



International Journal of Social Sciences

ISSN: 2587-2591

DOI Number: <http://dx.doi.org/10.30830/tobider.sayi.5.6>

Volume 3/1 Spring

2019 p. 68-85

LEVEL OF AWARENESS OF E-SPORTS CONCEPT AND ITS EFFECT ON IMAGE OF SPORTS CLUBS IN TURKEY

Bora GÖKTAŞ¹

ABSTRACT

Digital games have become very common nowadays. Even, Digital Game Design departments are gradually opening up in universities; bachelor's degree and graduate degree trainings are provided. As a result of the expansion of digital games, a concept called e-Sports was born, then e-Sports teams were established by professional sports clubs and universities; tournaments, leagues have become organized. e-Sports is a sport that is played over computer or game consoles in a virtual environment where players compete with each other. Major clubs in Turkey have e-Sports teams and sports clubs are struggling in the leagues in various categories. Brand image is the sum of thoughts and impressions of the costumer about the brand. In this study, first of all, consumer thoughts regarding the awareness of the concept of e-Sports were tried to be determined; After that, the effects of the e-Sports activities performed by the clubs on the club / brand image were tried to be revealed. In order to obtain the results of the research, 7 hypotheses were developed for consumer attitudes and 5 of them were supported. 7 of the 10 hypotheses underwent regression testing were supported. Based on these findings, it was concluded that the participants had a positive attitude about e-Sports and that the awareness of e-Sports had an effect on the brand / club image.

Keywords: e-Sports, Brand Awareness, Brand Image

¹ Dr. Öğr. Üyesi, Bayburt Üniversitesi Uygulamalı Bilimler Fakültesi Yönetim Bilişim Sistemleri Bölümü, boragoktas@bayburt.edu.tr, ORCID ID: 0000-0003-2159-0241

1. Introduction

Technology is advancing rapidly and parallel to this, the fields, channels, media where the consumers can have fun and spend time are progressing and multiplying. One of the activities that consumers can do is digital games. Especially we are in a period where there are generations (baby boomers, X and Y) called digital immigrants and Z generation called digital native. These generations, also known as generation C, are a segment that spends a lot of time in digital media and are very interested in digital games. With the development of digital games and the interest of consumers, a concept called e-Sports has emerged. Even major sports clubs now have e-Sports teams, and great clubs without an e-Sports team are in the process of being formed and are in preparation. Here it is understood that; e-Sports is a branch that attracts the attention of recognized sports clubs.

E-Sports is still a very young concept in Turkey and to e-sports interest is increasing every day. The literature on the concept is still developing in parallel. In particular, studies on the effect of e-Sports activities on club / brand image are very limited. The study makes a significant contribution to the literature in terms of a deficiency in this subject. It is also a data for sports clubs with or without e-Sports branch.

In the study, first of all, the concepts and development of digital games and e-sports are mentioned. Then, the attitudes of consumers towards e-Sports activities are tried to be understood. Finally, the effect of e-Sports awareness on club / brand image is tried to be determined. Recommendations are presented according to the findings of the study.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Concept of Dijital Games

The game, which is as old as human history, has undergone many changes from past to present, especially since the early 1980s digital games have entered our lives. Thus, with the advancing technology, the shape and content of the games people play have changed (Hazar et al., 2017: 320). In parallel with the developing technology, the needs of consumers have also changed and computer games have become an important media tool (Yıldırım, 2016: 13). About digital gaming; a game machine called “Computer Space” was launched in 1971, followed by “Pong” (1972), “Odyssey 100” (1975), “Steeplechase” (1975), “Night Driver” (1976), “Space Invaders” (1978), “Pac-Man” (1980), “Donkey Kong” (1981), “Commodore Max” (1982), “Habitat - Club Caribe” (1988), “SimCity” (1989), “Warcraft: Orcs & Humans” (1994), “Ultima Online” (1997) respectively. If today; game consoles such as Playstation4 and Xbox One are the most popular digital gaming tools (Wolf, 2008: 73; Van Dreunen, 2016:31; Gür, 2018: 16). In addition, a lot of games with the download tool is downloaded and played on smart phones and computers.

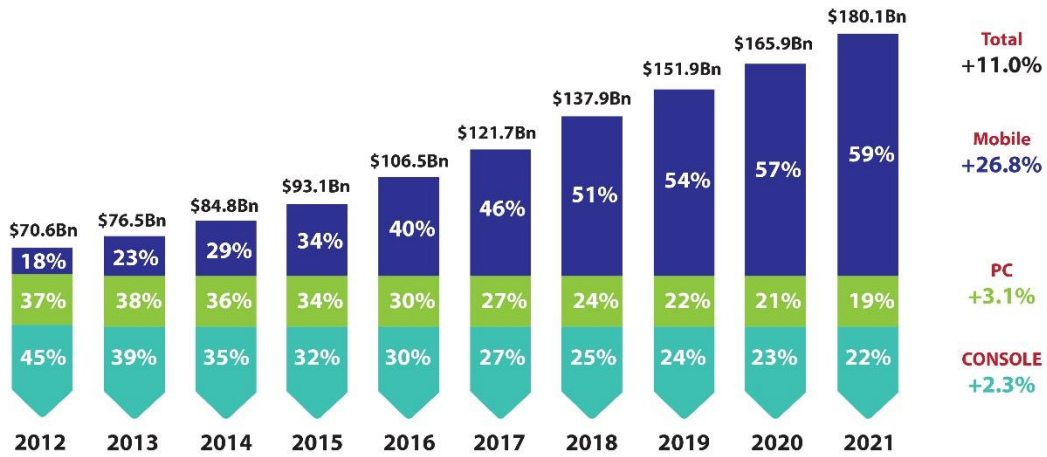
Interaction of digital game and monitor, mouse, keyboard or joystick with computer software is provided. Digital games are a set of systems with rules and objectives related to these tools. The digital game is played with the user login with a visual environment. These games are programmed with various technologies and these games may also be referred to as digital console games, computer games and online games. In today's world, digital games are one of the most important occupation for the Z generation (Tekkurşun Demir and Hazar, 2018: 129). Because, although playing digital games is preferred by all age groups, it is seen that it is mostly used in early childhood. Digital games are now designed even for children under the age of 1 and that children are allowed to play (Toran et al., 2016: 2265).

The digital game is defined as the display of something that is formed by the interaction of the player with an electronic system or game tools through a screen or similar display system (Jull, 2011: 18). Digital games are entertainment software that allows players to interact with each other. Many digital games are designed to play online and offline with other players and players can play in this online environment in three ways and are as follows (Djaouti et al., 2008: 2);

- ✓ A controller can be connected to a console,
- ✓ Players can enter digital gaming devices through a local area network (LAN) connection,
- ✓ Players can be involved in a game with multiple players from around the world.

With the development of digital games, the sales channels of the games have also changed. Due to the fact that digital sales costs are less than physical copies and can be easily delivered to consumers, a significant restructuring has been taking place in this sector in recent years. According to research published by IDATE DigiWorld Research, sales in digital games in 2008 were 22% digital and 78% physical copies. However, in 2014, this figure changed to 69% digital and 31% physical. By 2023, it is predicted to be 93% digital. People's Republic of China is the market leader with 28% share in the digital gaming industry. ABD follows the People's Republic of China with a market share of 23% (Dijital Oyunlar Raporu, 2019: 8).

More than 30 million people in Turkey play digital games through computers, phones and televisions. 2015 revenue of the game market in our country was \$400 million and 2017 was \$750 million in parallel with the increase in the number of players. This figure increased to \$878 million in 2018. It is expected to endure \$1 billion in 2019 and \$1.2 billion in 2020. (<https://startupdostu.com/turkiyede-dijital-oyun-pazari-buyuyor-4060/>). The global game market size, which was around \$138 billion in 2018, is estimated to be around \$152 billion in 2019. It is estimated that this amount will approach approximately \$166 billion in 2020 and \$180 billion in 2021 (<https://newzoo.com/insights/articles/global-games-market-reaches-137-9-billion-in-2018-mobile-games-take-half/>). This is illustrated by Figure 1 below.

Figure 1: Exchange of Game Platforms Market Shares

Source: Newzoo, Global Game Market Report Premium, 2018

Digital games are widely used as a means of entertainment by a wide audience. Individuals play these games on their own accord, and are environments that have their own rules and entertainment that are independent of the outside World. Digital games are widely used as a means of entertainment by a wide audience. Individuals play these games on their own accord, and are environments that have their own rules and entertainment that are independent of the outside world and can now be played through technological platforms such as desktop and laptop, game console, mobile phone, tablet, Playstation, Xbox, Nintendo (Taylan et al., 2018: 55). In parallel with this expansion, the number of companies producing digital games has increased and as a result various and quality games have emerged (Korkusuz and Karamte, 2013: 81). Digital games are also used as educational and training activities in schools, companies, military and economic fields (Çetin, 2013: 3). This has also attracted the attention of universities and The department of digital game design started to be opened in universities. Now in Turkey; Bayburt, Bahçeşehir, Beykoz, Bilgi and Eastern Mediterranean Universities have “Digital Game Design” departments.

2.2. Concept of E-Sport

e-Sports is a sport that requires both physical and mental effort where people at one end of the world can meet and play online with people at the other end of the world, or where people from different parts of the world can meet and play through big electronic sports organizations (Argan et al., 2006: 3). It is played through computer or game consoles in a virtual environment where amateur or professional players compete with each other. Here e-Sports; It is a form of sport that mediates human-computer interfaces (Mustafaoğlu, 2018: 86). As in non-electronic sports, there are various branches in electronic sports. Virtual

versions of traditional sports games are made as electronic sports under the name of sports games (Hamari and Sjöblom, 2017:214). A new and serious form of computer games appears as e-Sports. This conversion is not a smooth change. This change is a period in which players face various challenges to facilitate professionalization. e-Sports can become a niche game played by a handful of people or it can become more and more widespread with the effect of growth. e-Sports can become a niche game culture played by a handful of people, or it can become more and more widespread with the effect of growth. However, this growth in e-Sports seems to tell us that it will be more than a niche market (Taylor, 2012: 239).

As defined by the Oxford English Dictionary, a sport is “an activity involving physical exertion and skill in which an individual or team competes against another or others for entertainment.” According to this definition, e-Sports is a sport like other sports. Because e-Sports is a sport that requires intensive training and focus at the highest level. Professional eSports teams train for up to 8 hours per day. They have coaches, trainers, nutritionists and receive salaries like professional players (Merwin et al., 2018: 3).

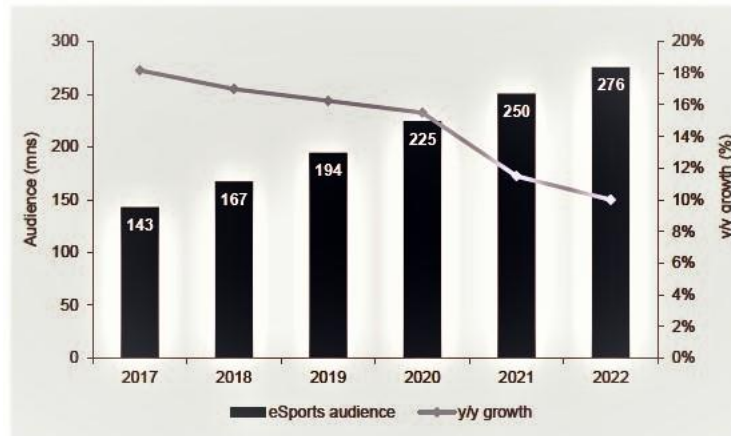
With the advent of the first computer games, e-sports, which actually started to exist, have become popular in the last 8-9 years. While it was played in arcades in the 1970s, with the advent of game consoles, gaming venues began to vary and became more competitive over time and became an industry and tournaments began to be organized. Initially; The \$ 1000, \$ 2500 award winning tournaments weren't very attractive for making an e-sports career; but then the awards reached an incredible career and became an important career goal. For example; In the summer of 2016, the International's prize pool was worth \$ 20,770,460, and the team that won the tournament won \$ 9,139,000. With the rise of the digital gaming industry, the concept of professional gaming career has emerged (Kocadağ, 2017: 51).

In e-Sports, competitions such as modern sports are organized, and there are aspects that require mastery such as strategy, tactics, team motivation. An e-sports player can perform 400 moves per minute using a keyboard and mouse. He/she can also produce cortisol at the level of a car racer in a competition, and heartbeats may resemble the marathon racer (Mustafaoğlu et al., 2018: 116). This situation; it can refute the views that electronic sports do not contain any physical activity, that there is no sport by sitting in an armchair and that there should be a physical activity in the sport. Because in electronic sports there is a physical activity. e-Sports players must use their reflexes, brain functions and hand-eye coordination in order to perform successfully (Aktuna and Ünlüönen, 2017: 3). Therefore, Tiedemann (2004) defines e-sports as a sport that includes sports activities that develop and train people's physical and mental activities (Bayram, 2018: 18). Professional e-sports players have the same status as professional athletes and receive very good rewards. Thus, e-athletes can also earn very good money. In this case, e-sports is now an attractive profession. Nowadays, the interest of students and young people in traditional sports is gradually decreasing, while the interest in e-sports is increasing. young people, students e-

athletes to continue their careers, aims to earn money from this profession (<https://www.espor-turkiye193.com/espor-nedir/>).

Young people mostly communicate through online environments. Therefore, social interactions are now established through online channels. It is thought that e-Sports will continue to take its share from traditional sports as an interactive and social sport. It is estimated that the audience of e-sports will grow by 14% in the next 5 years. This is further supported by Figure 2 (Merwin et al., 2018: 8).

Figure 2: eSports Audience Growth Forecast - 2017A to 2022E



Source: Merwin et al., 2018: 8

E-Sports in Turkey as well as all over the world is growing very rapidly and it reaches huge budgets and the number of followers. Thus, e-Sports is under the influence of young people in our country and is becoming widespread. Thus, e-Sports also affects young people in our country and is becoming increasingly common. Therefore, the proportion of young people under his influence also increases. In our country due to widespread e-sports activities, Turkey Digital Games Federation (TUDOF) was established by the Youth and Sports Ministry in 2011. In 2013, this institution was connected to the Federation of Emerging Sports Branches and continues its activities (Çolak et al., 2018: 124).

The best-known e-sports team in Turkey; Dark Passage, Space Soldiers, Hardware Arena Gaming, Bahçeşehir Supermassive, Youthcrew, Galacticos, Doğuş Uni. Aurora, Royal Youth, Gamers of Future, Royal Bandits teams (<https://www.redbull.com/tr-tr/turkiye-nin-en-iyi-espor-takimlari>). In addition, sports clubs such as Galatasaray Espor, Beşiktaş Espor, 1907 Fenerbahçe E-sports and Bursaspor Espor have e-Sports teams (<https://www.acunn.com/e-spor/turk-espor-takimlari-1127425-haber>).

3. Methodology

3.1. The Purpose, Method and Limitations

The purpose of the research is determination of the level of awareness of the concept of e-Sports and determining the effect of sports clubs that make e-Sports activities on the strengthening of brand image. e-Sports is a concept with an 8-9 year history and its literature continues to develop both in the world and in Turkey. There is very limited study on the contribution of sports clubs' e-Sports activities to club or brand image. In this paper, it is tried to fill the gap in the literature and contribute to the literature.

For the purpose, a questionnaire was prepared and it was conducted by convenience sampling method. Although the research was conducted with a total of 558 participants, only 308 of them were tested. Because the research was conducted only for the participants who have knowledge about the concept of e-Sports. That's why; "Do you have any information about e-Sports?" participants who answered "no" to the question were excluded from the evaluation. In the preparation of the questionnaire, the studies of Kuznetsov (2017) and Yoo and Donthu (2001) were used for the e-Sports awareness scale. For the brand image scale; Dölarslan (2012), Yüksekbilgili (2017) and Guens' et al. studies were used. The research was conducted between 15.06.2018 and 22.06.2018 and it was tested in SPSS 25 program. It consists of 8 questions about demographic characteristics, 10 e-Sports awareness scale items (5-point Likert scale) and 36 brand image scale items (5-point Likert scale). So, total of 54 questions and items were addressed to the participants.

The limitations of the research are as follows;

- ✓ The research is limited to the participants who had knowledge about e-Sports. The inclusion of participants who were not familiar with e-Sports could had hampered the achievement of the research objective.
- ✓ The research was tested with 308 participants. If the number of samples were higher, more different and perhaps more healthy results could be achieved.
- ✓ Participants were selected by convenience sampling method. Instead of this method, other research methods could be used that could give better results. However, this method had to be used due to time and financial constraints.
- ✓ Since the research was conducted with onvenience sampling method, the majority of the participants were Y generation.

3.2. Research Hypotheses

The hypotheses of the study were designed in accordance with the research purpose and these are presented as follows;

H1: Participants' attitudes towards e-Sports are positive.

H1a: Participants' attitudes towards knowledge are positive,

H1b: Participants' attitudes towards following are positive,

H2: Participants' attitudes towards the image of sports clubs engaged in e-Sports activities are positive.

H2a: Participants' attitudes towards responsibility are positive,

H2b: Participants' attitudes towards activity are positive,

H2c: Participants' attitudes towards positivity are positive,

H2d: Participants' attitudes towards interaction are positive,

H2e: Participants' attitudes towards contentment are positive,

H3: The fact that Sports Clubs conduct e-Sports activities has a positive effect on club images.

H3a: Knowledge has a positive effect on the responsibility.

H3b: Knowledge has a positive effect on the activity.

H3c: Knowledge has a positive effect on the positivity.

H3d: Knowledge has a positive effect on the interaction.

H3e: Knowledge has a positive effect on the contentment.

H3f: Following has a positive effect on the responsibility.

H3g: Following has a positive effect on the activity.

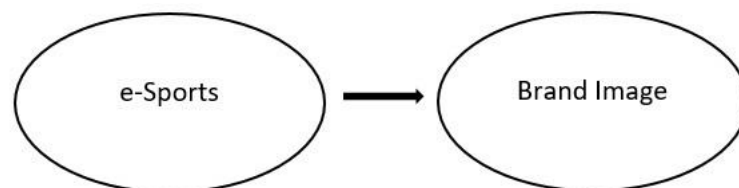
H3h: Following has a positive effect on the positivity.

H3i: Following has a positive effect on the interaction.

H3j: Following has a positive effect on the contentment.

In order to test the first two of the research hypothesis, the mean of the factors were examined and regression analysis was used to test the third hypothesis of the study. Figure 1 below describes hypothesis 3 of the search.

Figure 3: Basic Hypothesis of Research



3.3. Reliability Analysis

In order to see the reliability of the scales used in the study, Cronbach's Alpha coefficient test was used. If Cronbach's Alfa coefficient is found equal or greater than 0.70, the reliability of the scale is accepted as good (Kılıç, 2016: 48). In this study, the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient was found to be 0.708 for the e-Sports awareness scale and 0.783 for the brand image scale. Thus, both scales can be said to be highly reliable. The test result is given in Table 1.

Table 1: Reliability Analysis

Scale	Cronbach's Alpha	Items
e-Sport	0.708	10
Brand Image	0.783	36

3.4. Factor Analysis

Before the factor analysis, Bartlett's sphericity test and KMO (Kaise-Meyer-Olkin) test were performed to see whether the scale was suitable for testing. At the end of the test, KMO for e-Sports awareness scale is 0,848; Bartlett's sphericity test is 746,944 and p value is 0,000. KMO for brand image scale is 0.888; Bartlett's sphericity test is 1737,088 and p value is 0.000. According to the literature, KMO value for Social Sciences is sufficient to be greater than 0,60. Since Bartlett's sphericity test result is $p > 0.05$, the data is correlated. The test results are given in Table 2 and Table 3.

Table 2: KMO and Bartlett's Sphericity Test for e-Sports Scale

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		,848
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	746,944
	df	45
	Sig.	,000

Table 3: KMO and Bartlett's Sphericity Test for Brand Image Scale

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		,888
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	1737,088
	df	120
	Sig.	,000

The factor load of 4 of the 36 brand image items under factor analysis was less than 0.30. Therefore, these items were excluded from the research. Thus, 32 items for the brand image scale were tested. As a result of the factor analysis, 2 factors for the e-Sports awareness scale and 5 factors for the brand image scale are found. The e-Sports awareness scale explains 51.25% of the variance and the brand image scale explains 71.220% of the variance. While e-Sports scale factors are given knowledge and following names; The factors of Brand Image scale were named as responsibility, activity, positivity, interaction and contentment. The names given to the factors are the same as those mentioned in the literature. Thus, the compatibility with the literature has achieved.

4. Findings

In the findings of the research; firstly, the demographic characteristics of the participants and other descriptive answers were given. Then, in order to test the hypotheses of the research; The mean of the factors and the results of the regression analysis are presented.

4.1. Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Half of the respondents are female and the other half are male, 38% are married and 62% are single, the generation Y has the highest rate with 75.6% in terms of age range, in education level variable; 43.2% of the respondents have Bachelor's Degree. 31.2% of the participants were students and in terms of household income, 10,1% of the participants have income below the minimum wage. Table 4 provides information on the demographic characteristics of the participants.

Table 4: Demographic Characteristics of Participants

Variables	Groups	N	%
Gender	Female	154	50,0
	Male	154	50,0
Marital Status	Married	117	38
	Single	191	62

Age	-19 (Generation Z)	31	10,1
	20-39 (Generation Y)	233	75,6
	40-54 (Generation X)	44	14,3
Education Level	Primary School	2	,6
	Secondary School	2	,6
	High School	34	11,0
	Vocational School	40	13,0
	Bachelor's Degree	133	43,2
	Graduate	97	31,5
Occupation	Worker-Farmer	4	1,3
	Public Officer	82	26,6
	Student	96	31,2
	Housewife	6	1,9
	Manager	9	2,9
	Merchant	6	1,9
	Specialist (Dr., engineer, lawyer etc.)	46	14,9
	Unemployed	12	3,9
	Other	47	15,3
Household Income	Less than ₺2020	31	10,1
	2020 ₺ (minimum wage)	30	9,7
	₺2021-3500	58	18,8
	₺3501-5000	53	17,2
	₺5001-6500	43	14,0
	₺6501-8000	40	13,0
	₺8001 and above	53	17,2

4.2. Other Descriptive Analyzes

In other descriptive statistics; the participants were asked about the sports club they are fans of and whether or not that sports club has an e-Sports team. As can be seen in Table 5, 31.5% of the participants are in favor of Galatasaray. Galatasaray is followed by Fenerbahçe (28,9%), Beşiktaş (23,7%) and Trabzonspor (10,7) respectively.

Table 5: Sports Club Supported By Participants

Takım	Frekans	%
Galatasaray	97	31,5
Fenerbahçe	73	23,7

Beşiktaş	33	10,7
Trabzonspor	89	28,9
Other Teams	16	5,2

Participants were asked whether this sports club is an e-Sports team. Thus, the participants' knowledge on this subject was tried to be measured. In fact, there are currently e-Sports teams of Galatasaray, Fenerbahçe and Beşiktaş. The total of these 3 teams is 84.1%. The reason for the remaining 7.1% is; Trabzonspor's current ambiguous situation or 5.2% may be due to other team supporters. Because Trabzonspor is continuing its efforts to establish an e-Sports team. Negotiations are underway for the merger of Trabzonspor with Galacticos. On the other hand, there is a team called Trabzon e-Sports and the colors are burgundy-blue. Because of this situation, 91.2% of the participants may have given yes. However, it can be concluded that the participants have knowledge about whether their teams are e-Sports teams. The results are indicated in Table 6.

Table 6: Does your club have an e-Sports team?

Answer	Frequency	%
Yes	281	91,2
No	27	8,8

4.3. Mean of The Factors

The fact that the mean of the factors are greater than 3 (neutral) in the 5-point Likert scale means that the participants responded in favor of the factors. In this test; according to the mean of factors, H1a, H1b, H2a, H2b, H2c, H2d and H2e are tested. As point out in Table 7; the mean of all factors except knowledge and following factors is greater than 3. According to these results, H1b and H2b are not supported. However; in support of H1a, H2a, H2c, H2d and H2e. In the test, it is remarkable that the mean of knowledge and interaction factors is close to 4 (agree).

Table 7: Mean of The Factors

Factors	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
knowledge	305	1,60	5,00	3,9549	,64371
following	304	1,00	5,00	2,5853	,74583

responsibility	302	1,22	5,00	3,2708	,82822
activity	300	2,33	3,67	2,7251	,24867
positivity	304	1,67	3,86	3,2075	,34308
interaction	302	1,00	5,00	3,8424	,58830
contentment	303	2,33	5,00	3,0338	,28123

4.4. Regression Analysis

Regression analysis was performed to see the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable. Thus; the level of change caused by the relative change in the independent variable can be seen in the dependent variable. In regression analysis; the effect of knowledge and following independent variables, which are the factors of e-Sports scale, on responsibility, activity, positivity, interaction and contentment variables which are the factors of brand image scale are tested. H3c, H3e and H3i according to β and P values ($p > 0,05$) in Table 8 are not supported. The independent variables in models 3, 5 and 9 have no effect on the dependent variables. For models 1, 2, 4, 6,7, 8 and 10, independent variables have positive effects on dependent variables. That's why; H3a, H2b, H3d, H3f, H3g, H3h and H3j can be supported ($p < 0,05$). Although there is not a very high effect in these models, it can be said that there is an effect due to $p > \alpha$. The dependent variable that the Knowledge independent variable affects most is the interaction factor ($\beta = 0,550$) and explanation power of the model is about 60% ($R^2 = .585$). A 1-unit change in the knowledge factor causes a 0.550-unit change on the interaction factor. The positivity factor is the dependent variable that is most affected by the following independent variable. Model 8 has a β of 0.390. This model explains approximately 90% of its variance ($R^2 = .877$). Table 8 displays the results of the Multiple Regression Analysis

Table 8: Multiple Regression Analysis

Model	Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	R ²	P Value (R ²)	β	P Value (β)
1	Knowledge	responsibility	,454	,000	,263	,001
2	Knowledge	activity	,498	,000	,158	,012

3	Knowledge	positivity	,877	,000	,029	,086
4	Knowledge	interaction	,585	,000	,550	,000
5	Knowledge	contentment	,369	,000	,025	,357
6	Following	responsibility	,454	,000	,355	,000
7	Following	activity	,498	,000	,139	,000
8	Following	positivity	,877	,000	,390	,000
9	Following	interaction	,585	,000	,002	,970
10	Following	contentment	,369	,000	,148	,016

The decisions regarding the hypotheses of the research are shown in Table 9 below. While 12 of the 17 hypotheses created for the study can be supported, 5 are unsupported.

Table 9: Decisions On The Research's Hypotheses

Hypothesis	Decision
H1a: Participants' attitudes towards knowledge are positive	supported
H1b: Participants' attitudes towards following are positive	unsupported
H2a: Participants' attitudes towards responsibility are positive	supported
H2b: Participants' attitudes towards activity are positive	unsupported
H2c: Participants' attitudes towards positivity are positive	supported
H2d: Participants' attitudes towards interaction are positive	supported
H2e: Participants' attitudes towards contentment are positive	supported
H3a: Knowledge has a positive effect on the responsibility	supported
H3b: Knowledge has a positive effect on the activity	supported
H3c: Knowledge has a positive effect on the positivity	unsupported
H3d: Knowledge has a positive effect on the interaction	supported
H3e: Knowledge has a positive effect on the contentment	unsupported

H3f: Following has a positive effect on the responsibility	supported
H3g: Following has a positive effect on the activity	supported
H3h: Following has a positive effect on the positivity	supported
H3i: Following has a positive effect on the interaction	unsupported
H3j: Following has a positive effect on the contentment	supported

5. Conclusion and Recommendation

The era is now the digital age, and there are also the means of consumption created by this digital age. There is a lot of research in the literature that generation Z, which is called born digital or digital native in this age, and generation Y, which uses most widely digital platforms after them, use digital tools too much. Besides, of course, there is a section of the generation X and baby boomers which is also interested in computer games. Regardless of the generation, the segment that is in good communication with digital means is called the C generation. Apart from the generation Z, people who keep up with the digital age in the other generations are called digital immigrants. For the reasons explained in this study, the age group of the study was determined as X, Y and Z generation.

e-Sports continues to develop as a sports branch where interest is increasing day by day. 3 of the 4 largest sports club in Turkey with Galatasaray, Fenerbahçe and Beşiktaş there are e-Sports teams struggling in the league. Trabzonspor announced this year (2019-2020 season) will be in the e-Sports league. Because e-Sports is an activity of particular interest to the C generation, and therefore the fans expect and want the sports clubs they support to be e-Sports team. Therefore, in this paper, the attitudes of the participants about e-Sports and the effects of these attitudes on the club / brand image were tried to be seen.

In the study, there are two factors for the e-Sports scale, and the attitudes of the participants towards the information factor were higher than the mean (3 neutral options) (mean = 3,9549 and close to 4). On the other hand, the average of the following factor, which is the other factor, is less than 3 with a slight difference. According to these results, it can be concluded that the participants have knowledge about e-Sports but they cannot follow them sufficiently. Regression analysis was performed to test the effect of e-Sports scale factors on brand image scale factors and were found, in 7 of the 10 models created, independent variables have an effect on dependent variables. Although the effect coefficients are not very high, there is an effect for these 7 models. As a result of the regression analysis, it can be interpreted that e-Sports activities have an effect on brand image.

Because of the increasing interest of people in e-sports, it is a fact that sports clubs cannot remain insensitive to it. Therefore, clubs continue to establish e-Sports teams. It is possible that e-Sports teams will increase in parallel with the increasing interest of fans in e-Sports. In such a case, it will be more difficult to strengthen the image of the clubs that do not have e-Sports team in the eyes of the fans. What sports clubs need to do is to give more importance to e-Sports activities in order to strengthen their image. Because competition in e-sports leagues is seen as going to become even more fierce. There is a serious competition for branches such as football, basketball, volleyball, handball and it is predicted that a similar competition could soon take place for e-sports as well. Therefore, it is thought that the fact that the clubs continue to concentrate on e-Sports activities will satisfy their supporters. So, clubs are advised to continue their e-Sports activities.

The concept of e-Sports is more a new sport and there is a shortage of literature on the effect of this sport on club image. The present study can give an idea about the attitudes of the club supporters to e-Sports and the effect of e-Sports on the club image. This aspect of the study is thought to contribute to the literature. The literature can be further improved by next studies on whether E-Sports contributes to strengthening the brand / club image. For example, research can be made on supporters to see whether their clubs' the lack of an e-Sports team exhibits a negative image.

REFERENCES

- Aktuna, H.C. and Ünlüönen, K. (2017). Yeni Bir Turizm Çeşidi Olarak Elektronik Spor Turizmi, *Gazi Üniversitesi Turizm Fakültesi Dergisi*, 2: 1-15.
- Argan, M., Özer, A. and Akın, E. (2006). Elektronik spor: Türkiye'deki siber sporcuların tutum ve davranışları. *Spor Yönetimi ve Bilgi Teknolojileri Dergisi*, 1(2): 1-11.
- Bayram, A.T. (2018). Planlanmış Davranış Teorisi Çerçevesinde E-spor Turizmine Katılma Niyeti, *Turizm Akademik Dergisi*, 2: 17-31.
- Çetin, E. (2013). *Tanımlar ve Temel Kavramlar (Ed. M. A. Ocak), Eğitsel Dijital Oyunlar: Kuram, Tasarım ve Uygulama*. PegemA Yayıncılık: Ankara.
- Çolak, S., Örs, A. Çolak, E., Son, M., Güzelordu, D., Çolak, T. and Yargıcı, M. (2018). Spor Bilimleri Fakültesi Öğrencilerinin E-Spor Bilgi Düzeylerinin Araştırılması, *Kocaeli Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi*, 35: 121-127.
- Demir, G.T. and Hazar, Z. (2018). Dijital Oyun Oynama Motivasyonu Ölçeği (Doomö): Geçerlik ve Güvenirlik Çalışması, *Niğde Üniversitesi Beden Eğitimi ve Spor Bilimleri Dergisi*, 12 (2): 128-139.

Dijital Oyunlar Raporu (2019). <https://www.guvenliweb.org.tr/dosya/RjARy.pdf> (01.04.2019).

Djaouti, D., Alvarez, J., Jessel, J. P., Methel, G. and Molinier, P. (2008). A Game Play Definition Through Videogame Classification, *International Journal of Computer Games Technology*, 2008:1-7.

Dölarslan, E.Ş. (2012). Bir Marka Kişiliği Ölçeği Değerlendirmesi, *Ankara Üniversitesi SBF Dergisi*, 67 (2): 1-28.

Gür, M.R. (2018). Çok Oyunculu Dijital Oyunlarda Oyun Oynama Pratikleri: Moba ve Mmorpq Oyunlar Üzerine Karşılaştırmalı Bir İnceleme, T.C. İstanbul Arel Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü: İstanbul.

Hamari J. and Sjöblom M. (2017), What is eSports and why do people watch it? *Internet Research*, 27(2): 211-232.

Hazar, Z., Tekkurşun Demir, G., Namlı, S. and Türkeli, A. (2017). Investigation of The Relationship Between Digital Game Addiction and Physical Activity Levels of Secondary School Students, *Niğde Üniversitesi Beden Eğitimi ve Spor Bilimleri Dergisi*, 3: 320-332.

Jull, J. (2011). *Half-Real: Video Games Between Real Rules and Fictional Worlds*, The MIT Press Cambridge, Massachusetts London, England.

Kılıç, S. (2016). Cronbach'ın Alfa Güvenirlilik Katsayısı, *Journal of Mood Disorders*, 6 (1): 47-48.

Kocadağ, M. (2017). Elektronik Spor Kariyeri Ve Eğitim, *Doğu Anadolu Sosyal Bilimlerde Eğilimler Dergisi*, 1(2): 49-63.

Korkusuz, M. E., and Karamete, A. (2013). Dijital Oyun Geliştirme Modeli, *Necatibey Eğitim Fakültesi Elektronik Fen ve Matematik Eğitimi Dergisi*, 7 (2): 78-109.

Kuznetsov, N. (2017). E-Sports and The Attitude of The Russian speaking Residents of Estonia to E-Sports, Bachelor Thesis, Tallinn University of Technology School of Business and Governance Departament of Economics and Finance, Tallinn: Estonia.

Merwin, C.D., Sugiyama, M., Mubayi, P., Hari, T., Heath P., Terry, H.P. and Duval, A. (2018). *The World of Games: eSports: From Wild West to Mainstream*, The Goldman Sachs Group, Inc.

Mustafaoğlu, R. (2018). e-Spor, Spor ve Fiziksel Aktivite, *Ulusal Spor Bilimleri Dergisi*, 2 (2): 84-96.

Mustafaoğlu, R., Zirek, E. and Yasacı, Z. (2018). e-Spor Oyuncularının Demografik Özellikleri, Oyun Oynama Süreleri ve Başarılarını Etkileyen Faktörler, *Bağımlılık Dergisi*, 19 (4):115-122.

- Taylan, H.H., Topal, M. and Ayas, T. (2018). Sakarya'daki Lise Öğrencilerinin Dijital Oyun Oynama Eğilimlerinin İncelenmesi, *Online Journal of Technology Addiction & Cyberbullying*, 5(1): 53-68.
- Taylor, T. L. (2012). *Raising the stakes: E-sports and the professionalization of computer gaming*. The MIT Press Cambridge, Massachusetts London, England.
- Toran, M., Ulusoy, Z., Aydın, B., Deveci, T. and Akbulut, A. (2016). Evaluation of Mothers' Views Regarding Children's Use of Digital Game, *Kastamonu Eğitim Dergisi*, 24 (5): 2263-2278.
- Van Dreunen, J. (2016). Welcome to the New Era: Games as Media. <http://www.gamesindustry.biz/articles/2016-10-24-welcome-to-the-new-era-games-as-media> (08.04.2016).
- Yıldırım, E. (2016). Dijital Oyun Tasarım Programlarının Eğitimde Önemi, *Mesleki Bilimler Dergisi*, 5 (2): 12 – 19.
- Yoo, B. and Donthu, N. (2001). Developing and Validating A Multidimensional Consumer Based Brand Equity Scale", *Journal of Business Research*, 52 (1): 1-14.
- Yüksekbilgili, Z. (2017). Marka Beğenilirlik Ölçeğinin Türkçeye Uyarlanması: Güvenilirlik ve Geçerlilik Çalışması, *Journal of Yasar University*, 12 (46): 171-180.
- Web: <https://newzoo.com/insights/articles/global-games-market-reaches-137-9-billion-in-2018-mobile-games-take-half/> (21.04.2019).
- Web: <https://startupdostu.com/turkiyede-dijital-oyun-pazari-buyuyor-4060/> (28.05.2019).
- Web: <https://www.acunn.com/e-spor/turk-espore-takimlari-1127425-haber> (28.05.2019).
- Web: <https://www.espor-turkiye193.com/espor-nedir/> (01.06.2019).
- Web: <https://www.redbull.com/tr-tr/turkiye-nin-en-iyi-espor-takimlari> (04.06.2019).
- Wolf, M. J. (2008). *The Video Game Explosion*. London: Greenwood Press.