRODUCTION

In today's world, the sense of sports fandom is observed to be increasing day by day. It can be said that individuals have turned their supported clubs into a part of their lives. People are seen to act according to club emblems and colors in their social lives. This situation is most prominent among football fans. Football is a sport that captivates large masses. Both its significant industry and the high number of followers demonstrate its global power. The majority of football fans exhibit intense levels of fanaticism. The level of fanaticism among football fans can influence many aspects, such as a sense of belonging and loyalty. Fanaticism among fans can also enhance their emotional attachments. Additionally, it can contribute to supporting the club's image.

Fanaticism represents a strong dedication to any idea, group, or individual (Dwyer et al., 2018). In the realm of sports, fanaticism can lead to social issues and give rise to various social problems (Dođaner et al., 2021). This situation can also lead to violence, alongside the strong commitment of football fans. However, fandom is a significant act, particularly in football, as it positively affects the team's performance (Tanyeri, 2019). Fanatic supporters express their emotions intensely. They manifest their own personalities and characters on the sports fields and in the stands. These actions collectively reveal their levels of fanaticism (Demirci, 2021).

With the influence of fanaticism, fans can also exhibit emotional attachments. Various factors are present in sports, including organizational, behavioral, and attitudinal attachments (Durgutluođlu, 2020). However, one of the most important factors is emotional attachment. Another factor that influences emotional attachment is fans' ambitions. The successes or failures of their teams can affect their emotional attachments. Nevertheless, it can be said that the sense of attachment persists even if the team does not perform as desired (Erdođan and řirin, 2021). Fanaticism and emotional attachment also have an impact on fans' decision-making situations. Decision-making is the aspect of utilizing an individual's capacity to the fullest (Eren et al., 2020). Thus, in conjunction with capacity and cognitive formation, it also influences decision-making situations. Alongside fan fanaticism and emotional attachments, the club's image is also a crucial aspect for fans. This is because the club's image, or its quality, plays a significant role in revealing or sustaining fans' commitment (Polat et al., 2019). Consequently, the club's image has a substantial impact on increasing fan participation in matches and maintaining loyal behaviors (Kural and Eraslan, 2021). In this regard, all elements within the club are responsible for preserving fan commitment and loyalty.

Sports fandom is present in all segments of society. People frequently discuss the clubs they support both in their social and professional lives. A global phenomenon, sports fandom can unite people who are far apart while also creating divisions among them. This highlights the presence of fanaticism. Fanaticism among fans can also influence their emotional attachments. However, it is important to scientifically establish this assumption. Additionally, the club's image can further enrich the research topic. While there are numerous studies on the mentioned subjects in the literature, it is observed that no study has investigated the combined effects of fan fanaticism, emotional attachments, and club image perceptions. This uniqueness underscores the significance of

this study. Based on this information, the aim of this study is to examine the relationship between emotional attachments, levels of fanaticism, and perceptions of club image among football fans.

METHOD

Design of Study

In the research, both descriptive and relational survey methods were employed as quantitative survey methods. Relational survey is a scanning model that examines the changes in existing variables and identifies the reasons behind the observed changes (Karasar, 2011). For the research, approval was obtained from Ordu University, Ethics Committee for Social and Human Sciences Research, with decision number 2023/123 on 06/07/2023, in order to apply the scales and collect the data.

Population And Sample

The population of the study consists of fans located in Turkey. The sample of the research comprises 219 randomly selected supporters who endorse Samsunspor.

Data Collection Tools

In the research, "Personal Information Form," "Fanaticism Scale For Football Fans Scale", "The Emotional Commitment To Sports Team Scale" and "Club Image Scale" were used. The researcher-created personal information form includes variables such as gender, age, educational status, marital status, occupation, match-watching location, and purchasing behavior related to the supported team.

The "Fanaticism Scale For Football Fans Scale" developed by Taşmektepligil et al. (2014), is a 4-point Likert scale consisting of 13 items. The scale includes two sub-dimensions: tendency towards violent thoughts and actions, and institutional loyalty. When examining the scale score averages, scores between 13-21 are labeled as "fanatic," scores between 22-30 as "team supporter," and scores between 31-52 as "football enthusiast" (Taşmektepligil et al., 2014).

The "The Emotional Commitment To Sports Team Scale" developed by Dwyer et al. (2015) and adapted by Erdoğan and Şirin (2021), is a 7-point Likert scale consisting of 7 items. The emotional attachment to the sports team scale comprises two sub-dimensions: cognitive investment and emotional gain. The overall score on the scale is calculated between 7 and 49.

The "Club Image Scale" developed by Jung (2012) and adapted by Sönmezoğlu et al. (2016), is a 7-point Likert scale consisting of 6 items. The single-dimensional scale's score averages are calculated between 7 and 42.

Statistical Analysis

Prior to the data collection process in the research, participants were provided with information about the study. There were no time constraints during this process. In the study, Cronbach's alpha coefficients of the scale items were analyzed. When examining the reliability coefficients of the Football Fanaticism Scale, it was found to be

0.898 for the sub-dimension of tendency towards violent thoughts and actions, 0.863 for the sub-dimension of institutional loyalty, and 0.906 for the total score of the scale. For the Emotional Attachment to the Sports Team Scale, the reliability coefficients were calculated as 0.821 for the cognitive investment sub-dimension, 0.956 for the emotional gain sub-dimension, and 0.936 for the total score of the scale. The reliability coefficient for the Club Image Scale, another scale used in the research, was determined as 0.904. Skewness and kurtosis values were examined to determine whether the normality assumption was met in the research. In the study, Student's t-test was used for binary comparisons of scale scores, and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) and Tukey's multiple comparison test were used for multiple comparisons.

FINDINGS

Table 1. Frequency and Percentage Distributions Regarding the Demographic Characteristics of Fans

		n	%
Gender	Male	182	83,1
	Famale	37	16,9
Age	18-22	43	19,6
	23-27	27	12,3
	28-32	33	15,1
	33 ve üzeri	116	53,0
Educational Status	Primary and High School	81	37,0
	University	102	46,6
	Postgraduate	36	16,4
Marital Status	Single	98	44,7
	Married	121	55,3
Job	Public Sector Employee	122	55,7
	Private Sector	60	27,4
	Student	37	16,9
Match-Watching Location	Stadium	109	49,8
	Other (home, café, etc.)	110	50,2
Purchasing Behavior Related to Supported Team	Yes	151	68,9
	No	68	31,1
Season Ticket Ownership Status	Yes	95	43,4
	No	124	56,6

Table 2 presents the levels of fanaticism, emotional attachments, and club image perceptions of fans based on gender.

Table 2. Fanaticism Levels, Emotional Attachments, and Club Image Perceptions of Fans by Gender

Scale and Sub-dimensions	Gender	n	Mean	Sd.	P
Tendency Toward Violent Thought and Action	Male	182	15,62	6,13	0,017
	Famale	37	13,43	4,65	
Organizational Belonging	Male	182	14,26	4,14	0,000
	Famale	37	11,62	3,54	
Total Score on Fanaticism Scale For Football Fans	Male	182	29,89	8,98	0,001
	Famale	37	25,04	7,31	
Cognitive Investment	Male	182	15,47	5,43	0,137
	Famale	37	14,00	5,65	
Emotional Investment	Male	182	22,74	6,82	0,434
	Famale	37	21,78	6,49	
Total Score on The Emotional Commitment To Sports Team Scale	Male	182	38,21	11,63	0,246
	Famale	37	35,78	11,30	
Total Score of The Club Image Scale	Male	182	30,73	9,47	0,852
	Famale	37	31,05	9,29	

In the study, it was determined that there is a significant difference based on the gender variable in terms of tendencies towards violent thoughts and actions as well as institutional loyalty sub-dimensions, and the total score of the football fan fanaticism scale (Table 2).

Fanaticism levels, emotional attachments, and club image perceptions of fans based on age are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Fanaticism Levels, Emotional Attachments, and Club Image Perceptions of Fans by Age

Scale and Sub-dimensions	Age	n	Mean	ds.	P
Tendency Toward Violent Thought and Action	18-22	43	19,53	7,12	0,000
	23-27	27	16,03	5,13	
	28-32	33	16,36	6,14	
	33 and above	116	13,16	4,53	
Organizational Belonging	18-22	43	16,34	4,57	0,000
	23-27	27	14,00	3,88	
	28-32	33	14,72	3,63	
	33 and above	116	12,58	3,74	
Total Score on Fanaticism Scale For Football Fans	18-22	43	35,88	9,92	0,000
	23-27	27	30,03	7,73	
	28-32	33	31,09	7,94	
	33 and above	116	25,75	7,27	
Cognitive Investment	18-22	43	16,37	5,80	0,312
	23-27	27	13,96	5,96	
	28-32	33	15,51	6,01	
	33 and above	116	15,00	5,07	
Emotional Investment	18-22	43	23,20	7,45	0,521
	23-27	27	20,81	7,61	
	28-32	33	22,69	6,72	
	33 and above	116	22,72	6,31	
Total Score on The Emotional Commitment To Sports Team Scale	18-22	43	39,58	12,93	0,410
	23-27	27	34,77	12,79	
	28-32	33	38,21	12,32	
	33 and above	116	37,73	10,52	
Total Score of The Club Image Scale	18-22	43	30,97	10,10	0,686
	23-27	27	28,92	10,59	
	28-32	33	31,84	9,80	
	33 and above	116	30,85	8,82	

In the study, it was determined that there is a significant difference based on the age variable in terms of tendencies towards violent thoughts and actions as well as institutional loyalty sub-dimensions, and the total score of the football fan fanaticism scale (Table 3).

Fanaticism levels, emotional attachments, and club image perceptions of fans based on educational status are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Fanaticism Levels, Emotional Attachments, and Club Image Perceptions of Fans by Educational Status

Scale and Sub-dimensions	Educational Status	n	Mean	Sd.	P
Tendency Toward Violent Thought and Action	Primary and High School	81	16,97	6,82	0,004
	University	102	14,24	5,14	
	Postgraduate	36	14,22	5,24	
Organizational Belonging	Primary and High School	81	16,22	3,64	0,000
	University	102	12,39	4,01	

		n	Ort.	Ss.	P
Total Score on Fanaticism Scale For Football Fans	Postgraduate	36	12,47	3,16	0,000
	Primary and High School	81	33,19	9,08	
	University	102	26,63	8,11	
Cognitive Investment	Postgraduate	36	26,69	7,17	0,006
	Primary and High School	81	16,14	5,89	
	University	102	15,39	4,78	
Emotional Investment	Postgraduate	36	12,66	5,76	0,050
	Primary and High School	81	23,87	7,36	
	University	102	22,17	6,20	
Total Score on The Emotional Commitment To Sports Team Scale	Postgraduate	36	20,80	6,51	0,017
	Primary and High School	81	40,02	12,65	
	University	102	37,56	10,34	
Total Score of The Club Image Scale	Postgraduate	36	33,47	11,43	0,025
	Primary and High School	81	32,69	10,10	
	University	102	30,36	8,33	
	Postgraduate	36	27,72	10,01	

In the study, it was determined that there is a significant difference based on the educational status variable in all sub-dimensions and total scores (Table 4).

Fanaticism levels, emotional attachments, and club image perceptions of fans based on marital status are presented in Table 5

Table 5. Fanaticism Levels, Emotional Attachments, and Club Image Perceptions of Fans by Marital Status

Scale and Sub-dimensions	Marital Status	n	Ort.	Ss.	P
Tendency Toward Violent Thought and Action	Single	98	17,13	6,54	0,000
	Married	121	13,72	4,96	
Organizational Belonging	Single	98	14,65	4,36	0,008
	Married	121	13,14	3,88	
Total Score on Fanaticism Scale For Football Fans	Single	98	31,78	9,57	0,000
	Married	121	26,87	7,66	
Cognitive Investment	Single	98	15,30	5,66	0,842
	Married	121	15,15	5,35	
Emotional Investment	Single	98	22,28	7,13	0,564
	Married	121	22,81	6,47	
Total Score on The Emotional Commitment To Sports Team Scale	Single	98	37,59	12,23	0,808
	Married	121	37,97	11,07	
Total Score of The Club Image Scale	Single	98	30,35	9,28	0,542
	Married	121	31,14	9,55	

In the study, it was determined that there is a significant difference based on the marital status variable in terms of tendencies towards violent thoughts and actions as well as institutional loyalty sub-dimensions, and the total score of the football fan fanaticism scale (Table 5).

Fanaticism levels, emotional attachments, and club image perceptions of fans based on occupational status are presented in Table 6.

Table 6. Fanaticism Levels, Emotional Attachments, and Club Image Perceptions of Fans by Job

Scale and Sub-dimensions	Job	n	Mean	Sd.	P
Tendency Toward Violent Thought and Action	Public Sector Employee	122	14,00	5,68	0,001
	Private Sector	60	16,35	5,42	
	Student	37	17,59	6,73	

Organizational Belonging	Public Sector Employee	122	12,72	3,75	0,000
	Private Sector	60	15,03	4,16	
	Student	37	15,45	4,48	
Total Score on Fanaticism Scale For Football Fans	Public Sector Employee	122	26,72	8,40	0,000
	Private Sector	60	31,38	8,31	
	Student	37	33,05	9,17	
Cognitive Investment	Public Sector Employee	122	14,53	5,33	0,112
	Private Sector	60	16,08	5,78	
	Student	37	16,10	5,31	
Emotional Investment	Public Sector Employee	122	21,82	7,01	0,180
	Private Sector	60	23,61	6,52	
	Student	37	23,37	6,13	
Total Score on The Emotional Commitment To Sports Team Scale	Public Sector Employee	122	36,36	11,65	0,117
	Private Sector	60	39,70	11,57	
	Student	37	39,48	11,01	
Total Score of The Club Image Scale	Public Sector Employee	122	29,78	9,73	0,153
	Private Sector	60	32,65	9,49	
	Student	37	31,08	7,88	

In the study, it was determined that there is a significant difference based on the occupational status variable in terms of tendencies towards violent thoughts and actions as well as institutional loyalty sub-dimensions, and the total score of the football fan fanaticism scale (Table 6).

Fanaticism levels, emotional attachments, and club image perceptions of fans based on match-watching location are presented in Table 7.

Table 7. Fanaticism Levels, Emotional Attachments, and Club Image Perceptions of Fans by Match-Watching Location

Scale and Sub-dimensions	Match-Watching Location	n	Mean	Sd.	P
Tendency Toward Violent Thought and Action	Stadium	109	16,75	6,11	0,000
	Other (home, café, etc.)	110	13,76	5,42	
Organizational Belonging	Stadium	109	16,14	3,34	0,000
	Other (home, café, etc.)	110	11,51	3,58	
Total Score on Fanaticism Scale For Football Fans	Stadium	109	32,89	8,10	0,000
	Other (home, café, etc.)	110	25,28	7,99	
Cognitive Investment	Stadium	109	15,89	5,90	0,070
	Other (home, café, etc.)	110	14,55	4,96	
Emotional Investment	Stadium	109	23,27	7,05	0,130
	Other (home, café, etc.)	110	21,89	6,42	
Total Score on The Emotional Commitment To Sports Team Scale	Stadium	109	39,17	12,34	0,081
	Other (home, café, etc.)	110	36,44	10,67	
Total Score of The Club Image Scale	Stadium	109	30,82	10,43	0,956
	Other (home, café, etc.)	110	30,75	8,34	

In the study, it was determined that there is a significant difference based on the match-watching location variable in terms of tendencies towards violent thoughts and actions as well as institutional loyalty sub-dimensions, and the total score of the football fan fanaticism scale (Table 7).

Fanaticism levels, emotional attachments, and club image perceptions of fans based on purchasing behavior related to the supported team are presented in Table 8.

Table 8. Fanaticism Levels, Emotional Attachments, and Club Image Perceptions of Fans by Purchasing Behavior Related to Supported Team

Scale and Sub-dimensions	Purchasing Behavior Related to Supported Team	n	Mean	Sd.	P
Tendency Toward Violent Thought and Action	Yes	151	16,07	5,93	0,002
	No	68	13,41	5,63	
Organizational Belonging	Yes	151	15,23	3,37	0,000
	No	68	10,67	4,04	
Total Score on Fanaticism Scale For Football Fans	Yes	151	31,31	8,19	0,000
	No	68	24,08	8,39	
Cognitive Investment	Yes	151	16,21	5,33	0,000
	No	68	13,01	5,19	
Emotional Investment	Yes	151	23,76	6,14	0,000
	No	68	19,94	7,36	
Total Score on The Emotional Commitment To Sports Team Scale	Yes	151	39,98	10,85	0,000
	No	68	32,95	11,76	
Total Score of The Club Image Scale	Yes	151	32,20	9,26	0,001
	No	68	27,64	9,07	

In the study, it was determined that there is a significant difference based on the purchasing behavior related to the supported team variable in all sub-dimensions and total scores (Table 8).

Fanaticism levels, emotional attachments, and club image perceptions of fans based on season ticket ownership are presented in Table 9.

Table 9. Fanaticism Levels, Emotional Attachments, and Club Image Perceptions of Fans by Season Ticket Ownership Status

Scale and Sub-dimensions	Season Ticket Ownership Status	n	Mean	Sd.	P
Tendency Toward Violent Thought and Action	Yes	95	17,92	6,38	0,000
	No	124	13,20	4,69	
Organizational Belonging	Yes	95	16,10	3,45	0,000
	No	124	12,07	3,81	
Total Score on Fanaticism Scale For Football Fans	Yes	95	34,03	8,38	0,000
	No	124	25,27	7,27	
Cognitive Investment	Yes	95	15,49	6,20	0,523
	No	124	15,01	4,87	
Emotional Investment	Yes	95	22,41	7,74	0,747
	No	124	22,70	5,94	
Total Score on The Emotional Commitment To Sports Team Scale	Yes	95	37,90	13,49	0,910
	No	124	37,72	9,93	
Total Score of The Club Image Scale	Yes	95	30,06	11,09	0,319
	No	124	31,34	7,91	

In the study, it was determined that there is a significant difference based on the season ticket ownership variable in terms of tendencies towards violent thoughts and actions as well as institutional loyalty sub-dimensions, and the total score of the football fan fanaticism scale (Table 9).

Pearson correlation for the relationship between fans' levels of fanaticism, emotional attachments, and club image perceptions is presented in Table 10.

Table 10. Pearson Correlation Analysis Results for the Relationship Between Fans' Levels of Fanaticism, Emotional Attachments, and Club Image Perceptions

		TTVTA	OB	TSFSFF	CI	EI	TSECSTS
OB	r	0,528					
	p	0,000					
TSFSFF	r	0,918	0,823				
	p	0,000	0,000				
CI	r	-0,074	0,312	0,097			
	p	0,273	0,000	0,155			
EI	r	-0,142	0,315	0,053	0,786		
	p	0,036	0,000	0,438	0,000		
TSECSTS	r	-0,118	0,332	0,076	0,933	0,956	
	p	0,081	0,000	0,260	0,000	0,000	
TSTCIS	r	-0,182	0,207	-0,025	0,726	0,743	0,778
	p	0,007	0,002	0,710	0,000	0,000	0,000

TTVTA: Tendency Toward Violent Thought and Action, OB: Organizational Belonging, TSFSFF: Total Score on Fanaticism Scale For Football Fans, CI: Cognitive Investment, EI: Emotional Investment, TSECSTS: Total Score on The Emotional Commitment To Sports Team Scale, TSTCIS: Total Score of The Club Image Scale

The correlation results between fans' levels of fanaticism, emotional attachments, and club image perceptions are observed in the study. According to the correlation analysis results, there is no significant difference between fans' levels of fanaticism and their emotional attachments or club image perceptions. However, a significant positive relationship has been identified between fans' emotional attachments and club image perceptions.

CONCLUSION and DISCUSSION

This study reveals the relationship between the levels of fanaticism, emotional attachments, and club image perceptions among Samsunspor fans. When examined in terms of educational background and purchasing products related to the supported team, significant differences were found in all sub-dimensions and total scores of the scales used in the study. However, in terms of gender, age, marital status, occupation, match attendance location, and season ticket ownership, significant differences were observed in the dimensions of violence-related thoughts and behaviors, corporate identity, and the total score of the football fan fanaticism scale.

In the analysis by gender, it was determined that there is a significant difference in the dimensions of violence-related thoughts and behaviors, corporate identity, and the total score of the football fan fanaticism scale. The analysis indicated that the average scores of males are higher compared to females. This could be attributed to the excessive attachment of males to their teams. While the findings of this study do not align with the results of Doğaner et al. (2021), Bülbül (2021) and Demirci (2021), they show similarity with Tanyeri (2019) and Çakıroğlu (2022). There were no significant differences in the total scores and sub-dimensions of the emotional attachment to the sports team scale and the club image scale in terms of gender. In a literature review, the findings of this study align with Yılmaz (2021).

In the analysis by age, it was determined that there is a significant difference in the dimensions of violence-related thoughts and behaviors, corporate identity, and the total score of the football fan fanaticism scale. The findings indicate that as the age level decreases, the average fanaticism scores increase. This may be attributed to the heightened excitement of younger fans towards their teams. While the results of İlk et al. (2020), Doğaner

et al. (2021) and Çakıroğlu (2022) align with the findings of this study, the results of Aak et al. (2018) and Durgutluęlu (2020), do not overlap. There were no significant differences in the total scores and sub-dimensions of the emotional attachment to the sports team scale and the club image scale in terms of age. The lack of differences may be interpreted due to socio-cultural factors or the participants' ages being similar to each other.

Sport encompasses various factors, both unifying and divisive, within its domain. It holds a unifying power while also containing elements of violence, particularly in football due to its broad appeal and inherent competitiveness. The study particularly highlights that individuals with lower levels of education show a higher tendency towards violence-related thoughts. This could be due to increased stress or lower awareness levels among individuals with lower education. In fact, there are studies advocating for reducing levels of fanaticism or increasing awareness levels through sports (Derelioęlu et al., 2022). The role of media in this process is also crucial. For instance, a study indicated that individuals with varying educational backgrounds are affected differently by a news story in the media (Gökulu, 2008). Furthermore, involvement in violent incidents by spectators may be influenced by multiple psychological factors (Boniface, 2017). Thus, these issues not only lead to animosity among individuals but may also result in a lack of support for Turkish teams in European matches (Sabah et al., 2020). When examined according to educational status, significant differences are found in the total scores and sub-dimensions of all scales. In the obtained findings, fans with primary and high school education levels have higher average scores. In the literature review, the result of the current study does not align with the findings of Aak et al. (2018). Regarding marital status, significant differences in fanaticism levels are determined. The scores of singles are higher, which could be attributed to the higher responsibilities of married individuals. However, this finding contradicts the results of Durgutluoęlu (2020), in the literature. Based on the variable of match-watching location, significant differences in fanaticism levels are revealed. Those watching matches in the stadium have higher average scores. This indicates that fans present in the stadium tend to be more fanatical and dedicated to their team. In terms of purchasing team-related products, significant differences are observed in all scales and sub-dimensions used in the study. Fans who buy team products show significant differences in all scales and sub-dimensions. In the literature, it is observed that as fanaticism level increases, the purchase of licensed team products and attendance at stadium matches also increases (Dwyer et al., 2015). Another study demonstrates that emotional attachment positively influences purchase intent (Çiftiyıldız and Sütütemiz, 2021). Regarding season ticket ownership, significant differences in fanaticism levels are identified. Fans with season tickets have higher average scores, indicating their higher levels of fanaticism. When analyzed based on the occupation variable, significant differences in the perception of fanaticism are found. Students have higher average scores compared to others. It could be suggested that their lower responsibilities compared to others may influence their fanaticism levels. The result of Çakıroęlu (2022), contradicts the findings of the current study, while the findings of Demirci (2021), show substantial similarity.

SUGGESTIONS

The study indicates that the levels of fanaticism among fans are within normal range. Additionally, a significant positive relationship is observed between fans' emotional attachment to their teams and their perception of the club's image. It is notable that higher levels of fanatical behavior can sometimes have a detrimental effect on the club's image. In this regard, it is recommended that fans exhibit behaviors that support the club's image. Furthermore, the positive relationship between emotional attachment and club image can be interpreted as an expected outcome. Finally, meetings for football clubs aimed at fans and rewarding non-violence behavior could be organized. In addition, engaging in activities that enhance their loyalty to the team and interventions that elevate the club's image could be recommended.

ETHICAL TEXT

This article complies with journal writing rules, publication principles, research and publication ethics, and journal ethics. Responsibility for any violations that may arise regarding the article belongs to the author of this article. For this research, the permission of the ethics committee dated 06.07.2023 and numbered 2023-123 was obtained from the Ordu University, Ethical Committee for Social and Human Sciences Research.

Authors Contribution Rate: The authors have not declared any conflict of interest. The contribution rate of the researchers in this study is as follows: 1. Author (55%), 2. Author (45%).

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