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INVESTIGATION OF THE PSYCHOLOGICAL COMMITMENT OF SPORTS SCIENCES FACULTY STUDENTS TOWARD THEIR 4 BIG FOOTBALL TEAMS[1]

SPOR BİLİMLERİ FAKÜLTESİ ÖĞRENCİLERİNİN TUTTUKLARI 4 BÜYÜK FUTBOL TAKIMINA KARŞI PSİKOLOJİK BAĞLILIKLARININ İNCENLEMESİ

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Abstract: Aim: This research aims to examine the psychological loyalty of Yozgat Bozok University sports sciences faculty students towards the 4 major football teams they support.

Method: A total of 258 students, 119 women and 139 men, studying at Yozgat Bozok University in 2023-2024, participated voluntarily. In the study, a personal information form developed by the researchers was used as a data collection tool, and the Team Psychological Commitment (TPB) scale developed by Mahony et al. (2000) based on the studies of Churchill (1979) and Pritchard et al. (1999) was used to measure the students' psychological commitment levels to the team they support. The 258 data obtained were coded in accordance with the SPSS 26.00 data program rules and the answers were recorded. It was understood from the kurtosis and skewness values that the data had a normal distribution, and parametric tests were preferred. While the Independent Samples t-test was used for the gender variable, one-way analysis of variance (One Way ANOVA) was applied for the variables of age, department, grade level and your favorite team.

Results: As a result of the examinations, it was concluded that there was no statistically significant difference in terms of gender and grade level variables in the sub-dimensions of resistance to team variability, loyalty to the team, questioning loyalty and psychological commitment to the team. It was concluded that it was statistically significant and high according to the age of the students, the department they studied and the teams they were fans of.

Conclusion: As a result of the examinations, it was concluded that while gender and grade level variables did not affect the psychological loyalty of the students of the faculty of sports sciences towards the 4 major football teams they support, the variables of age, department of education and the team they support were statistically significant and higher than the average score.

Keywords: Sports, Psychological Commitment, University Student, Football

Öz: Amaç: Bu araştırmada Yozgat Bozok Üniversitesi spor bilimleri fakültesi öğrencilerinin tuttukları 4 büyük futbol takımına karşı psikolojik bağlılıklarının incelenmesi amaçlanmıştır.

Yöntem: Araştırmaya 2023-2024 yılında Yozgat Bozok Üniversitesinde öğrenim gören 119 kadın, 139 erkek olmak üzere toplam 258 öğrenci gönüllü olarak katılmıştır. Araştırmada veri toplama aracı olarak araştırmacılar tarafından geliştirilmiş kişisel bilgi formu ve öğrencilerin taraftarı oldukları takıma psikolojik bağlılık düzeylerini ölçmek için Churchill (1979) ve Pritchard ve diğerleri (1999) çalışmalarına dayanarak Mahony ve diğerleri (2000) tarafından geliştirilmiş Takım Psikolojik Bağlılık (TPB) ölçeği kullanılmıştır. Elde edilen 258 veri SPSS 26.00 veri programı kurallarına uygun bir şekilde kodlanarak, cevapların kaydı yapılmıştır. Verilerin normal dağılım gösterdiği basıklık ve çarpıklık değerlerinden anlaşılmış ve parametrik testler tercih edilmiştir. Cinsiyet değişkeni için Bağımsız Örneklem t-testi (Independent Samples t Test) kullanılırken, yaş, öğrenim görülen bölüm, sınıf düzeyi ve tuttuğunuz takım değişkenleri için tek yönlü varyans analizi (One Way ANOVA) uygulanmıştır.

Bulgular: Yapılan incelemeler sonucunda takım değişkenliğine direnç, takıma duyulan sadakat, sadakati sorgulama alt boyutları ve takıma psikolojik bağlılık boyutunda cinsiyet, sınıf düzeyi değişkeni açısından istatistiksel olarak anlamlı bir farklılık olmadığı sonucuna ulaşılmıştır. Öğrencilerin yaş, öğrenim gördükleri bölüm ve taraftarları oldukları takımlara göre istatistiksel olarak anlamlı ve yüksek olduğu sonucuna ulaşılmıştır.

Sonuç: Yapılan incelemeler sonucunda spor bilimleri fakültesi öğrencisinin tuttukları 4 büyük futbol takımına karşı psikolojik bağlılıkları cinsiyet ve sınıf düzeyi değişkenleri etkilemezken yaş, öğrenim görülen bölüm ve taraftarı olunan takım değişkeninin puan ortalamalarından istatistiksel olarak anlamlı ve yüksek olduğu sonucuna ulaşılmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Spor, Psikolojik Bağlılık, Üniversite Öğrencisi, Futbol

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INTRODUCTION

Sport, with its rules and principles, is a game or entertainment tool that supports socialization and aims to motivate the individual's sense of success (Yetim, 2000), and it is a concept that takes a place in a person's life and affects his life. Sports is not limited to the feeling of supportership or fanaticism, which consists of an emotional attachment to the teams involved (Demirel et al., 2007).

In the current period, sports have become an increasingly important social dynamic. The reason for this is that, in addition to gaining increasing importance, it is followed by many people, influences the masses, and acquires a prestigious position with international respect (Togo, 2016). In our current period, football is the most watched and most popular branch compared to other sports branches (Mungan, 1995). Football has a large audience among sports branches in our country, as well as in many countries of the world, and has gained a prestige that concerns the whole country. For football fans, the competition related to their team or with other team fans is more interesting than many economic, social or political events in the country (Koçer, 2012).

Football is a sociological fact in terms of being a group behavior, and it is a psychological fact asit is related to performance of players and psychological factors that affect this performance. Therefore, football constitutes the common ground for sport sociology and sport psychology (Afacan et al., 2014).

The boost in the progress of football has turned it into a potential market to the extent that in the contemporary global economy it is realised as an industry with enormous capital. The progress in football in the last decade resulted in e.g. increased physical contact between players. In view of the technological and scientific developments that often exceed the physiological limits in order to increase the players' performance (Gumusdag et al., 2011).

It is not clear where, by whom, and when football was first played. However, since its emergence, football has become a factor affecting countries militarily, religiously or socially in most parts of the world, rather than being just a sports branch (Stemmler, 2000). Football is one of the most popular and well-known sports branches around the world and in our country. Football is the sport with the largest fan base (Biscaia et al., 2016) and the most watched sport in the world (Barnfield, 2013). It can be said that the football branch, which has become popular, has an addictive side. In addition, it allows individuals to gain an identity, interact with various social identities, and be influenced by each other (Öntürk et al., 2019).

The sports clubs that are considered the big four in the sports league in our country are Galatasaray, Fenerbahçe, Beşiktaş and Trabzonspor (Özevin, 2016). Every year, billions of people spend time, money and energy to support their football team (Vallerand et al., 2008). When football is examined in the literature, many terms such as spectators, fans and football fans are encountered.

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It has been stated that there are bonds formed by individuals towards sports teams and that these bonds are related to psychology or emotionality (Zorba et al., 2017). Individuals who follow the sports activities directly or through the media are called spectators, and individuals who support their favorite team, show loyalty to the team, have positive emotions and support the team and its athletes, and satisfy their football-related desires in this way are called fans (Arslanoğlu, 2005). Individuals who show excessive passion are described as fanatics (Koruç et al., 2004). While sports spectator (who does not take sides) refers to the person who watches sports competitions in their spare time, fandom differs from the phenomenon of spectator by expressing the degree of commitment of individuals to a team and the players of this team (Trail et al., 2000).

Football fandom, which allows people to keep their existing warrior feelings under control, offers people the opportunity to isolate and relax from the troubles of daily life with a sense of pride, boasting, identification and sense of belonging (Şen, 2004). The concept of fandom is literally an urban ritual created with the participation of individuals who are devoted to their favorite team. Fanaticism is explained as being attached to something with a great deal of passion, partisanship that pushes the individual to extremes, attachment without questioning, conservatism, or, in a sense, devotion or addiction that renders the person's mental reasoning ineffective (Püsküllüoğlu, 1997). As a result of the studies conducted, it is concluded that loyal fans among the fan base are the most loyal and devoted to the team they support (Hacısoftaoğlu et al., 2012).

It is said that sports, as a social phenomenon, create many feelings of commitment and psychological needs in people (Ekici et al., 2016). Although it has been known for many years that fans are loyal to their favorite team, there is not enough information about the psychological factors that increase the emotional bond towards the sports team (Eskiler et al., 2011). The expression of commitment indicates that the relationship between fans continues in a closed or open manner and gains continuity. The most basic stage of expressing commitment is the conscious participation of fans in existing activities in order to maintain their relationship with the team (Dwyer et al. 1987).

The literature on the concept of psychological commitment is examined, research has been conducted in various fields. Psychological commitment is the degree to which individuals reach personal decisions regarding psychological objects, objects or events, even without sufficient objective evidence to support the existing process (Fichman & Levinthal, 1991) and is the attitudinal component of the feeling of loyalty (Backman & Crompton, 1991). It is possible to describe psychological commitment as the free choices that an individual makes by combining information related to the phenomenon of self-confidence, value and commitment (Shamir, 1988). Psychological commitment is an attitude that has an active role in revealing many beneficial attitudes

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and behaviors and includes loyalty behavior (Tüfekçi & Bagis, 2016).

Theoretical Framework

Individuals have a feeling of being included in a community due to the need to reinforce their sense of belonging. It is stated that underlying the feeling of fandom lies a psychological commitment such as identification (Cengiz, 2014). Mostly, people use the feeling of commitment to relieve their loneliness (Dinç & Demircan, 2016).

In this sense, supporting a football team gives people a sense of belonging to a group or family, gives them social status and a feeling of happiness. Thus, fans try to integrate and meet their emotional needs, such as joy, sadness, expectation and hope, and their need for socialization with the team they support and feel loyal to (Koçer, 2012). In this respect, while football is on its way to becoming an important part of the fans' lives, especially because it contains these feelings, it also affects individuals to feel a sense of belonging to the team they support and create psychological loyalty (Orçun & Demirtaş, 2015). Although the fans' re-participation in sports activities is shown as an important indicator of the feeling of commitment, it is necessary to pay attention to the psychological factors that affect the participation of some fans in sports events over time (Mahony et al., 2000).

OBJECTIVES

Within the scope of the study, it was aimed to examine the psychological commitment of the students of the faculty of sports sciences to the nationally and internationally recognized Beşiktaş Gymnastics Club, Fenerbahçe Sports Club, Galatasaray Sports Club and Trabzonspor Club, which are called the 4 major football clubs they support, and to compare them according to different variables.

METHODS

Research Model

This research, which focuses on the psychological attachment of students studying at Yozgat Bozok University faculty of sports sciences to the 4 major football teams they support, was designed with the relational survey model, one of the survey model studies. The scanning model in which the status, existence, direction and degree of change between variables are determined is called the relational scanning model (Karasar, 2005).

Study Group

The population of the research consists of students studying at Yozgat Bozok University. The sample consists of students studying at the Faculty of Sports Sciences at Yozgat Bozok University. In this context, 258 students (119 women, 139 men) participated in the study voluntarily.

Data Collection Tool

Personal Information Form

This form includes 5 questions prepared to understand demographic characteristics. In this section, the students participating in the study were asked about their gender, age, grade level, department of study, and the

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team they support, and these questions were answered.

Informed Volunteer Consent Form

In order to explain the applicability of this research, a warning was made that participation in the study was on a voluntary basis and that only students who wanted to participate should participate.

Psychological Commitment to Team Scale

Team Psychological Commitment (TPB) scale is a scale used to measure fan loyalty. The TPB scale is a 7-point Likert-type scale and contains 14 items in total. The scale was developed by Mahony et al. (2000) based on the studies of Churchill (1979) and Pritchard et al. (1999).

Analysis of Data

The 258 data obtained were coded in accordance with the SPSS 26.00 data program rules and the answers were recorded. It was understood from the kurtosis and skewness values that the data had a normal distribution, and parametric tests were preferred. If the skewness and kurtosis coefficients are between +2 and -2, the normality assumption can be accepted (Field, 2009). While the Independent Samples t-test was used for the gender variable, one-way analysis of variance (One Way ANOVA) was applied for the variables of age, department, grade level and your favorite team.

Ethics Committee Report and Institutional Permission: Since the research project is a course graduation thesis, an ethics committee report and permission was not requested.

RESULTS

Table 1. Frequency and Percentage Distributions Regarding Students' Demographic Characteristics

	Groups	N	%
Gender	Woman	119	**46,1**
	Man	139	**53,9**
Age	18-24 y.o.	177	**68,6**
	25-30 y.o.	62	**24,0**
	31-35 y.o.	17	**6,6**
	36+ y.o. and over	2	**0,8**
Department	Teaching	87	**33,7**
	Coaching	100	**38,8**
	Management	71	**27,5**
Grade Level	1st Grade	42	**16,3**
	2nd Grade	53	**20,5**
	3rd Grade	62	**24,0**
	4th Grade	101	**39,1**
Favorite Team	Galatasaray	92	**35,7**
	Fenerbahçe	79	**30,6**
	Beşiktaş	64	**24,8**
	Trabzonspor	23	**8,9**
Total		258	**100**

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Table 1 is examined; According to the gender variable, 46.1% (n=119) of the individuals participating in the research are female and 53.9% (n=139) are male. According to age variable, 68.6% (n=177) are between the ages of 18-24, 24% (n=62) are between the ages of 25-30, 6.6% (n=17) are between the ages of 31-35. It was concluded that between and 0.8% (n=2) were older than 36 years of age. According to the department variable, 33.7% (n=87) studied teaching, 38.8% (n=100) studied coaching, and 27.5% (n=71) studied management has been reached. According to the grade level variable, 16.3% (n=42) are 1st grade, 20.5% (n=53) are 2nd grade, 24% (n=62) are 3rd grade and 39%, It was concluded that 1 of them (n=101) was studying at the 4th grade level. Depending on your favorite team variable, 35.7% (n=92) are Galatasaray, 30.6% (n=79) are Fenerbahçe, 24.8% (n=64) are Beşiktaş and 8.9% (n=23) It was concluded that they were Trabzonspor fans.

Table 2. T-Test Results for Sub-Dimensions of Participants' Psychological Commitment Levels According to Gender Variable

	Gender	N	x̄	Ss.	Sd	t	p
Resistance to Tool Variability	Woman	119	4,358	,671	256	**-,557**	**,578**
	Man	139	4,407	,745			
Loyalty to the Team	Woman	119	4,221	,768	256	**-1,114**	**,266**
	Man	139	4,329	,777			
Questioning Loyalty	Woman	119	4,361	,930	256	**-,825**	**,410**
	Man	139	4,453	,843			
Psychological Commitment to the Team	Woman	119	4,313	,625	256	**-1,031**	**,304**
	Man	139	4,396	,664			

Table 2 is examined; It is aimed to examine the psychological commitment levels of sports sciences faculty students according to gender variable. As a result of the examinations, there was a statistically significant difference in terms of gender variable in the sub-dimensions of resistance to team variability, loyalty to the team, questioning loyalty and psychological commitment to the team.

Table 3. One-Way ANOVA Results Regarding the Sub-Dimensions of Participants' Psychological Commitment Levels According to Age Variable

	Age	N	x̄	SS	F	P	Tukey
Resistance to Tool Variability	18-24 y.o. (1)	177	4,304	,684	**4,983**	**,002****	**2>1,4**
	25-30 y.o. (2)	62	4,602	,670			
	31-35 y.o. (3)	17	4,568	,858			
	36+ y.o. (4)	2	3,250	1,060			
Loyalty to the Team	18-24 y.o. (1)	177	4,183	,727	**5,814**	**,001****	**2>1,4**
	25-30 y.o. (2)	62	4,541	,766			**2,3>4**

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	31-35 y.o. (3)	17	4,482	,927			
	36+ y.o. (4)	2	3,000	1,131			
Questioning Loyalty	18-24 y.o. (1)	177	4,352	,894	**4,963**	**,002****	**1,2,3>4**
	25-30 y.o. (2)	62	4,543	,821			
	31-35 y.o. (3)	17	4,764	,674			
	36+ y.o. (4)	2	2,500	,707			
Psychological Commitment to the Team	18-24 y.o. (1)	177	4,279	,595	**7,605**	**,001****	**1,2,3>4**
	25-30 y.o. (2)	62	4,562	,668			**2>1**
	31-35 y.o. (3)	17	4,605	,752			
	36+ y.o. (4)	2	2,916	,212			

Table 3 is examined; It was aimed to examine the psychological commitment levels of sports sciences faculty students according to age variable. As a result of the examinations, it was concluded that the mean scores of students aged 25-30 in the resistance to team variability sub-dimension were statistically significantly higher than the mean scores of students aged 18-24 and 36 years and above. It was concluded that the mean scores of 25-30 year old students in the sub-dimension of loyalty to the team are statistically significantly higher than the score mean points of 18-24 year old and 36 year old and over students, and that the 25-30 year old and 31-35 year old students' mean score mean score is higher than the mean score of 36 year old and over students. has been reached. It was concluded that the mean scores of students aged 18-24, 25-30 and 31-35 in the sub-dimension of questioning loyalty were statistically significant and higher than the mean scores of students aged 36 and over. It was concluded that the mean scores of students aged 18-24, 25-30 and 31-35 in the dimension of psychological commitment to the team were statistically significant and higher than the mean scores of students aged 36 and above, and that the mean scores of students aged 25-30 were higher than the mean scores of students aged 18-24.

Table 4. One-Way ANOVA Results Regarding the Sub-Dimensions of Participants' Psychological Commitment Levels According to the Department Variable

	Department	**N**	**x̄**	**SS**	**F**	**P**	**Tukey**
Resistance to Tool Variability	Teaching (1)	87	4,408	,755	**1,729**	**,180**	-
	Coaching (2)	100	4,290	,752			
	Management (3)	71	4,490	,575			
Loyalty to the Team	Teaching (1)	87	4,365	,685	**6,940**	**,001****	**1,3>2**
	Coaching (2)	100	4,066	,907			
	Management (3)	71	4,476	,586			
Questioning Loyalty	Teaching (1)	87	4,639	,627	**8,029**	**,001****	**1,3>2**
	Coaching (2)	100	4,150	1,011			
	Management (3)	71	4,497	,878			
	Teaching (1)	87	4,471	,602	**7,399**	**,001****	**1,3>2**
	Coaching (2)	100	4,168	,688			

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Psychological Commitment to the Team	Management (3)	71	4,488	,579			

Table 4 is examined; It is aimed to examine the psychological commitment levels of sports sciences faculty students according to the department variable. As a result of the examinations, it was concluded that the mean scores of the students studying in the teaching and management departments in the sub-dimensions of loyalty to the team, questioning loyalty and psychological commitment to the team were higher and statistically significant than the average scores of the students studying in the coaching department. No statistically significant difference was found in the department variable and the sub-dimension of resistance to team change.

Table 5. One-Way ANOVA Results Regarding the Sub-Dimensions of the Participants' Psychological Commitment Levels According to the Grade Level Variable

	Grade Level	N	x̄	SS	F	P	Tukey
Resistance to Tool Variability	1st Grade (1)	42	4,297	,776	**1,188**	**,315**	-
	2nd Grade (2)	53	4,314	,764			
	3rd Grade (3)	62	4,524	,542			
	4th Grade (4)	101	4,372	,743			
Loyalty to the Team	1st Grade (1)	42	4,195	,726	**2,607**	**,052**	-
	2nd Grade (2)	53	4,366	,682			
	3rd Grade (3)	62	4,471	,608			
	4th Grade (4)	101	4,152	,899			
Questioning Loyalty	1st Grade (1)	42	4,492	,800	**,694**	**,556**	-
	2nd Grade (2)	53	4,389	,942			
	3rd Grade (3)	62	4,510	,788			
	4th Grade (4)	101	4,326	,942			
Psychological Commitment to the Team	1st Grade (1)	42	4,328	,645	**1,502**	**,215**	-
	2nd Grade (2)	53	4,356	,697			
	3rd Grade (3)	62	4,502	,550			
	4th Grade (4)	101	4,284	,669			

Table 5 is examined; It was aimed to examine the psychological commitment levels of sports sciences faculty students according to the class level variable. As a result of the examinations, it was concluded that there was no statistically significant difference in terms of the grade level variable in the sub-dimensions of resistance to team variability, loyalty to the team, questioning loyalty and psychological commitment to the team.

Table 6. One-Way ANOVA Results Regarding the Sub-Dimensions of Participants' Psychological Commitment Levels According to the Team Variable They Support

	Team	N	x̄	SS	F	P	LSD
Resistance to Tool Variability	Galatasaray (1)	92	4,385	,673	**2,135**	**,096**	**-**
	Fenerbahçe (2)	79	4,244	,843			
	Beşiktaş (3)	64	4,479	,640			
	Trabzonspor (4)	23	4,601	,445			
	Galatasaray (1)	92	4,215	,804	**2,040**	**,109**	**-**

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Loyalty to the Team	Fenerbahçe (2)	79	4,215	,776			
	Beşiktaş (3)	64	4,328	,789			
	Trabzonspor (4)	23	4,626	,483			
Questioning Loyalty	Galatasaray (1)	92	4,467	,890	**2,835**	**,039***	**1,3,4>2**
	Fenerbahçe (2)	79	4,185	,961			
	Beşiktaş (3)	64	4,515	,769			
	Trabzonspor (4)	23	4,666	,758			
Psychological Commitment to the Team	Galatasaray (1)	92	4,356	,656	**3,076**	**,028***	**3,4>2**
	Fenerbahçe (2)	79	4,215	,696			
	Beşiktaş (3)	64	4,441	,578			
	Trabzonspor (4)	23	4,631	,506			

Table 6 is examined; It is aimed to examine the psychological commitment levels of sports sciences faculty students according to the team variable they support. As a result of the examinations, it was concluded that the mean scores of students who are Galatasaray, Beşiktaş and Trabzonspor fans in the sub-dimension of questioning loyalty are statistically significant and higher than the mean scores of students who are Fenerbahçe fans. In the dimension of psychological commitment to the team, it was concluded that the mean scores of students who are Beşiktaş and Trabzonspor fans are statistically significant and higher than the mean scores of students who are Fenerbahçe fans. No statistically significant difference was found in the sub-dimensions of resistance to team variability and loyalty to the team.

DISCUSSION

At this stage of the study, the analysis of the data, the findings obtained as a result of the analysis and the results obtained as a result of the findings are included.

This study was conducted to examine the psychological commitment of university students studying sports sciences towards the 4 major football teams they support. As a result of the examinations made with the gender variable in the research findings, it was determined that there was no statistically significant difference in terms of the gender variable in the sub-dimensions of resistance to team variability, loyalty to the team, questioning loyalty and psychological commitment to the team (Table 2). Supporting this finding when looking at the literature, Giray and Gültekin Salman (2008) found in their study that psychological commitment to the team did not create a significant difference according to the gender factor. Kartal and İnan (2018) found that there was no significant difference between the psychological commitment levels of football fans according to the gender factor. In his study, Altınbeyaz (2022) found that the psychological commitment of fans did not differ according to the gender variable. In his study on fans, Durgutluoğlu (2020) found that the psychological commitment of fans did not differ according to the gender factor. When the literature is examined, it is seen that there are studies that differ from our research. In their research on Fenerbahçe fans, Giray and Salman (2008) found that the psychological commitment level of male fans was higher than that of female fans. Similarly, Salam (2015) found in his research that the

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psychological commitment of male fans was higher than the psychological commitment of female fans. It is thought that the reason why the study findings differ from the relevant literature is that the gender distribution of the individuals participating in the study was not made in a healthy ratio. Another finding of the research was to examine the psychological loyalty of the students towards the 4 major football teams they support in terms of age variable (Table 3). As a result of the examinations, significant age-related differences were detected in the resistance to team variability sub-dimension, loyalty to the team sub-dimension, questioning loyalty sub-dimension and psychological commitment to the team sub-dimensions. When the literature review is made, similar to our study; In his research, Durgutluoğlu (2020) concluded that there is a statistically significant relationship between the fans' psychological commitment levels and the age factor. Giray and Salman (2008) found in their study that the psychological attachment of fans to their teams differs significantly according to the age variable. In the research conducted by Çakmak, Başaran and Karatut (2022) on the psychological loyalty of football fans to the team, it was determined that the age variable did not create a statistically significant difference, but it created a significant difference in the level of fanaticism. Unlike our study, Altınbeyaz (2022) concluded in his research on Konyaspor fans that there is no significant difference between the fans' psychological commitment level and the age factor. Similarly, in the study conducted by Yıkılmaz (2017) on the fans of 4 major sports clubs, it was found that there was no significant relationship between psychological commitment and age factor. The lack of similarity in the study results may be due to the differences in the research groups.

Another finding of the research was to examine the psychological loyalty of the students towards the 4 major football teams they support in terms of the department variable (Table 4). As a result of the examinations, it was concluded that the sub-dimensions of loyalty to the team, questioning loyalty and psychological commitment to the team dimension were higher and statistically significant for those studying in the teaching and management departments than the mean scores of the students studying in the coaching department. No statistically significant difference was found in the department variable and the sub-dimension of resistance to team change. Göksel, Zorba, Yıldız and Caz (2020) found in their study that, according to the department variable, the psychological loyalty of the students of the sports management department to the team they support was higher than the students of other departments and that it differed statistically significantly from the students of the physical education teaching department. Similarly, in the study conducted by Bozyiğit and Doğan (2018), it was determined that there was a statistically significant difference between the psychological commitment to the team according to the department factor. In the study conducted by Yıkılmaz (2017) on the fans of 4 major sports clubs, no significant difference was found between the

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psychological commitment level and the department of education variable. Similarly, Baş (2008) found in his study that the psychological commitment level of fans did not differ according to their education level.

Another finding of the research was to examine the psychological commitment of students to the 4 major football teams they support in terms of the grade level variable (Table 5). According to the results of the research, it was determined that students' psychological commitments did not differ according to grade level. In their research on football fans' psychological commitment to the team, Çakmak, Başaran and Karatut (2022) concluded that there was no statistically significant difference in terms of grade level.

Another finding of the research was to examine the psychological loyalty of the students towards the 4 major football teams they support in terms of the team variable they support (Table 6). As a result of the research, it was determined that the mean scores of students who are Galatasaray, Beşiktaş and Trabzonspor fans in the sub-dimension of questioning loyalty were statistically significant and higher than the mean scores of students who were Fenerbahçe fans. In terms of psychological commitment to the team, it was determined that the average score of students who are Beşiktaş and Trabzon sports fans was significantly higher than the average score of students who were Fenerbahçe fans. In his study by Yıkılmaz (2017), which supports our study when looking at the literature, the level of loyalty of individuals who are fans of Galatasaray, Trabzonspor and Beşiktaş to their teams was found to be statistically higher than that of Fenerbahçe fans. Similarly, Giray and Gültekin Salman (2008), who partially supported our study, found a statistical difference between the psychological commitment and aggression attitude of individuals who are Fenerbahçe fans. In the study conducted by Bozyiğit and Doğan (2018), it was concluded that fans who bought licensed products had higher psychological loyalty to the team they support than those who did not buy licensed products.

CONCLUSION

As a result, it has been determined that while gender and grade level variables do not affect the psychological loyalty of sports science faculty students towards the 4 major football teams they support, age, department of study and the team they support do. It is thought that conducting studies on the psychological loyalty of sports fans will help sports organizers make predictions about what kind of attitude they will have towards the fans and how to increase the fans' loyalty to the teams.

SUGGESTIONS

In a similar study, it is thought that expanding the study group to be researched, applying it to fans other than the fans of the 4 big football clubs, increasing the variables, observing the student population during their graduation period and the years they start their careers, and making analyzes in a broad framework will contribute to the field.

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