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### ADAPTATION OF THE MOTIVATION SCALE FOR ATHLETES' INSTAGRAM USE TO TURKISH AND EXAMINATION OF ATHLETES' MOTIVES REGARDING DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS\*

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**Abstract:** The popularity of the Instagram application has a serious potential for brand development for athletes. Athletes gain great potential in the phase of branding when they use the Instagram application successfully. Therefore, the aim of this study was to make an adaptation of the motivation scale for athletes' Instagram use to Turkish for understanding their motives to use Instagram and analyzing the determinants in terms of gender, age, educational status, frequency of Instagram use, type, and level of the sport. Within the research framework, a total of 208 athletes from different sports branches of sports clubs in Turkey participated in our study. Data collection was carried out via adapting the Instagram Motivation Scale developed by Sheldon and Bryant (2016) and a questionnaire was included based on the respondents' demographic characteristics. Apart from the validity and reliability analysis of the scale, T-Test and One-Way Variance (ANOVA) analysis were used to evaluate the collected data. According to the findings of the research, which were obtained via adapting the motivation scale for using Instagram to the context of Turkey, the scale is a valid and reliable measurement tool. Gender, age, education level, sportive branch level, and frequency of Instagram use were the factors that influenced the athletes' motivation to use the application. This research will help athletes manage their social media brands efficiently in the future by focusing on identifying the motivations that draw the attention of athletes to the Instagram application.

**Key Words:** Athlete, instagram, social media, sport

### SPORCULARIN INSTAGRAM KULLANMA MOTİVASYONLARI ÖLÇEĞİNİN TÜRKÇE'YE UYARLANMASI VE SPORCULARIN DEMOGRAFİK ÖZELLİKLERİNE GÖRE İNCELENMESİ

**Öz:** Instagram uygulamasının popülaritesi, sporcular için marka gelişiminde ciddi bir potansiyele sahiptir. Sporcular, Instagram uygulamasını başarılı bir şekilde kullandıklarında, markalaşma aşamasında büyük bir potansiyel kazanırlar. Bu nedenle çalışmanın amacı, sporcuların Instagram kullanma motivasyonlarını belirleyecek bir ölçek uyarlama çalışması yapmak ve bu motivasyonların cinsiyet, yaş, eğitim durumu, Instagram kullanma sıklığı, spor türü ve düzeyi açısından farklılıklarının analizini yapmaktır. Araştırmaya spor kulüplerinin farklı sportif branşlarında yer alan toplam 208 sporcu katılmıştır. Çalışmada veri toplamak için Sheldon ve Bryant (2016) tarafından geliştirilen Instagram Kullanma Motivasyonları Ölçeği ve sporcuların demografik özelliklerinin yer aldığı bir anket formu kullanılmıştır. Verilerin analizinde araştırmada kullanılan ölçek ile ilgili geçerlilik ve güvenilirlik analizlerinin yanı sıra T-Testi ve Tek Yönlü Varyans (ANOVA) analizi kullanılmıştır. Araştırmada elde edilen bulgulara göre Instagram kullanma motivasyon ölçeğinin geçerli ve güvenilir bir ölçme aracı olduğu belirlenmiştir. Sporcuların, cinsiyet, yaş, eğitim düzeyi, sportif branş düzeyi, Instagram kullanım sıklığı açısından Instagram kullanma motivasyonlarında farklılıklar belirlenmiştir. Bu araştırma sporcuların dikkatini Instagram uygulamasına çeken motivasyonların belirlenmesine odaklanarak, sporcuların gelecekte sosyal medya markalarını verimli bir şekilde yönetmelerine yardımcı olacaktır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Sporcu, instagram, sosyal medya, spor

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## INTRODUCTION

Athletes comprise an important part of stakeholders in sports management, and they compete in many fields and levels. Athletes who are in a competition to display their abilities in the same sport type act alike in the sportive sense. The competitive strategy that can be effective in the level of competition among athletes, however, emerges in the field of marketing. In addition to sportive performance, athletes can distinguish themselves from their competitors via marketing activities.

Today, both professional and amateur athletes prefer to use up-to-date, advanced, and effective communication tools to distinguish themselves from their competitors (Santos et al., 2019). Thanks to the rapid spread of digital technologies, athletes gain many advantages in terms of effective communication. Social media tools play an important role in increasing recognition, for they support athletes in their efforts to stand out in branding activities (Anagnostopoulos et al., 2018). The Instagram application, for instance, is among the actively used social media tools which athletes take advantage of in the field of sports for digital branding (Anagnostopoulos et al., 2018; Li et al., 2021; Pegoraro et al., 2018; Toffoletti and Thorpe, 2018).

Current improvements in this popular social networking app accelerate the orientation of athletes to the application by improving their digital life. According to the Digital 2020 report, 49% of the population are active social media users and 15% of these people use the Instagram application (Wearesocial, 2020). The popularity of the app drives users to take action as social influencers (Gupta et al., 2020). This allows athletes as well to express themselves online.

With accompanying photography and digital videos, Instagram (Li et al., 2021) is one of the social media applications that is seen as the best, most convenient, and most interesting (Markivska et al., 2020) social media tool of all information media. Instagram is considered a crucial platform that will provide more sociality in the future (Rhee et al., 2021). The application has a serious potential for brand development for athletes, too. Because Instagram has a structure that can reveal the relationship between branding, discursive, symbolic, and data-based work, it is an integral part of the ongoing development of brand activities (Brodmerkel and Carah, 2016).

As Instagram continues to grow, the motivations of athletes to be on social media become more and more important. Although there are some quality academic studies on the motivation of athletes to use Instagram (Abeza et al., 2017; Anagnostopoulos et al., 2018; Green, 2016), there is a need to examine the motivation of athletes to use Instagram, especially in our country. Because, there are many studies on the motivation to use the Instagram application in terms of different disciplines of students (Aktan, 2018; Balcı et al., 2019) and academics (Diker and Gencer, 2019). However, no research has been found to determine the motivation of athletes to use Instagram.

The Instagram application offers two-way communication (Dessart, 2017). This situation increases the motivation of the athletes to take part in the application. Because, thanks to the Instagram application, athletes can expand their following (Geurin-Eagleman and Burch, 2015), increase the number of news stories (Romney and Johnson, 2020), and their image (Li et al., 2021), and as a result, their sponsorship income (Su et al., 2020). This research will help athletes manage their social media brands efficiently in the future by focusing on identifying the motivations that draw the attention of athletes to the Instagram application.

## LITERATURE

To understand the importance of the Instagram application in terms of marketing and branding in the sports industry, many researches were conducted on the issue of creating and sharing effective content via the app. Watkins and Lee (2016) pointed out that Instagram is used more than Twitter among college athletes, to convey brand relationships and brand-related personality cues, which revealed the participants exposed to Instagram content to have reported higher perceptions of brand personality than those exposed to Twitter content. Toffoletti and Thorpe (2018), whose research focused on female athletes' contribution to the conceptualization of personal brands on Instagram, proved that the content of sports branches produced by female athletes receives more likes and comments. According to Abeza et al. (2017), who added Instagram to the research content, the application facilitates the establishment, maintenance, and development of relationships between athletes and fans, and also achieving marketing goals. Anagnostopoulos et al. (2018) observed that Instagram facilitates successful branding for sports clubs that offer their fans, in the branding process, some advantages in return for their comments.

In addition to research on the branding of athletes and sports clubs for the sports industry, there are also studies that showed the impact of Instagram on effective communication. Mentioning the wide range of social media use directed by age and gender during live sports broadcasts, Abdourazakou et al. (2020) highlighted the importance of differentiating the role of Instagram from other applications in propelling communication and interaction between athletes and fans of sports clubs. As Slavich et al. (2018) emphasized, athletes benefit from sharing pictures of food and drink on Instagram with supporters of college football teams, for it provides fan loyalty, sharing nostalgia, and a sense of community.

Van Driel and Dumitrica (2021) revealed that the influencers using the Instagram app keep working with advertisers and maintaining more professional relationships with their audiences day by day. Athletes can also become Instagram phenomenons thanks to the advantages it offers them for developing their personal brands. It is known that athletes become brands with the performance they display on the field related to their professional lives. In sports fields where athletes display their talents, it is also the support of sportsmen's brands, to which the media contributes via announcing sport events to large masses and social media tools that offers the audience diversity in terms of visuality. Brands created on the sports field should be supported by athletes' Instagram brands (Doyle et al., 2020). Therefore, it is necessary to do more quantitative research on the motivation of athletes to use the Instagram application, which will contribute to the issue of branding.

Considering all these studies, it would not be wrong to say that the Instagram application contributes to sports branding. When the on this app is examined, it is seen that there are relatively more qualitative studies with content analysis. Quantitative studies on this subject, however, are limited in number. In addition to all these, it is noteworthy that the leading factor in sports discussions on Instagram is fan attraction. Thus, for Instagram communication, athletes are often directed to prepare engaging content for fans. Nevertheless, athletes should be directed to themselves along with their own brands by the character of the application. The exploration of their motivations to use it should not be ignored, either. The determination of athletes' motives as Instagram users can raise their awareness and ensure a more conscious orientation on the application.

Understanding how the Instagram application is used by athletes will enable us to see the social reflections of athletes' sports performances. The comprehension of what underlies this reflection requires the examination of athletes' motives for using the app. This will help producing content that can strengthen brands in line with athletes' motivation of Instagram, and eliminate the destructive potentials available and difficult to control on social media (Miller et al., 2016). In this way, it will be possible for both academics and athletes to consider sportive motivation and its correct handling as a significant issue. There are studies examining the motivation of athletes to use the Instagram application in terms of gender (Weber et al., 2022) and age (Bodaghi and Oliveira, 2022). However, in the literature, the frequency of the athletes in the Instagram application, the motivation of the athletes to use the Instagram application during their educational status, and how the sports branch they are interested in motivates the athletes to use the application have not been emphasized. Analyzed, these demographic variables can provide a deeper and more multidimensional understanding of the reasons that motivate athletes to use the application. Therefore, the aim of this study is to conduct a scale adaptation analysis to determine the motivations of athletes to use Instagram and to analyze the differences of these motivations in terms of gender, age, educational status, frequency of Instagram use, sport type, and sport level.

In the light of the research mentioned above, the questions to be answered by the athletes for the determination of their motivation for using Instagram can be listed as follows:

Research Question 1: Is the Turkish version of the Instagram Usage Motivation Scale (Sheldon and Bryant, 2016), used as a data collection tool in this research, a valid-reliable measurement tool in athlete culture?

Research Question 2: Does the motivation of the athletes to use Instagram differ in terms of gender, age, education level, frequency of using Instagram, type of sport, and level of sport?

## **METHOD**

### **Research Model**

In the research framework of this study, a quantitative research method was used to examine what motivated the athletes as Instagram users and how the variations of gender, age, educational status, frequency of using Instagram, sport type, and sport level affected it.

### **Working Group**

208 athletes selected by convenience sampling from different branches in sports clubs in the province of Izmir participated in the research. Descriptive Statistics Regarding the Sample of the Study are shown in Table-1.

**Table 1.** Distribution of athletes by gender, age, educational status, frequency of Instagram use, sports type and sports level variables

Variables		N	%
Gender	Female	88	42.3
	Male	120	57.7
Age	21 years and under	125	60.1
	22 years and older	83	39.9
Education status	High School Student-Graduate	56	27
	University Students	118	56.7
	University Graduates	34	16.3
Frequency of Instagram Use	More than once	144	69.2
	Less than once a day	64	30.8
Sports Type	Individual	107	51.4
	Team	101	48.6
Sports Level	Amateur Branches	138	66.3
	Professional Branches	70	33.7

42.3% of the athletes examined were female and 57.7% were male. While 60.1% of the participants were under the age of 21, 39.9% of them were athletes under the age of 22. In terms of education level, high school students/graduates comprised 27%, university students 56.7%, and university graduates 16.3% of the respondents. When the Instagram usage frequency variable was employed, it is seen that 69.2% of the athletes use Instagram more than once while 30.8% use it less than once a day. The sport type variable indicates that the rate of athletes with individual sports type was 51.4% whereas the rate of athletes with team sports was 48.6%. The comparison of respondents by sport level variable shows that 66.3% belong to amateur branches and 37.7% belong to professional branches.

### Data Collection Tool

In this research, the adaptation of Sheldon and Bryant (2016)'s Motivation Scale for Using Instagram and a questionnaire including the demographic characteristics of the athletes were implemented as a data collection tool in order to determine the influence of Instagram. In the original Instagram Usage Motivation Scale, the motivation of individuals to use Instagram consists of 4 sub-dimensions and 20 items. The scale was applied to measure the extent to which participants used the factors called Surveillance (following individuals, monitoring, and obtaining information), Documentation (recording the moments of individuals' lives), Coolness (getting interested in making new posts), and Creativity (exhibiting creativity skills). A 5-point Likert-type rating scale helped us to verify the extent to which respondents agree with the statements by the choices ranging from 1-Never to 5-Always. For the linguistic equivalence of the scale, the feedback was evaluated, and the scale took its final form with the addition of two Turkish teachers, who work for the Ministry of National Education, to the research. During the data collection phase of the research, the data related to the scale were collected via face-to-face interviews held by the athletes' voluntary participation within the scope of the research.

### Data Analysis

In the study, the validity and reliability analysis of the scale were carried out, and an item analysis based on the average difference between the upper and lower groups of 27% was performed. After examining the distinctive features of the items, confirmatory factor analysis was applied to the data. Furthermore, Cronbach's Alpha values for the sub-dimensions of the motivation to use the Instagram scale were calculated.

The construct validity of the scale was tested via the athletes subjected to factor analysis of 20 items that were evaluated on a 5-point Likert-type scale. When the confirmatory factor analysis was applied to the scale items, it was seen that the fit indices of the scale showed better results because the factor loads of some items were low. They were removed on the grounds where they were not suitable for the athlete's culture. As a result, the scale was finalized with 15 items by subtracting 2 (items 1 and 4) from the surveillance sub-dimension and 3 (items 5, 8 and 16) from the documentation sub-dimension. Finally, statistical analysis were made via the evaluation of the collected data according to their calculated Kurtosis and Skewness values. Accordingly, SPSS Statistics 22.0 Package and LISREL 8.51 were the two programs utilized for analyzing the research data.

## RESULTS

In this part of the study the data obtained related to the research questions are given. Kurtosis and skewness values, factor loads ( $\lambda$ ),  $R^2$ ,  $T$  values, and Cronbach Alpha values can be seen in Table 2.

**Table 2.** Skewness, kurtosis values, factor loads( $\lambda$ ),  $R^2$ ,  $t$  values, cronbach alpha values

	Item	Skewness	Kurtosis	$\lambda$	$R^2$	$T$	$\alpha$
Documentation	2	0.329	0.796	.73	.53	10.92	
	9	0.268	0.817	.76	.57	11.50	.79
	12	0.476	0.509	.75	.56	11.31	
Coolness	3	0.512	-1.123	.79	.43	12.36	
	6	0.536	-1.085	.73	.42	11.00	.79
	17	0.125	-1.274	.65	.44	9.62	
Creativity	18	-0.112	-1.132	.64	.59	9.36	
	7	0.067	-1.186	.44	.20	6.10	
	14	0.564	-0.991	.75	.54	11.16	.71
Surveillance	20	0.573	-0.994	.84	.74	12.90	
	10	-0.595	-0.391	.74	.61	10.92	
	11	-0.991	0.320	.48	.24	6.39	
	13	-0.745	-0.003	.60	.39	8.53	.74
	15	-0.508	-0.335	.70	.42	10.23	
	19	0.012	-1.064	.53	.20	7.33	

When the factor loading related to confirmatory factor analysis is examined, it is seen that the factor loading values of the items related on the scale are at a sufficient level. The kurtosis and skewness values of the items reveal that the data are normally distributed. The internal consistency coefficients of the scale sub-dimensions were calculated .79 in the Documentation sub-dimension, .79 in the Coolness sub-dimension, .71 in the Creativity sub-dimension, and .74 in the Surveillance sub-dimension.

**Table 3.** Item analysis results

Items	Lower %27		Upper %27		t
	$\bar{X}$	s.s.	$\bar{X}$	s.s.	
2- To remember special events	2.25	1.12	4.18	.92	-9.993**
3- To become popular	1.17	.47	3.60	1.33	-12.876**
6- It is cool	1.26	.67	3.53	1.43	-10.679**
7- To find people with whom I have common interest	2.23	1.15	3.58	1.21	-6.039**
9- To commemorate an event	2.08	1.06	3.78	.77	-9.610**
10- To see "visual status updates" of my friends.	2.78	1.12	4.25	.76	-8.049**
11-It is fun.	3.28	1.12	4.62	.70	-7.564**
12- To remember something important.	2.39	1.12	4.08	.64	-9.820**
13- To follow my friends.	3.25	1.06	4.21	.86	-5.249**
14- To create art	1.51	.78	3.62	1.21	-10.900**
15- To see what other people share	2.69	1.14	3.94	.84	-6.594**
17- To self-promote.	1.60	.88	3.76	1.06	-11.684**
18- To provide "visual status updates" for my friends	1.91	.85	4.08	.83	-13.594**
19- To creep through other people's posts	2.12	1.14	3.55	1.12	-6.654**
20- To show off my photography skills	1.41	.73	3.75	1.14	-12.851**

\*\*p&lt;.01

When the item analysis results of 27% lower and upper groups of the Instagram motivation scale are evaluated, it is obvious that the t values are significant. That means, the questions on the motivation scale for using Instagram have a distinctive quality.

**Table 4.** Factor analysis of fit indices

Fit Indices	Values	Acceptable Values
$X^2/d_f$ <sup>1</sup>	1.77 (143,68/81)	$X \leq 3$
RMSEA <sup>2</sup>	.061	$X \leq .08$
GFI <sup>3</sup>	.92	$X \geq .85$
CFI <sup>4</sup>	.93	$X \geq .90$
NFI <sup>5</sup>	.86	$X \geq .90$
NNFI <sup>4</sup>	.91	$X \geq .90$
SRMR <sup>2</sup>	.064	$X \leq .10$

**References:** 1-Kline, 2011; 2 -Cudeck, 1993; 3-Schermelleh-Engel et al., 2003; 4-Hu and Bentler, 1999; 5-Bentler and Bonett, 1980.

As the confirmatory factor analysis of fit indices in Table 4 shows, the model's goodness-of-fit indexes were measured as quite high. Since all fit indices took acceptable values, it was proven that the scale items were appropriate. Accordingly, concurrency validity was met. In the confirmatory factor analysis, it was seen that the fit indices of the scale were sufficient.

**Table 5.** Descriptive statistics on Instagram usage motivations

Sub-dimensions	N	$\bar{X}$	s.s.
Surveillance	208	3.53	.78
Documentatiton	208	3.15	.98
Coolness	208	2.69	1.10
Creavity	208	2.54	1.07

When the descriptive statistics on Instagram usage motivations are examined by the average values obtained in the participants' responses to the four sub-dimensions, it is seen that surveillance sub-dimension values have the highest mean ( $\bar{X}=3.53$ ), followed by documentation ( $\bar{X}=3.15$ ), then coolness ( $\bar{X}=2.69$ ), and finally creativity ( $\bar{X}=2.54$ ) sub-dimensions. It is observed that they have the averages relevant to their dimensions.

After the presentation of the skewness and kurtosis values of the items that contented and showed a normal distribution regarding the answer to the question "Do the motivations of the athletes to use Instagram differ in terms of gender, age, educational status, frequency of using Instagram, sport type, and sport level" (Table 2), T-Test and One-Way Variance (ANOVA) analysis results are presented in Table 6 for a comparison of the differences related to the variables obtained in this research.

**Table 6.** T-test results on athletes' gender, age, Instagram frequency, sports type and sports level Variables

T-TEST		Surveillance		Documentation		Coolness		Creativity	
		$\bar{X}$	s.s.	$\bar{X}$	s.s.	$\bar{X}$	s.s.	$\bar{X}$	s.s.
Gender	Female	3,76	,70	3,39	,92	2,78	1,08	2,61	1,09
	Male	3,36	,80	2,96	,98	2,62	1,10	2,50	1,05
	<i>t</i> value	3,842**		3,181*		,989		,731	
Age	Under 21	3,46	,79	3,01	1,03	2,66	1,12	2,35	1,05
	Older 22	3,63	,75	3,34	,85	2,73	1,05	2,83	1,03
	<i>t</i> value	-1,545		-2,469*		-,448		-3,254*	
Frequency Instagram	>1	3,66	,71	3,22	,98	2,78	1,13	2,66	1,07
	<1	3,22	,83	2,96	,95	2,49	,98	2,29	1,02
	<i>t</i> value	3,691**		1,771		1,874		2,377 *	
Sports Type	Individual	3,63	,75	3,16	,92	2,61	1,09	2,55	1,10
	Team	3,42	,79	3,12	1,03	2,77	1,10	2,54	1,04
	<i>t</i> value	1,945		,244		-1,004		,110	
Sports Level	Amateur	3,55	,82	3,16	,90	2,57	1,12	2,42	,99
	Professional	3,48	,68	3,10	1,10	2,92	1,01	2,79	1,17
	<i>t</i> value	,653		,481		-2,225*		-2,374*	

\*  $p<.05$ ; \*\* $p<.01$



According to the findings shown in Table-6 concerning the gender variable of the respondent athletes in the research, it is seen that there is a significant difference in the sub-dimensions of surveillance and documentation between male and female athletes. It is viewed that the first group have higher averages than the second one in the Surveillance and Documentation sub-dimensions, which contain significant variations.

It is noticed by the documentation and creativity sub-dimensions that the athletes vary significantly in age. That is, the ones aged 22 and over have higher averages than the ones aged 21 and under.

According to the daily Instagram usage frequency variable of the participants, the surveillance and creativity sub-dimensions differ remarkably for the ones using the app more than once a day and the ones who don't use it. Further evaluation of the sub-dimensions proved higher averages for the athletes that use more than one application than the ones that do not use any applications. On the other hand, regarding the type of sport variable, the sub-dimensions did not vary at all among the respondents whether they perform individual or team sports.

Finally, a notable variation in the actuality and creativity sub-dimensions is observed among the athletes that took part in this research as professionals and amateurs. Professional athletes have higher averages than amateur athletes considering the sub-dimensions mentioned.

**Table 7.** Anova results on the educational status variable of athletes

Sub-dimensions		$\bar{X}$	s.s.	F	
Surveillance	High School Student-Graduates	3,40	,93	1,809	---
	University Student	3,53	,64		
	Graduates student	3,72	,92		
Documentation	High School Student-Graduates	2,93	1,08	2,398	---
	University Student	3,17	,92		
	Graduates student	3,38	,93		
Coolness	High School Student-Graduates	2,65	1,14	,646	---
	University Student	2,65	1,09		
	Graduates student	2,88	1,03		
Creativity	High School Student-Graduates	2,39	1,11	3,396*	3>1
	University Student	2,50	1,00		
	Graduates student	2,97	1,17		

\*p<01

As the findings in Table-7 reveal, high school students and graduates differ from university students and graduates according to the educational status variable of the athletes which was obtained by the creativity sub-dimension applied in this research. The aforementioned sub-dimensions with substantial differences demonstrate that the athletes who comprised university

graduate group of this research have higher averages compared to the group of high school students and graduates.

## DISCUSSION

In this study, where the motivation of the athletes to use Instagram was examined by a comparison of various variables, it was seen that the athletes used Instagram with different motives affected by gender, age, daily Instagram usage frequency, sports level, and education (Table 6 and Table 7). The fact that female athletes have significantly higher averages in the surveillance and documentation sub-dimensions than male athletes in terms of the gender variable may be due to the females' tendency to communicate more in interpersonal ways. As a matter of fact, Tannen (1986) underlined that women communicate more in solidarity in their interpersonal relations, unlike men who establish communication encouraging autonomy, independence, and knowledge. Therefore, it can be suggested that the female athletes participating in this research acted in solidarity by observing what others shared on the Instagram application.

South Asia's Leading News Agency made news on research about curiosity regarding genders which indicated men as more curious than women (South Asia's Leading Multimedia News Agency, 2018). However, depending on our research, we can say that the opposite is true when athletes are taken into consideration as Instagram users. The findings of this research revealed that female athletes tend to learn about other individuals by viewing their posts on Instagram. Because athletes constantly compete with their competitors in showing their sportive performances, they always monitor their opponents. Based on this observation, it was assumed in our study that this motive is also reflected in athletes' Instagram usage. As Lebel and Danylchuk (2014) concluded, female athletes have more brand and image awareness while using social media. Therefore, in this research, female athletes were proposed to edit their Instagram contents by observing the content posted by other people on the application.

Tiggeman et al. (2018) drew attention to women's face and body satisfaction that changes according to the number of likes they get on Instagram. The fact that Instagram interaction proceeds through likes and comments explains female athletes' motivation for documenting their content by sharing more liked and positive comments when they create their Instagram contents. As Davies (2017) underlined, female Instagram users are liked five times more than male users. Likewise, the number of likes given by both fans and athletes to the female Instagram sports content is quite high (Gönkek, 2019). This may be leading female athletes to gain likes by documenting their memories of their lives on the app. Analyzing fan images of women's football available on Instagram, Toffoletti et al. (2021) suggested that the process of creating and sharing visual content with an intention to document fans' self-identity has become a routine fan activity during major sporting events. This may relate to the female respondents in this research who want to document, in a similarly way, their sports-related content, which involves a large part of their lives, via the content they produce for Instagram.

The athletes', whose age average is high, having higher averages in both their motivation to use Instagram and the creativity sub-dimension might result from the opportunity to be more in the forefront of visuals thanks to the Instagram app. Instagram is one of the social media tools that does not require intense conversation (Coles, 2014) but more visuality in the forefront, thus this may lead athletes to be more creative in developing their Instagram content. In addition, sports by nature bring athletes from different cultures together through organizations, and these interactions may contribute to their physical and cultural development as well as constant

improvement of their creativity. It is possible to say that older athletes improve their sportive creativity owing to interactions with different clubs and athletes on various occasions. As a matter of fact, Green (2016) argues that athletes should choose innovative and interesting applications to enrich their followers on social media in an inventive way. The advantage of displaying their visuals via social media will possibly raise their motives for using also Instagram creatively to appeal to more audiences.

It is observed that the participants whose age average was high also had high averages in the documentation sub-dimension. As athletes progress in their professional careers, their fan base increases and so does the number of their followers on the Instagram app. This may be led by the fact that athletes document their sportive lives via Instagram as they age, and they are motivated to produce more creative content after getting likes or comments. The fact that athletes face retirement as they get older proves why Instagram becomes significant for supporting their brands by producing more creative content.

The findings in the surveillance and creativity sub-dimensions suggest that the athletes' desire to be seen and noticed on Instagram is one of the motivations for using this app. That is in line with the findings regarding the high average of athletes using the app more than once a day. The time spent on Instagram is increasing day by day (Statista, 2020). That's why athletes who use the app are driven to produce more remarkable and creative content via scrutinizing the content other users share. The fact that the Instagram application is at the forefront of sharing images that contain images beyond words (Lee et al., 2015) and that it offers the opportunity to make various filters on the shared content may be propelling athletes wishing to be seen by others to enrich their visuals and therefore, to be more productive on Instagram.

The fact that Instagram usage motives did not show a significant difference in terms of the type of sport variable in this study may be caused by Instagram's being an individual application. Whether the user is an individual or a team athlete, he creates an account for on the app to produce his own personal content. The reason for this is probably the athletes' intention of personal branding through the creation of an impressive personal account stamped by their own identities (Lindahl & Öhlund, 2013).

Professional athletes are always at the forefront in both sports' environment and media environment, and their sports history are longer than amateur athletes. That might explain the significant difference between professional and amateur respondents in the timeliness and creativity sub-dimensions examined as Instagram usage motives in this study. Global digitalization enables today's athletes to reach a wider area of their supporters thanks to social media, and it also ensures the fame their success on the field brings to be long-term. When they gain professional athlete identity, it is also necessary for athletes to work with professionals such as social media specialists and managers from a variety of fields apart from sports. For professional athletes, that means being guided in keeping their visual content constantly updated and using social media more creatively.

In the creativity sub-dimension, which is examined as another motive for Instagram use, a noteworthy distinction was observed between the participants who are university students or graduates and the ones who are high school students or graduates. This is compatible with these athletes' psycho-motor, mental, emotional, and social competency improved via sports and education, which accelerated one's personal development process. At this point, the role of social intelligence in efficient social media use is indisputable. Social intelligence refers to establishing effective interpersonal relationships (Bacanlı, 2014). With regard to Instagram, the

way to communicate efficiently with others is to strengthen the visual content. Athletes can attract audiences and accomplish successful relationships if they present their content in more creative ways. As the creativity sub-dimension analysis indicates, the increase in athletes' education level leads to a tendency to produce more creative content on the Instagram application.

It has been seen that motivation to use Instagram among athletes progresses in order of surveillance, documentation, coolness, and creativity (Table-5). This shows that the athletes are motivated in the field of surveillance of others rather than being at the forefront of creating their brands in the Instagram application. In this period when the brands of athletes in the Instagram application have developed rapidly (Su et al., 2020), it is an event that should be considered for athletes to be motivated to use the application for surveillance of others, apart from developing their brands. Mentioning that the Instagram application athletes closer to their fans, Li et al. (2021) mention that athletes produce content to introduce self-promotion, team promotion, and brand promotion. This research has revealed that athletes should focus on coolness more.

Doyle et al. (2020) find that creating content in which athletes show their athletic performance is more liked in the Instagram application. In this sense, creativity, which is in the last place in the motivation to use Instagram in this research, should be given more attention. In other words, if the athletes want to get more likes on the Instagram application, they should create aspirational and authentic content. In this regard, Romney and Johnson (2018) pointed out that Instagram images of athletes are more liked. Athletes will be liked more by their followers on the Instagram application when they create creative content and include themselves.

## CONCLUSION

In this study, which was carried out through a scale adaptation to determine the motivations of athletes (in Turkey) for using Instagram and to analyze the differences between these motivations with regard to gender, age, educational status, frequency of using Instagram, sport type, and sport level, the motivations scale developed by Sheldon and Bryant (2015) was used. Athletes from the sports industry participated in our research made via the the scale's adaptation, and they responded to the questionnaire to convey their perspectives of Instagram usage. In this direction, it was determined that the motivation scale to use Instagram used in the research is a valid and reliable measurement tool. The scale sub-dimensions, which were implemented to assess the athletes' motives for using Instagram, were surveillance, documentation, actuality, and creativity. The research conducted through the participation of 208 athletes revealed that these motivations increase with athletes' individual development as well as gender differences.

As Statista (2020) pointed out, Instagram is one of the most popular social media apps among young people. Similarly, the app is popular among athletes. Athletes gain great potential in the phase of branding when they use the Instagram application successfully, which means using it creatively, keeping their accounts up-to-date, and taking an active part in sharing appealing content on Instagram. In order to achieve this, athletes create a successful brand by promoting themselves visually (Geurin-Eagleman and Burch, 2015), and to support these brands, they turn into brands themselves through their frequent Instagram usage (Doyle and Kunkel, 2020). Therefore, it is necessary to determine motivations of athletes to use the app. It is also important for athletes to receive training from experts in the field of social media so that these motivations can be directed correctly. This will furnish athletes with the capacity to produce more effective and accurate content for Instagram and to develop their brands. We suggest that not only

athletes but also sports managers should work with experts in the field of social media to raise sports clubs' awareness to this issue. With this research, it became evident that the determination of the motives that drive athletes' interests in the Instagram application will help them manage their social media performance efficiently in the future as well.

This study can serve as a model for future studies that might be carried out on motivations for using Instagram in sports field, for the qualitative research method applied in interviewing athletes is an effective tool to reveal different motivational dimensions. In this study, specifically, the inclusion of the Instagram application is the limitation of the research. Therefore, in future studies' motivations for using different social media platforms for athletes can be determined. In this situation, specifying the motivations of each stakeholder in the sports industry regarding Instagram or other social media platforms might play an influential role in discovering the motivations of the sports environment to use social media in a broad sense. Based on this study, motivations for using different social media platforms can be determined and the orientations of each platform can be identified. Also, the research could be expanded by including more athletes. Finally, it is recommended to conduct comparative research between all these platforms, the findings of which will also contribute to the field of social media use in sports.

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