

Football spectators in Turkey in the perspective of official sports managers

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study which has been developed from the pre-assumption that those who know very well about the football spectators in Turkey are Provincial Directors of Sports, who officially direct sports in Turkey, is to make the football spectators in Turkey recognized in the light of certain views. The questionnaire was developed to reach that goal was applied to 52 (64, 1%) Provincial Directors of Sports who represent the main population. Insufficiency of football spectators' conscience (80.8%), insufficiency of their knowledge regarding the game rules (53.8%) and their exaggerated reactions during the game (80.8%) was emphasized by most of the attendants. While the view that "most of the spectators are fans" is confirmed by 42.3% of the attendants the rate of those who say it is not at fanaticism level are 38.5%. There is also the problem of racism from the audience stated that they were Turkish (32.7%). The opinion that "There is no problem of racism among the Turkish spectators" was answered mostly with "yes" with 63.5% rate. In the study, there is no problem of racism among football spectators however it was emphasized that some political and ethnical problems shall be encountered unless measures are taken.

Key Words: Football, Spectators, Fanatics, Fans, Football Spectators in Turkey.

INTRODUCTION

Sports is a social reality that enables people to develop, explore themselves and to make social relations that makes contribution to social integration and which has become the center of interest by older/smaller all kind of people from all types and age groups. The Football which is generally the first thing that comes to mind when talking about sports is among the universal incidents which is thought most and watched simultaneously by billions of people around the world by television broadcasts. The points that Football has become a branch of sports that exceeded universal limits and has become a branch of sports watched and followed from all around the world have made it stand out amongst the other sports branches.

It is an undeniable fact that there are a considerable number of people who just prefer watching (spectating) it instead of enjoying it as a game. It draws the attention that there are two important actors and parties in the basis of sports. The first one is the active participants which mean the producers, say players, and the second one is the other party which is named with such concepts like spectators, audience, fans etc. who are the buyers of the presented service (consumes sports) [1], the passive attendants.

Being a spectator covers also many concepts (fans, fanatics, hooligans, etc.) in general terms as the consumers of the service of sports. The concepts of fans, fanatics, hooligans include different meanings. It will not be a good approach to evaluate the sports fans that just enjoy watching with the spectator who are the fans of a team and who cheers/worries with the winning/losing of his/her team [2]. Especially some of those during a match get excited and become full of life while some just focus on the quality of the game and enjoy the pleasure of watching. Those who follow without aware/unaware of the rules of the game sometimes criticize referee decisions and player choices

while some just focus on scoring a goal. Being a spectator is like the beginning phase of being a fan. Neither the joy/enthusiasm felt with after a win nor the grief after a lost game is so exaggerated. But for the fans the sentimentality created after a winning or losing is much more intense. If his/her team loses the fans feel like s/he struggled on the pitch and lost it and if his/her team wins the game s/he feels as if she has won a victory. To say, the bond of fans with their team is much stronger than that of spectators. While fans refer their teams at all moments of life not just on match days, the spectators are generally defined as a mass of people who don't show any interest out of the match days and forget it soon after [3].

Football spectators are the first thing that comes to mind among the spectators of sports. It is like the concepts of fans, fanatics and hooligans have become integrated with the branch of football. For instance the question of are you fans/fanatic? Is generally replied in terms of a football team. Spectators don't show a homogenous formation in demographic, social, psychological and social terms. Especially the differentiations in social and cultural codes are remarkable. This differentiation can be formed as Eastern/Western Societies or nations English/Turkish. The feelings arising when it is talked about English football spectators are different from that of when it is talked about Turkish football spectators.

On this concern sports managers have the most important role within such a process when the spectators and players are organized and they should treat equally. In such a country like Turkey where sports is mostly conducted by the state, official sports managers [4] are the executors of state's general or local sports politics within a process of managing sports [5]. Turkish sports are executed in provinces and their under-directorates and in this structure the Ministry of Youth and Sports stands as the top manager. Governorates have the authority to represent the state in local terms while the Youth Services and General Directors of Sports are the official authorized managers of sports. This management covers the conduction of activities and organizations of all sports branches in provinces.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Most of the football spectators in Turkey are fanatics yet there is no fanaticism or racism problem among the football spectators. Setting off from basic hypothesizes and aiming to enlighten the condition of football spectators in Turkey by reviewing the Official Sports Managers (Provincial Directors of Youth and Sports), this study has been limited to the views of Provincial Directors of Youth and Sports regarding the football spectators in Turkey. Views and opinions of official sports managers regarding spectators, referees, sports facilities and on many fields are important in terms of their official titles and impartiality. More than half of the Provincial Directors of Youth and Sports in 81 provinces who represent the main population have been reached (n= 52, %64.1).

It was reasoned from the assumption that Official Sports Managers are the most suitable persons in the impartial assessment of football spectators in Turkey. Pre-questionnaire work was made and certain questions were removed from the questionnaire in order to reach the goal of the work. After the Cronbach's Alpha value $\alpha = 0.77$ of the questions were found final shape of the work formed. In these formed questionnaires it was given info regarding the content of the work in which the participation of Provincial Directors of Youth and Sports of 81 provinces was achieved. It was talked face to face with the voluntary attendants of the work and questionnaires were filled. The personal participation of the researcher to the negotiations enabled observations that direct the content applicable to the purpose of the work and their latter usage with the support of literature.

After the obtained data were uploaded to computer environment, the percentage and frequency distributions constituted by demographic features thanks to statistical programs were determined by descriptive statistical method.

RESULTS

15 opinions of Provincial Directors of Sports compliant with the purpose of the study were given place in order to provide the assessment of football spectators in Turkey in many ways. 10 of 16 Metropolitan Municipalities and 42 Provincial Sports Directors in Turkey attended to the study. Their age averages is $\bar{X} = 44.94 \pm 1.45$, their work year averages is $\bar{X} = 3.51 \pm 0.22$ and almost all of them are married (96.2%). Most of them having bachelor's degree (71.0%), 48.1% of the Provincial Sports Directors are the graduates from such departments like Graduate Schools for Physical Training and Sports, Faculty of Education Physical Training and Sports Teaching which give training mainly on sports. 92.3% of the participants deal with such sports like wrestling (38.2%), football (23.5%), basketball (11.8%), volleyball (11.8%), taekwondo (8.8%) handball (5.8%) and more than half of them (55.8%) quit making sports. 78.8% of Provincial Sports Directors are the fans of Galatasaray, Fenerbahce, Besiktas and Trabzonspor which are expressed as "the big four".

Table 1: The table of Views Regarding the Spectators of Football

Opinions of Provincial Directors Regarding the Football Spectators	Yes %	No %	Partially %
(1) Conscious of spectators regarding sports is insufficient.	80.8	3.8	15.4
(2) Spectators' have little knowledge regarding football game rules.	53.8	13.5	32.7
(3) Most of the spectators are fanatics.	42.3	9.6	48.1
(4) Reactions of the spectators during the game are exaggerated.	80.8	9.6	9.6
(5) Conscience of spectators regarding football increases when they are qualified to Super League.	46.2	21.2	32.7
(6) Spectators of four big clubs are more conscious comparing to that of others.	15.4	51.9	32.7
(7) Spectators of the big four are more conscious comparing to others.	5.8	76.9	17.3
(8) Spectators of eastern teams are more conscious comparing to others.	9.6	84.6	05.8
(9) Political and ethnical problems shall be moved in football unless precautions are taken.	51.9	15.4	32.7
(10) There is no fanaticism problem among Turkish spectators.	38.5	32.7	28.8
(11) There is no racism problem among Turkish spectators.	63.5	26.9	09.6
(12) Public Opinion regarding Sports positively influences the spectators.	13.5	48.1	38.5
(13) Team managers and trainers positively influence the spectators.	17.3	48.1	34.6
(14) Printed and visual media positively influence the spectators.	13.5	53.8	32.7
(15) Referees positively influence the spectators.	15.4	30.8	53.8

Most of the official sports managers (80.8%) emphasize the insufficiency of spectators regarding sports. 53.8% of the participants said no to the view that "Spectators' have little knowledge regarding football game rules" while 13.5% of them answered "no" to that question. Majority of the participants confirmed that most of the football spectators are fanatics by answering "partially" (48.1%) and "yes" (42.3%). It is seen that most of the participants confirmed that spectators' reactions are exaggerated by answering "yes" (80.8%) to that question. While the opinion that conscience of spectators regarding football increases when they are qualified to Super League is confirmed (yes) with a 46.2% rate, the opinion that spectators of four big clubs (big four) are more conscious comparing to that of others was rejected by more than half of the participants with a rate 51.9%. The opinion that spectators of teams other big four are more conscious comparing to others wasn't accepted by the majority (76, 9%) of the participants. The opinion that spectators of eastern teams are more conscious comparing to others wasn't accepted by the majority (84.6%) of the participants. The opinion that political and ethnical problems shall be moved in football unless precautions are taken was confirmed by 51.9% of the participants by answering "yes" to this question. But however, while the rate of those who confirmed that there is not a fanaticism problem among Turkish spectators was 67.3% by answering "yes" or "partially", the number of those who said "no" to this question (32.7%) is also remarkable. The opinion that "there is no racism problem among Turkish spectators" which is one of the basic hypothesizes of the research was confirmed by 63.5% of the participants by answering "yes".

The number of those who object to the opinion that Public Opinion regarding Sports positively influences the spectators was near to the half of the participants (48.1%). More than half of the participants (53.8%) objected to the opinion that printed and visual media positively influence the spectators by answering "no" while the rate of those who said "no" to the opinion that referees positively influence the spectators was 30.8%.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Moving from the pre-acceptance that with their official sports manager title and their executive position within the application the Provincial Directors of Youth and Sports shall objectively assess the football spectators, this work aimed to provide scientific data to literature through the different views on football spectators in Turkey. 52 Provincial Directors of Youth and Sports in Turkey attended to the research. Moving from 15 different views like "yes, no, partially" football spectators in Turkey were assessed specifically by the Provincial Directors of Youth and Sports.

Most of the official sports managers (80.8%) emphasize the insufficiency of spectators regarding sports. Sufficiency of the sports conscience carries the meaning of being aware of the rules or behaving accordingly with the rules. In works directed towards the popularization of sports conscience of Turkish society it is drawn attention to those that should be done to make sports noticed by the society. In Turkey it is drawn attention to the point that in Turkey sports is not sufficiently perceived in Turkey and the insufficient number of various national and international organizations [6].

It is accepted that media especially the sports media took an important role in increasing the sports conscience of the society it is also indicated that they are insufficient in fulfilling this task. It is possible to express that various unconscious rampancy and emotional behaviors lay behind the financial and emotional damages of the spectators who express that they love their teams "to death". Of course it is not true to relate unconscious behaviors of the spectators just to these mentioned reasons. For instance it is expected for the high rates of fines given to clubs as a result of various rampancy and violence and the penalties given to spectators and clubs (plating without spectators for instance) to be deterrent. However, it was decided for totally 61 matches of 37 teams to be played without

spectators due to the violence and tension in 2006-2007 periods and it makes us think over the deterrent effect of the penalties when seeing Galatasaray on the top with 7 matches without spectators [7]. If the penalties were deterrent then it wouldn't be expected for punished team to be penalized over and over again. Of course the conscience of spectators cannot be related to the punishment. However in literature there is no scientific data regarding that the football spectators in Turkey increase comparing to past or when elevating beneath to upwards.

Insufficiency of football game rules was confirmed by 86.5% of the participants by giving answers with "yes" and "partially". It is remarkable that there is an insufficiency of works directed towards the interpretation of spectators by other sample groups even though the works regarding the questioning of the football rules knowledge of the spectators and the works to which spectators personally appeared can be seen. However, in a study executed with the participation of 500 spectators 47.6% of them answered "partially" and "no" to a question concerning their knowledge of football game rules while in a different work covering 524 persons similarly 43.7% of the spectators answered same [8, 9] Almost half of the football spectators' insufficiency on this issue is a matter that shouldn't be ignored. Because while the game knowledge of the spectators are being questioned, similarity of the rates of those who claimed to have knowledge on football game rules and those who answered that they partially know or don't know about these rules has a type which prevents making generalization on this matter.

While the 42.3% of the attendants mostly of who were fanatics answered "yes", 48.1% answered partially (Table 1). It is difficult make a statement that the basis of team fanaticism derives from political or ethnical reasons in Turkey where there is violent team fanaticism that triggers football fanaticism. Because it can be said that in Turkey football team spectators' past don't have any history regarding economic, denominational, religious, ethnical roots or political conflicts and being a team supporter mostly has a basis on city or just competition between the teams [3]. However there are examples in many countries that experience fanaticism and violence based on political, ethnical and religious reasons. The competition between Glasgow Celtic team -which shows political and denominational difference among many fan groups in England that is one of the countries associated with hooliganism- in which there is a dominance of Catholic fans and Glasgow Rangers which is supported by Protestant fans is not just based on football [3, 10]. It is possible to give examples to politically based supporters in Scotland, Ireland, Italy and Spain [3]. Although there is no fan profile in Turkey based on political and ethnical reasons, it is impossible to ignore the fanaticism and violence in Turkish football history. The incidents occurred in the tribunes of matches played in 1967 between Kayserispor and Sivasspor and in 1969 between Kırıkkalespor and Tarsusspor, in terms of their results [10, 11]. When the reasons of the incidents in Turkish football history are examined, it is difficult to mention about any incident that recalls racism in terms of the resources in literature and of the results of the work.

Based on this fact, most of the attendants answered "yes" (63.5%) to the view that follows "there is no racism problem among Turkish spectators" which is one of the hypothesizes that constitute the basis of this work and thus it was expressed that this condition is not yet seen as a problem. The opinion that political and ethnical problems shall be moved in football unless precautions are taken was confirmed by 51.9% of the participants by answering "yes" to this question.

Since the football teams in Turkey require competition in different categories such as 3rd League, 2nd League, 1st League and Super League, it cannot be said that the spectators' profile is homogeneous. The opinion of "conscience of spectators regarding football increases when they are qualified to Super League" is approved almost half of the attendants (42.6%) by answering "yes". It was observed that 51.9% of the attendants answered "no" to the view that "spectators of four big clubs are more conscious comparing to that of others". The views that "spectators of the big four are more conscious comparing to others" and "spectators of eastern teams are more conscious comparing to others" were not also approved by most of the attendants (Table 1). The fact that spectators in Turkey have no homogeneous structure is natural since there are competitions in different leagues. Different fan profile works of fan groups in Turkey center on (Besiktas/Carsi, Galatasaray/Ultraslan, Fenerbahce/Genc Fenerliler, Bursa/Teksas, Trabzon/Cilginlar, Sakarya/Tatangalar, Sivas/Yigidolar...) [3].

While Turkish media announces news regarding football spectators they move from this private fan groups. Differentiation among fan groups is made through fanaticism. It is expressed that the most fanatic groups are lined as the following: Besiktas, Bursa, Ankaragucu, Galatasaray, Goztepe, Karsiyaka, Diyarbakir, Mardin and Fenerbahce [12]. Not only is it possible to see works regarding that the differentiation among these fan groups changes over competition, but also no work regarding the conscious levels of the fan groups has been made in Turkey. It is seen that most of the participants confirmed that spectators' reactions are exaggerated by answering "yes" (80.8%) to that question.

Regarding the view that sports media, governmental institutions on sports, sports clubs, all amateur or professional players and spectators, sports public opinion in short [12] positively influence the spectators was near to the half of

the participants (48.1%). With this concern it was mentioned in 5th article of the Fair Play Guidelines that sports public opinion had important functions in the achievement of peace and friendship [13].

Influence of team managers and trainers on other elements concerning spectators and football is a known fact. It is seen that a very little part (17.3%) of the attendants positively influenced trainers and managers. Especially the belief and attitudes of team managers and trainers concerning the winning of a match at all costs may constitute negative examples. Carriage of training to a professional vocation field results successful training to be a profession that also brings much money [11]. For this reason, while it is expected for trainers and managers to positively influence the spectators, the mentality based on winning results pressure on referees and it becomes inevitable for spectators influenced by this to behave negatively [14]. It is expressed that written and visual media also have the same concern and they display a mentality that legitimizes all ways that result profits and they have industrialized [15]. Written and visual media which is one of the efficient factors in directing spectators negatively influences the spectators. Similarly in a research made on 779 persons, it is expressed by more than half of the attendants (53.8%) that sports media has become insufficient in raising awareness among the public [6]. With this concern there are many works that draw attention to the point that spectators behave negatively after negative examples are shown on sports media [3, 8, 11, 14, 16]. It is expressed that referees influence the result of the game thus the attitudes of the spectators. The view that referees positively influence the spectators was accepted by a small portion (15.4%) of the attendants. When lining the factors that stir aggression among spectators it was expressed that opponent team's spectators comes first and the referees after it. There are many works that underline that football is a game of mistakes and thus referees positively/negatively influence the spectators [11, 12].

In this work directed towards the recognition of football spectators in Turkey it is emphasized that the problems of hooliganism, racism and political ethnical problems that cause big international problems might also be seen among Turkish football spectators unless precautions are taken. It is emphasized that the insufficiency of the football spectators regarding sports conscience and football game rules doesn't show difference in terms of the fans of the Big Four, Eastern Teams and the supporters of other teams. The fact that aggression and violence don't show generality in turkey like many European countries doesn't mean that they shall increase in future. Absence of political and ethnical problems in football in such countries like Turkey where macro change and transformations are experienced makes it compulsory to take precautions at this field.

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