Studying Identification Level of Applicants of Football Supporter Teachers by Different Variables

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ABSTRACT

This study was carried out to understand identification level of students at Kahramanmaraş Sütçü Imam University Department of Physical Education Teaching and Faculty of Education with their football team by gender, faculty, the age of becoming supporter and the level of interest to the sports. The data was obtained by using "Sport Spectator Identification Scale". The data obtained from questionnaire conducted on teacher applicant university students (n= 241) was solved with t test, One Way Anova and Pearson correlation analysis. In conclusion, there were not any significant relations found between teacher applicants' gender and identification level with the team they supported (p>0.05). It was found that the younger they became supporter the greater identification level with their team got (p<0.05). It was also found that the identification level of the students at department of physical education teaching and sports was greater than the students at faculty of education (p<0.05). Besides, teacher applicants playing active role in sports were found to have a greater identification level with the team they supported (p<0.05).

Key Words: Supporter, Spectator, Identification, Age of Becoming Supporter

1. INTRODUCTION

Generally supporter is a person who takes someone's part and who supports one side. They who are committed to (Turkish Dictionary, 1988) the values represented by the athletes and who support (Şahin, 2003) activities of the sports club materially and morally in terms of sport. Although majority of the university students were known to be supporters, it is very few known about the effects of being a supporter to gain social identity (End, Kretschmar and Dietz-Uhler, 2004). Team identification is based on social identity theory. Social identity theory contends that the self-concept is composed of a personal identity and a social identity (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). While the personal identity consists of distinctive attributes, such as abilities and interests, social identity is comprised of notable group categories that can be based on demographic classifications (e.g., sex, race) or organizational membership (*e.g., religious, educational, social institutions*) (Turner, 1982). Thus, if a person identifies with an organization (*or in this case, a team*), he or she observes, "a oneness with or belongingness to the organization, where the individual defines him or herself in terms of the organization(s) of which he or she is a member (Mael & Ashforth, 1992).

According to Wann and Branscombe (1990) supporters are evaluated in two groups as die-hard and fair-weather. Sutton, Mcdonald & Mılne (1997) studied the supporters by grading them in three groups as low, medium and high identification level. They found that if the identification level was low it meant that the supporter took more pleasure and a match meant more like an entertainment to them. They also found that if the identification level was medium the supporters tended to wear clothes in the colors of their team or having an emblem on them. Lastly they stated that if the identification level was high then the supporters were committed their self into their team as much as they could afford in time and in material Being identified as a supporter has different meanings from person to person. For some people, supporter identification may have a significant effect in determining social status (Wann & Melnick 2001). Applicant teachers in the study might set an example for their students by their attitudes and behaviors as the teachers of the future times.

Therefore, it is significant to determine partisanship of football in different ways on teacher applicant university students. From this point of view the purpose of this research is to study identification level of teacher applicants that are football supporters with their team by gender, department, the age of becoming supporter and their participation in sports.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study was carried out in the years of 2010 and 2011 academic years at Kahramanmaraş Sütçü İmam University Physical Education and Sports High School (P.E), (n=121) and Education Faculty (E.F), (n=120) The subjects were students attending in these schools whose ages were between 21.68±2.44. 76 of them were females and 165 of them were males. It was 241 in total. After obtaining official permissions for study, willing students took the questionnaire. Before conducting the questionnaire, students were given information about the correct way to fill in the questionnaire by the researcher. It took 15 minutes to fill in the questionnaire.

Questionnaire consisted of two parts. First part involved demographic data like gender, age, faculty they attended and the age of becoming supporter. Second part involved "Sport Spectator Identification Scale" (SSIS) developed by Wann and Branscombe (1993) to calculate identification level with the team they supported. This part had questions about *the team they supported*. This scale was adapted to Turkish (Cronbach alpha ,87) by Günay and Tiryaki (2003) and was determined to be reliable. Cronbach alpha value of this current "Sport Spectator Identification Scale" (SSIS) was calculated to be 0,86 and Cronbach alpha value was determined to be reliable when the results compared with results in literature (Büyüköztürk, 2002). Obtained data was analyzed by using SPSS 15.0 program. Differences in identification level of football supporter students in terms of gender and faculty were obtained by independent samples t-test. Identification level of the students in terms of their interest to sports was determined by One Way Anova test. Also, Pearson Correlation analysis was performed to understand the relation between the age of becoming supporter and identification level. They were evaluated in statistical comparisons by the values of p<0.05 and p< .001.

3. FINDINGS

Test group consisted of university students at High School of Physical Education and Sports (n=121; %50,6) and Faculty of Education (n=120; %49.6) and the ages were between 21.68±2.44. 76 of the group were females and 165 of them were males. It was 241 in total.

Table 1. Categorizing teacher applicants by demographic features (N=241)

	Value Label	f	%
Gender	Female	76	31.5
	male	165	68.5
	Total	241	100
Department	P.E	121	50.2
	E.F	120	49.8
	Total	241	100
The age of becoming supporter	1-5 age	44	18.3
	6-9 age	99	41.1
	10-13 age	74	30.7
	14 and upper	24	10
	Total	241	100
Age (year)	1-19 age	37	15.4
	20-22 age	135	56
	23-25 age	50	20.7
	26 and upper	19	7.9
	Total	241	100

When we look at the demographic features of the students we see that total 241 students from High School of Physical Education and Sports (P.E), (n=121) and Education Faculty (E.F), (n=120) between the ages of 21.68±2,44 took part in the study. 76 of the group were females and 165 of them were males and the age of becoming supporter was *8.58 ±3.52*

Table 2. T test results of identification level of students with the team by their gender

	Gender	N	M	SD	t	df	p
Identification Levels	Female	76	4.12	1.58	1.457	239	.146
	Male	165	4.42	1.45			

(p>0.05)

When comparing the identification levels with the team in terms of gender (Table 2), there were not any significant differences found in identification of male and female students with their team (p>0.05) .

Table 3. T test results of identification level of students with the team by their faculty

	N	M	*SD*	df	t	p
P.E	121	4.74	1.239	239	4.38	0.001
E.F	120	3.91	1.633			
Total	241	4.32	1.504			

P<0.05

When comparing the identification levels with the team in terms of faculties (Table 3) there were significant differences found in identifying with the team for the students at High School of Physical Education and Sports and Education Faculty (p<0.05)

Table 4. Pearson Correlation Analysis results for the age of becoming supporter and identification level with the team

		M	*SD*	1
1.	**Identification level with the team**	4.32	1.5	-
2.	**The age of becoming supporter** (years)	8.58	3.52	-.174(**)

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).**p<0.01*

When comparing the age of becoming supporter of teacher applicants with identification levels (Table 4), a low negative relation between *the age of becoming supporter* and *identification levels* was determined (*p*<0.01). The younger they become supporter the greater identification level with team they support gets (r=-.174; *p*<0.01).

Table 5.Identification level of students with the team by how much interest they have in sports

	N	M	*SD*
Only spectator	27	3.62	1.325
Only supporter	60	3.90	1.630
Both athlete and supporter	154	4.61	1.409
Total	241	4.32	1.504

Table 6.One Way ANOVA test results for identification level of students with the team by how much interest they have in sports

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Identification level with the team	Between Groups	36.401	2	18.201	8.551	.001
	Within Groups	506.580	238	2.128		
	Total	542.981	240			

P<0.05

When comparing interest in sports with identification level (see Table 5, Table 6), there was a significant difference found in identifying with the team for the students who actively participated in sports (p<0.05).

4. DISCUSSION AND RESULTS

There were not any differences found between the students' gender and the team they supported in terms of identifying (see Table 2; p>0.05). In spite of our findings, Melnick and Wann (2004) stated that male supporters had a higher identification level than female supporters. End et al. (2004) presented that being known as a football supporter is quite important for a man than a woman.   It is seen that applicants of physical education and sports teacher have a higher identification level with their team than the other applicants of teacher (see Table 3; P<0.01). Students who actively participated in sports have a higher identification level with their team than they who identified their selves to be only (see Table 6; P<0.01). In different approaches, it is seen that supporter level was categorized by how much they committed their selves to their team and how much interest they had. Jones (1997) stated that there was a difference between spectators and supporters.

It was determined that the level of committing their selves to their team and its players divided spectators and supporters. Sloan (1979) signified that spectators ranged from they who only watched a sports event to they who became identified with their team. Therefore this study has the same consequence as the others. When evaluating both findings (see Table 3 and Table 6) we see that participating in sports increases the level of identification with the team. So, being a supporter has a greater effect upon creating social identity of applicants of physical education and sports teacher who have chosen sports as their profession. When approaching in this way, it would be considered that choosing physical education and sports teaching might have an effect on becoming prominent of their supporter identifications.

According to results of Pearson correlation test for determining the relation between the age of becoming supporter and their level of identification with their team (see Table 4), it was found that, the younger they became supporters the greater the level identification got. This period of becoming supporter *(8.58 ±3.52 years)* is called latency period. The children at this age might seek for a more acceptable identification model as well as close identification models like mother's, father's and aunt's model (Uluğ, 1997). During socialization period children can identify with a popular and successful team, its players, colors and emblem.   In consequent, being a supporter for many people might be an important part of their social identity with the variety of identification factors (such as color, emblem, player and popularity) they have in them (Erkal, Güven & Ayan, 1998). With this aspect, media and sports club need to encourage sportsman attitudes in order to provide supporters a healthy identification. Yet developing a profile of a supporter who is respectful to opposing team, who does not wish violence and responds positively if opposing team has won the game, would contribute to developing a healthy society.

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