

İSTANBUL BİLGİ ÜNİVERSİTESİ
INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
MEDIA AND COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS MASTER’S DEGREE
PROGRAM

YOUNG AUDIENCES, YOUTUBE CULTURE AND FANDOM
CONCEPT IN TURKEY

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116680010

DR.ÖĞR.ÜYESİ ESRA ERCAN BİLGİÇ

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TÜRKİYE'DEKİ GENÇ İZLEYİCİLER, YOUTUBE KÜLTÜRÜ VE HAYRANLIK KAVRAMI

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Tezin Onaylandığı Tarih : 07.06.2018

Toplam Sayfa Sayısı:

Anahtar Kelimeler (Türkçe)

- 1) İzleyici Çalışmaları
- 2) Hayranlık Kavramı
- 3) YouTube
- 4) Vlog Kültürü
- 5) Katılımcı Kültür

Anahtar Kelimeler (İngilizce)

- 1) Audiences Researches
- 2) Fandom Concept
- 3) YouTube
- 4) Vlog Culture
- 5) Participatory Culture

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my sincere thanks for my thesis supervisor Dr. Esra Ercan Bilgiç, she gave me my achievement motive and always believed in me, led me and encouraged me during my thesis process and shared her experiences with me all the time.

I would like to thank Dean Prof. Dr. Füsün Alver, she has always supported me and has been a respectable guidance since I started working at Turkish-German University. I thank Dr. Ayşe Elif Posos Devrani for always sharing her valuable experiences with me.

Dear Dr. Tarkan Oğuz and Dr. Ufuk Eriş, I thank you for showing patience, helping me realize the depth of communication sciences and teaching me all.

I thank all of my friends for supporting me during all this period. Thanks as well to Z. Seçil Şimşek for her continuous moral support with our friendship over fifteen years.

My participants, too, deserve many thanks for their enthusiasm and joy.

At last, I thank my family for always supporting my decisions and being there for me and teaching me how to be a good person. I proudly look up to them.

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ABSTRACT

In order to understand the audience cultures that develop in the digital environment, it is necessary to benefit from the past audience cultures. In this research, in order to be able to explain the fandom culture that develops in the YouTube environment, the fandom cultures of the past and audience researches have been set out. Fandom practices in YouTube culture, where young individuals are active and producers, and fandom practices in television have been compared and analyzed. In the study, 12 people were interviewed in total between 10-14 years using qualitative method. Participants were asked semi-structured questions and conducted in-depth interviews.

At the end of the study, it has been observed that young people in the YouTuber fandom define the concepts such as fame, sincerity, fiction, childishness and access again and in comparison. Differences arise due to the variability of media environments on which YouTube and television messages are transmitted. On the other hand, points of audience and fandom habits in the past are compatible with the practices of today. Digital fandom cultures have been seen to be on the way to becoming a new culture fed by past habits and tendencies.

Keywords: Audience Researches, Fandom Concept, YouTube, Video Blogging Culture

ÖZET

Dijital ortamda gelişen izleyici kültürlerini anlamlandırabilmek adına geçmiş izleyici kültürlerinden de faydalanmak gerekir. Bu çalışmada YouTube ortamında gelişen fandom kültürünü açıklayabilmek adına, geçmişte gelişen fandom kültürlerinden ve izleyici araştırmalarından yola çıkılmış, genç bireylerin aktif olduğu ve üretici oldukları YouTube kültüründeki fandom pratikleri ile televizyondaki fandom pratikleri karşılaştırarak analiz edilmiştir. Araştırmada niteliksel yöntem kullanılarak, 10-14 yaşları arasında toplamda 12 kişi ile görüşülmüş, katılımcılara yarı-yapılandırılmış sorular sorulmuş ve derinlemesine mülakatlar yapılmıştır.

Çalışma sonunda elde edilen bulgular doğrultusunda YouTuber hayranlığında, genç bireylerin ünlü olma, samimiyet, kurgusallık, çocuksuluk, erişim gibi kavramları tekrar ve karşılaştırarak tanımladığı gözlemlenmiştir. YouTube ve televizyon mesajlarının iletildiği medya ortamının değişkenliğinden kaynaklanan farklılıklar gözlemlenmiştir. Öte yandan geçmişteki izleyici ve fandom alışkanlıklarının günümüzdeki pratiklerle bağdaştığı noktalar saptanmıştır. Dijital fandom kültürünün, geçmiş alışkanlıklardan ve eğilimlerden beslenen yeni bir kültür olma yolunda ilerlediği görülmüştür.

Anahtar Sözcükler: İzleyici Çalışmaları, Hayranlık Kavramı, YouTube, Vlog Kültürü

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to understand the YouTube culture and the fandom tendency of young audience in Turkey to YouTubers. Along with the increase in use and individualization of digital media tools, audience culture and watching habits, which previously were limited to television, are changed in parallel. In this context, individualization and use of digital media brought out differences between media usage of the young audience. In recent years, YouTube users are not only audiences but they also have YouTube channels and subscribers – these practices of individual use help to understand new audiences/users.

Newly developing watching habits and the contents have created a new audience/user profile. Especially YouTube's being a website that allows creating content has a significant role in audience/user profiles to become very diversified. Television contents and watching habits are included in this research to obtain a holistic and inclusive perspective and to have a better understanding in audience studies of communication researches. Different motivations, tendencies, habits, the extent of fandom and media use of young audiences and users are also included in this research.

In the first chapter of the research, the concept of the audience has been examined. The place of the television and the watching habits of the audience in the audience researches and how the audiences are positioned in these researches are really important points while handling the concept of audience. It's very important to discuss tendencies and habits of the audience in YouTube media and television media, considering the differences between what these two media offers to the audience and determining the ideologies that these media produce. The period that follows the de-massification process is vital for this research: The number of watching preferences increased especially after the de-massification process of television, therefore thematic channels according to different has come into existence. After de-massification period, audiences become more active. The

formats of the programmes have changed and audience groups showed up according to different interests and the tendencies. Nowadays, YouTube's content and channel variations are so many that it could be interpreted as a result of the active preferences of the audience in addition to being a producer. As well as the tendencies and motivations, these preferences should also be understood both theoretically and practically to create an audience preferences pattern.

YouTube offers a wide preference-field to audiences, yet it's inconclusive when compared to YouTube's offering the possibility that an audience could make contact with the creator/uploader of a content. Audience profile of today has drawn as an interacting, producing, sharing profile as well as deciding the content and behaving more simultaneously. Concerning this profile, Alvin Toffler used the term "prosumer" in his book *The Third Wave*. (Toffler, 1981, p.215) This word is a combination of two words, producer and consumer, and it means a user that determines his or her preferences, interests and circles by "producing and being involved in". User-generated contents help users more visible and more active. So in the first chapter of this study, these visible and active users and their interactivities, daily lives, producing practices and the communications are explained within the context of video blogging culture. In such a media which the consumers are also producers, audience approaches and the fluctuations in audience attitudes are handled from a broad perspective and it's focused on the relation between video blogging culture and YouTube.

The main focus of the second chapter of this study is the audience research and the fandom concept in YouTube. Fandom term is deeply examined in this chapter in order to provide a better explanation of fandom concept of nowadays audience practices. In the television environment, soap operas and the football fanaticism are the main topics to be used as different fandom types. The purpose of these selections is to determine the intersecting and confrontation points of different fandoms with YouTuber fandom. Another important objective is to understand and explain how the fandom concept has evolved and shaped through

YouTube environment. If we consider fandom as admiration for a person, a group, a celebrity or a programme in the frame of media studies, it's inevitable that some of tendencies intersect and some of the concepts come to the prominence as common grounds. Outstanding concepts in soap opera fandom are internalization and sentimentalism, while in football fandom it's togetherness and in YouTube fandom it's sincerity and being prosumer. Certain data are used while explaining fandom and YouTube fandom concepts. Today's internet environment made it possible that fandom concept evokes activeness, visibility and youth. In this context two questions are really important, which types of fandom that the children and young audience show examples of and how they interpret the concept of being a YouTuber.

In Turkey, YouTube has very high rating records. According to data received from the statistics portal *Statista*, Turkey ranks second among 19 countries with the percentage of users who watch online video content on any device as of January 2018. (Statista, 2018) On the other hand, the number of YouTuber channels that young audience follows increases in parallel with the rating records. According to YouTube data, Enes Batur, has the highest number of subscribers among the YouTubers in Turkey, has 7,339,938 subscriptions¹, (YouTube, 2018) while PewDiePie, has the highest number of subscriptions in the world, has 62,754,233 subscriptions to². (YouTube, 2018) These YouTuber channels are the most watched channels in Turkey and in the world in order. Based on the data obtained during the research, the motivation of watching both most subscribed channels and the less subscribed channels is emphasized. It's determined that the audience preferences about YouTubers and fandom vary according to the tendencies.

¹Enes Batur's YouTube Channel: <https://www.youtube.com/user/newdaynewgame>

² PewDiePie's YouTube Channel: <https://www.youtube.com/user/pewdiepie>

In the third chapter of the research, the main focuses are peer to peer, consumer culture, hedonism and gender differences concepts and relations of these concepts with YouTube. Peer effects are especially known among the youth and peers have an influence on children and young people. In this context, the relationship of children with their peers also changes their watching habits. Audience interacting with each other and having common interests create joint contents and produce common discourses.

As related to consumption, it's known that some YouTubers advertise products and promote various brands. The more rating YouTubers have, the newer consumption strategies they come up with, that way the consumption politics of content creators and media specialists are updated. So it's another important issue that how audiences and users interpret the messages they receive via YouTubers.

Another focus of the research is individual YouTube channels that users created their own. In the research, it's explained under the light of hedonism and the desire of being famous. YouTube has come into prominence as a platform in which users could share their daily lives and experiences, introduce themselves: a place they don't have to be fictive. In this context, users have the opportunity to reach many people and even YouTubers they admire, from their homes or usual places so without much cost and effort. For this reason, the research includes the opinions of participants on their channels or the idea of having their own channels.

Another focus is the changes in YouTube channel contents according to the gender. When the contents of the most watched videos are examined, it is seen that women mostly produce videos with make-up, fashion and beauty content, while men produce videos on games, daily life and competitions. In this context, while interviewing boy and girl participants, the video content of their preferences

was asked and whether the gender of the creator of the content made a difference for their preferences was also noted.

The other subject covered in the research is; YouTube's interface and recommended videos to users for watching. The way in which participants follow the recommended videos and trends is what YouTube offers on the interface and in the digital environment.

The methodology of the study has been identified as the qualitative method. Quantitative research methods do not meet the goals because the purpose of the research is to understand the motivations and admiration tendencies of YouTube audiences in depth. The goal of the research is not to quantify the participants but to analyze in depth the responses of the participants in the context of the research and then to discuss the underlying reasons.

An in-depth interview was conducted with 12 participants, 6 girls and 6 boys, aged between 10 and 14. The participants and the parents of the participants both signed consent forms. The participants were reached by snowball sampling method and by their parents. In the interviews, questions were preferred to be semi-structured in order to understand the reasons of the participants' opinions.

The topics handled during the interviews are as below.

- Motivations
- Tendencies
- Social and Daily Life
- Being Fan
- Watching Habits of YouTube Audiences
- Definitions of Media Environment

To approach the research through above subjects, it's critical to put forward the background of changes in YouTube culture of the young audience and fandom

concept, so the research not only focuses on digital media practices and ideologies but also the television ideology which is also known as traditional media. To embrace the concept of audience culture as a whole and to understand changing audience throughout the years, historical perspective and critical comprehension are adopted in the research. It also serves well to compare both environments, YouTube and television.

The approach is not limited to audience studies, it also contributes to fandom studies which were deeply examined in chapter two. Also at the beginning stage and modeling process of the research, it is linked to concepts, ideologies and the audience perspective.

Throughout the research, establishing links between concepts, assessing practices and understanding audience experiences have been primary goals. Audience research studies in the literature which explain the concept of fandom and YouTube culture in Turkey are limited so the aim of this research is to be one of the leading studies and to be an example of future studies.

Fandom studies have a very important place in the literature. Also in the media field fandom studies are handled not only within limited to visual culture but also written culture. In Turkey, there are not enough YouTuber and fandom researches. YouTuber concept's popularity and the number of fans are dramatically increased through the years, so this makes the research topic innovative and precursor. The reason of this research is based on YouTuber and fandom concepts could be explained as the behaviors of children and the young audience toward understanding the positioning of the fandom in this recent culture which reproduces itself and the place of the term "prosumer". (Toffler, 1981, p.215)

1. LITERATURE REVIEW

The role of media tools on the audience has been handled with many different disciplines. One of the most important elements of audience research is the channel, which the audience receives the message from. In this context, it is necessary to understand the past audience researches and the practices of today's audience together. In this research, the changing motivations in experience of watching will be investigated with the changes of today's technologies. The research will mainly handle YouTube watching practices of young people and especially teenagers and also their using habits in digital technologies. In this context, YouTube channels will be examined as a new producing, watching and presuming media area for teenagers. However, the research is based on the concept of the audience, therefore, it's necessary to examine the place of the audience in the communication researches.

1.1. Audience Research

Audience research is done to understand the effects of mass media on people. In this context, the history of audience research in communication is parallel to the emergence of mass media. At the beginning of communication researches, there has been a shift from the channels that convey media messages to the audience's experience. In the first stages of communication research, audience theories are kept at the passive audience point, whilst the second stage is called active audience.

In this study, audience motivations and practices are handled. Audience theories and practices should be examined historically. When YouTube channels and viewing statistics are taken into account, YouTube is an important platform by means of watching rates in both Turkey and worldwide. In this respect, one of the main scopes of the research is the audience researches. Different perspectives regarding audience researches are included in the research. Along with the changes in the media tools, the definition and the scope of audience term have

changed. In this literature, nowadays YouTube audience has been examined to understand their point of view by using different perspectives.

According to Abiocca, there is a theoretical division in the studies made over the last 40 years. This can be considered as two different theoretical approaches. One of these approaches is the active audience. These active viewers are indifferent, selective and individual. Passive followers are on the other side of the debate. Such audiences are harmonious, pure, defenseless and even victimized. Here, Abiocca refers to how audiences are positioned to perceive mass media messages. The main purpose of media content is to make audience perceive given message. The adoption of both concepts in mass communication theories, the sociopolitical role of the media, the role of audiences in the concept of self and 'reality' actually constitute the framework of many issues. (Abiocca, 2016)

The mass media researches on the audience are primarily focused on measuring and understanding audience's watching habits, response to messages from tv or another mass media tools. Chaffe and Metzger argued the mass communication concept from different perspectives. They have given various examples to explain mass and communication notions. One of the viewpoint is mass communication includes oxymoron concept because communication concept is based on upon changing conceit of people and it could be said that communication process should be active. In other respects, communication tools and technologies allowed a message to flow in one way but according to this view, since the flow of information is one-sided, real communication is not possible. (Chaffe & Metzger, 2009) On the basis of the article, it is evaluated that the basis of towards mass communication' perspectives. From this point of view, mass communication appealed to the mass passive audience. The second opinion addressed with mass communication is considering it as a societal problem. In this context, mass production also brought massive consent. It was assumed that media messages, such as the perception of society as homogeneous, were perceived as such. This sense the media can be called as a tool that convinces

people. From here, it is possible to make it possible for the spectators to have less power to resist media messages and to talk about isolation. (Chaffe & Metzger, 2009) In this respect, it will be wrong to say that active and passive audience concepts are play significant role in media studies.

According to Jensen and Rosengren there are five main traditions of research which can be ordered as follows 1) Effects research, 2) Uses and gratifications research, 3) Literary criticism 4) Cultural studies and 5) Reception analysis. In Effects Research, the effects of the media on people have been researched. With every new changing media technology, people get influenced and the levels at which people can be affected have differentiated. One of the examples of this influence levels of people is moral panic created through media.

On the other hand, uses and gratifications research reveals individual experiences of users. In other words, users are assumed to be heterogeneous. Reception theory, on the other hand, has deepened the debate and has shown itself in a qualitative and empirical way to understand audience motivations. (Jensen & Rosengren, 1990)

Sonia Livingstone similarly discussed the historical dimensions of viewer research. Television and audiences are viewed massively as televised messages, but ethnographic and reception studies argue that mass audiences are not only related to gender, class and culture but also have a heterogeneous structure. According to Livingstone, this is also related to cognition, participation and viewing styles. The concept of mass has itself challenges of mass communication. Theories and methods are evaluated in this context. (Livingstone, 1993) From this point of view, both the historical and the opinion of the audience in communication studies has changed quite a bit. In the communication studies, the viewer's theoretical understanding of how the audience reacts to media messages and how they are influenced are the potentially active or passive aspects of this process.

According to Livingstone, cultural researches and audience researches were both primarily questioned the perceptions of ordinary audiences against media texts, soap operas, or pop music. (Livingstone, 1998) It would not be wrong to say that the audience is very important for media research related to views of Sonia Livingstone. In this context, audience researches have become important in media researches and continue in different forms today. Media research has benefited from many different stages and approaches until it comes to this point. Even the simple communication matrix consists of the message which is sent from the channel to the receiver. An important point here is the changes in media tools that delivers messages to the audience. The second question to be asked is whether there is a similarity between present-day audiences and past audience practices, even though media tools have changed since.

On the other hand, the reception theory proposed by Stuart Hall is very important. Stuart Hall emphasizes that cognitive references of the person perceiving the message during the decoding-encoding process are influential. Hall defined this situation with the word “personification”. Hall said that circulation and reception are moments of production on television. (Hall, 2006, pp.164-173) Nowadays, it is possible to discuss the concept of personification mentioned by Hall in the context of new audience practices and new channels

Hall referred to a very important point in media research. Hall's point of view as a viewer in media researches differs from other media researches. It has been revealed that people can perceive media messages differently. In other words, the audience experiences some kind of interaction with the product when they are watching, this becomes a production process. In this context, the audience may personalize the message or show resistance. From here, it is opposed to the idea that people directly accept every message given by the media. The concept of personalization has an important place in Hall's views.

Hall draws attention to the positioning of the audience with his innovative and outstanding remarks. In communication studies, the different perceptions of the same message by different people and the submission of the perception by theoretical frame have a practical value by means of understanding nowadays audience. Hall argues that the act of watching is an active process. In this context, the main scopes of the research can be understood easily by looking at nowadays audience which could also be accepted as prosumers. On the other side, the idea remains inadequate to construe nowadays audience practices and communication technologies, although it brings out different perspectives to audience theories. With developing mobile technologies, audiences could produce content in their own YouTube channels. In this context, Hall's conceptualization illuminates the audience practices at some points yet remains insufficient by means of media tools and as timewise. As a matter of course, previous communication researches are not limited to audience practices. There are many researches that could be given as an example that ideologically analyses television and makes both context analysis and audience analysis. Therefore, it would be useful to evaluate Neil Postman's perspective.

Another study evaluating television and audience research as "ideological" is Neil Postman's book "Televizyon Öldüren Eğlence" (Amusing Ourselves to Death.) Neil Postman explores both the content on TV and reveals an audience analysis. He also examines the process of construction and ideological approaches in television programs. Postman also refers to television's role in people's thinking. According to Postman, media metaphors classify the world on behalf of people, draw a framework, expand and stain it. (Postman, 2006, p.21)

Postman not only brings a historical perspective to communication technologies, he also deals with the reflection of the media changing with each technology, in terms of society and by means of the audience. It could be argued that under holistic perspective, Postman illuminates the idea of television culture

by using verbal culture and typography. He qualifies the age of typography as interpretation, while television is a show era. (Postman, 2006, p.90) It's possible to say that audiences now create their own world as prosumers and they contribute user generated content to this world; while they used to watch other people's constructed shows on television before the media rapidly became individualized.

Postman notes that there are some complementary elements of the new public discourse created on television. One of these elements is photographic objects. (Postman, 2006, p.104) According to Postman, the belief was not to read the bases but to see. (Postman, 2006, p.105) It can be argued that YouTube's complementary elements are video editing, storytelling, music, environment, originality elements, as the complementary element of TV is photographic elements.

Another important point is the ideological points of the discourse produced by media tools. According to Postman, television's upper ideology is fun. (Postman, 2006, p.122) In this context, the music used in the news on television is related to how the news is transmitted, and how people will think after watching it, ideologically. It is also important that there is a concept that can be defined as a supra-ideology of YouTube, which is the subject of the research.

Before analyzing YouTube in audience researches, it would be advisable to mention the stages of ideological and thematic de-massification of television. That makes Neil Postman's perspective on audience and context analysis more important. With the emerging of private channels, audiences were categorized and channels started to broadcast according to different areas of interest. As with Hall's, Neil Postman's definition of television has varied in time. Nowadays, there are types of televisions that could connect to the internet, that could stop or record the broadcast. These all led to changes in audience habits. On the other hand, when it's observed ideologically, it could be said that Neil Postman is a source of inspiration in order to understand the motivations of internet audience.

The concept of “entertainment” that Neil Postman emphasized is a subject open to discussion by means of internet activities and as YouTube-based.

On the other hand, it is also necessary to mention children as audiences. Research on children and media relations has focused on television before digital media. Gender differences, other activities and television involvement, and the influence of children's television watching habits on the structure of the family are emphasized. (Huston, Wright, Marquis & Green, 1999) It is possible to talk about a content produced only for children in the television environment. Today, this situation is different for children with more options and control. This differentiation stems from the fact that it is in many other audience groups, such as easier and faster access to content, increased options and freedom of choice for children.

Other studies in the context of children as an audience have focused more on violence and the aggressive tendencies of children. (Singer, 1985) Studies on children and media have also focused on parental control. (Livingstone, 2008) Nowadays, parental role is very important in digital media and child researches.

Considering today's conditions, we are faced with a situation where children are perceived as users rather than perceived as children. As a prosumer that forms the basis of this research, it is necessary to consider children as both audience and producers. In this research, children are treated not only as a viewer but also as a media content producer. It can be said that children's powers of perception and using digital media have also caused them to become more selective as audiences. Relatively, it can be argued that, today's children involved in producing process and this situation enable to their perceptions improve.

1.1.1. De-massification

Inactive audience discussions, especially from the views of Stuart Hall and Abiocca, communication studies can be divided into various breakdowns. These breakdowns are important to what technology the viewer uses as a means of receiving the message or as a means of obtaining the message. Because technological changes have changed the way of getting messages by the audience. In Chaffe & Metzger' article "The end of mass communication", descriptive examples of mass communication are discussed. The concepts of communication and mass are rethought and how massive the communication can be also discussed. (Chaffe & Metzger, 2009) Another concept in this paper is that today's media technologies (personal mobile phones, the World Wide Web, video games) are "demassifying" the communication. Demassification is described as follows *“the dominant effect of mass media is to decentralize, particularize and segment society rather than centralize and unify it.”* (Olson, 1995, p.168) In television technology, too, the process of massification began with the transition from terrestrial broadcasting to satellite broadcasting. With this break-up, many independent television channels have become available.

From this point of view, it is not wrong to say that the proliferation of television channels means that the preferences of viewers increase. The increase in preferences also means that viewers with different interests will create new spaces for themselves. In this context, it is wrong to say that audience habits changed with increased TV channels and options. The world publications and the emergence of thematic channels, a feature of these thematic channels not being national broadcasts. Hence, national broadcasting channels were broadcasting with a single ideology and regulation. From this point of view, a thematic broadcasting community has emerged. It is possible to limit this to only the proliferation of television channels and the proliferation of options of the audience. On the other hand, with the proliferation of thematic channels, it can be said that audiences are more selective and active. From another point of view, it would not be wrong to say that the transition of the media economy became

possible by means of occurrence of satellite broadcasting. Because the way for the privatization of broadcast media channels has been opened. When approaching from a different angle; de-massification has brought the way of localization in publishing life. In this context, localization can also be called democratized in the field of broadcasting. The advantages and disadvantages of each technological change in the literature and in the academic field are discussed in terms of audience. For example, the increase in the number of TV and broadcasting channels has also led to democratization. This can be regarded as a positive development for publication life. In addition to this, with the emergence of thematic channels as a positive development, it can be said that audiences have the opportunity to watch channels for their interests. It can be said to have opened the way for the emergence of new fandom concepts among audiences and the formation of communities.

Geoff Hare, on the other hand, evaluates the differences in broadcasting, which comes with satellite broadcasting in France, from a social point of view in the article "*Towards demassification of French television in the 21st century*". Hare discusses the suitability of soap operas from different societal origins in different countries or American format programs for someone belonging to the French culture. According to Hare, along with demassification, the audience's consumption became increasingly individualized. According to Hare, the television set in a house is the focal point of the house, in other words, the house seating arrangement is adjusted to the television set, but with the demassification, the number of televisions in a house has also increased. (Hare, 2008)

Turkey has also been a lot of changes with the transition from terrestrial broadcast to satellite television as well as in the world. Çatalbaş, assesses a historical perspective of this change in Turkey. According to Çatalbaş, specialized channels in Turkey that also cause social and political effects. On the other hand, Çatalbaş emphasizes that special channels are a kind of ideological view but it

also criticizes the fact that the channels offer similar content in the format. Çatalbaş stated that because of commercialization of channels, the content of these channels became sensationalized and insignificant. (Çatalbaş, 2000)

1.1.2. Audience and YouTube

With the change of technology and communication tools, the studies in the literature have also changed. In the literature, social media and audience researches have also increased their context. Especially new generations have been watching videos on YouTube. According to Chau, increase in the numbers of subscriptions to YouTube channels indicates that YouTube gains importance in teenagers' lives. (Chau, 2011) The example given by Chau here could be accepted as a good example of the availability, measurability and rationality in the next generation of media research. This rationality makes it possible for people to register with YouTube channels. At the same time, unlike television viewers, the choices of people subscribed to YouTube channels are more individualized. It would not be wrong to say that an audience of people who decide what to watch at what time is an active aspect. At the same time, the measurability there can also be used as a measure of the increase in YouTube's popularity ratio.

On the other hand, Postman defines technology as a simple machine, while the medium is defined as the social and intellectual environment created by this machine. (Postman, 2006, p.118) In this context, it is not wrong to say that there are similarities between YouTube and television environments. It can also be said that this definition of Postman has a considerable influence on the definition of the YouTube environment. YouTube needs to be defined as a whole in the context of both the media and the audience's experiences.

Chau also argued that these kinds of media channels combine media production and distribution with social networking features, making them a suitable environment to create, connect, collaborate and circulate stories and individually meaningful media. (Chau, 2011)

YouTube offers a suitable medium for producing and consuming people and continues this cycle very quickly at the same time. Today there are quite a lot of individual YouTube channels. Generally, the content of these YouTube channels is determined by the producers. Contrary to classical television contents, channels are usually composed of original and individual contents. These contents are directed by people's subscriptions and especially their comments. For example, in Turkey, important YouTubers produce content according to comments from their subscriptions. In this context, the line between YouTube and the notion of being famous is blurred. From this perspective, it can be argued that the producers may try to make the stories internalized easier by the viewer. Because in many researches, one of the basic concepts between YouTuber and subscriptions is stated as sincerity.

According to Strangelove, the videos with user-generated content on YouTube is not solely a place for people sharing their own lives or experiences but also for them to express themselves and to communicate with others. The Strangelove book contains much important information about YouTube's content, audience, and process. Here, as Chau also supports, Strangelove notes that an individually produced video turns people into a form of self-expression. (Strangelove, 2010, p.76) At the same time, people express themselves on YouTube which it allows them to meet people. In this context, it can be said that past fandom concepts and nowadays fandom concepts on YouTube are different. People can meet people like themselves by expressing themselves more simply on YouTube. It would not be wrong to say that YouTube is not only a channel to watch a video but also an important socializing tool. Macnamara refers to the exchange that came with Web 2.0. Speaking of this change, Macnamara deals with the concept of "collective intelligence" that O'Reilly's emphasizes. (Macnamara, 2010, p.36) (O'Reilly, 2010, p.230) In this context, it is emphasized that the main values of Web 2.0 are "conversation" "collaboration" and "authenticity". (Macnamara, 2010, p.316) These concepts reveal the character of

today's communication environment. Macnamara has added a YouTube example; adding that, people can list popular videos only if they are not sharing in this environment. It also refers to the "Tagging" application. This practice makes it easier for people to meet at a common denominator. (Macnamara, 2010, p.36)

YouTube has provided a transition from the traditional viewing habits of people to a media in which they have social relationships with other people. (Haridakis & Hanson, 2009) YouTube's role in socialization is important in the literature. People can interact with each other simultaneously, contrary to the audience practices of the past. This can be seen as an important source of motivation in maintaining their viewing habits. Hence, this participatory culture can allow people to feel themselves as a part of a process. This culture in which followers are involved can eventually turn into a community to which they belong.

YouTube is basically a place for watching, sharing and editing videos online. By this point, YouTube might be viewed as a collection and archives of online videos. (Snelson, 2013) It can be said that the purpose of YouTube is different today from the beginning. Because when it first appeared, it emerged as a video channel idea that allows people to create and archive videos. Even the first slogan, 'Your Digital Video Repository,' as opposed to YouTube's current position that can be attributed to the viewer's ability to produce unique content and interact with each other. (Burgess & Green, 2009, p.88) YouTube, unlike television, is a tool that produces its own content.

Accordingly, Strangelove emphasizes that, YouTube is not just a video archive, it is also a place for intense and emotional experiences to be shared; on the other hand, this video channel is different from television experience because it reflects amateur video producer's cultural intellection, the way he or she represents democracy and faith. Hence, he argued that YouTube has become a battlefield of argumentative subjects and of amateur producers that endeavor to

affect the way events are represented and interpreted. (Strangelove, 2010, p.4) Parallel to this idea; it can be said that the fictional characters on TV became more obscure on YouTube. Looking at past fandom researches, it can be said that the TV series also created a great fandom culture. It can be said here that people cannot escape from the fact that the development of events depends on a scenario. While television's fandom culture is judged on a specific scenario and fiction, people on YouTube are attracted to videos with their own homes and casual clothes. In this sense, people can also be influenced by the physical features in the videos.

On the other hand, Snelson added that YouTube supports interactive features. In this context, YouTube can create a participatory culture example by creating its own communities. (Snelson, 2013) In this context, it is possible to see YouTube as a channel that constantly nourishes and feeds its feedback into the community created by people.

YouTube has changed people's use of popular culture and differentiated media tools that enabled popular pop culture to spread among people in the past. At the same time, people are both producers and consumers. The name of such content is user generated content. (Noh, 2015)

Especially after web 2.0, YouTube has found its place in the digital environment, in other words, YouTube creates in its own way. People who produce content on many different occasions have added a different dimension to their way of expressing themselves on YouTube. In short, even daily routines of people can be regarded as a content. One of the reasons for young people to choose YouTube is to feel more comfortable and develop a follow-up activity other than known and customary. Young people may also tend to be comfortable when they produce content at the same time. Because YouTube's motto is 'creating your own channel'. In this sense, the user generated content has increased fastly in time.

YouTube has usability and functionality and thanks to these features it makes easier creating, sharing and producing content for people. YouTube enables people to make new social interactions via various videos. (Susarla, Tan, & Ha-Oh, 2012) From here it can be said that there are many different content videos within the YouTube community. In this context, users can not only be limited to a single content but also be able to recognize many different interesting people within the video diversity. The main point here is that users interact with people in their own liking, while at the same time they are aware of different online communities on YouTube.

1.1.3. Video Blogging Culture

Invariably, new technologies create new concepts. People have begun to use a lot of concepts and different forms to express themselves on the internet. One of the most significant of the “video blogging” is that these blogs have emerged in the form of video content after the textual blogs. (Molyneaux H. , Gibson, O'Donnell, & Singer, 2007) Looking at the development of the Internet and personal content production, blogger culture has grown in popularity before the vlogger culture. Although the contents of the two cultures are similar, it is not wrong to say that the main difference between them is the actions of 'seeing' and 'hearing'. From this point of view, it can be said that transition has been realized from written internet culture to a visual internet culture. When looking at the content of Bloggers, it can be considered a channel in which people still express their daily experiences, lifestyles, or ideas about something. In this context, it cannot be said that vlogger culture is very different. But as mentioned before, the reader is now a viewer in vlogger culture. Thus, people are more interactive in comparison with past.

According to Kaplan and Haneil blogs represent the oldest form of social media. Blogs can be defined as personal web pages and a field where the author mirrors the life of the author; the author presents cross-sections of his

personal life to readers. (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010) At the same time, these blogs can also be in variations written on particular topics. From this idea, it can be stated that the interaction with the viewer in vlogger culture made an important difference. Because today in gaming videos which are highly popular, YouTuber can read the comments of users simultaneously while playing games. In this context, it is not possible for a blogger to instantly and verbally return comments in the blogger culture, even if there are comments or subscriptions. In this respect, vlogger culture can be called more interactive than blogger culture. This interactivity can also be said to accelerate the process of inclusion of people into the content. In short, a form of the message that appeals to more than one sense of humanity can be said to be more susceptible to interaction.

Kaplan and Haenlein point out that blogs are usually managed by one person, but other users interact with each other in a commentary. It gives an example of changing blog contents and techniques. For example, Justin.tv allows users to create personalized television channels that can be accessed from web cams and broadcast to other users in real time. (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010) The justin.tv example, which is included in the article, can be an example of a blog culture that's visual, video-based, and has different ways of interacting, which can produce contents different from personal, text-based and interactive blogging culture.

Another characteristic of vlogs is enabled to people communicate with each other. These kind of communication forms are interpretation, co-working, sharing, producing and also consuming. In literature, there are many researches on vlogging culture as people sharing personal lives and experiences.

The vlogs culture is divided into topics and age groups. For example; Teen vloggers shares their stories or school experiences on YouTube. (Snelson, 2013) Chau also stated that according to statistics, YouTube is preferred by young people. According to Entertainment Media Research, 44% of teenagers prefer

YouTube to other video channels and another data indicates that over half of this population becomes a member of YouTube to comment on videos. Moreover, 17% of teenagers become members to create their own YouTube channels. Teenagers' YouTube visiting percentages are as follows: 79% entertains, 71% passes time, 61% watches videos, 53% become users by recommendations from friends. (Chau, 2011) It can be stated that young people prefer YouTube by going out of this research. In this context, it can be said that it is logical to try to understand the motivation of young people as a research target audience covering YouTube habits.

On the other hand, Tobias Raun explains that video blogging by mirror metaphor. According to Raun, the vlogger culture could be seen as an individual verification, reflection and social tool. (Raun, 2015) The mirror metaphor used by Raun can actually help understand better many concepts. It's like the concept of 'personification' that Stuart Hall used. (Hall, 2006, pp.164-173) Hall's viewing habits have generally been examined with a different perspective from the point of view. Raun's mirror metaphor represents today's users and producers. At the same time this prosumer process is very personal.

Also, this situation has been discussed in research conducted by Jean Burgess and Joshua Green. According to the research, YouTube has created a field of reflexivity and activism for people. According to the research, some vloggers stated that they defined themselves as active participants, even activists. (Burgess & Green, 2009, p.67) In this context, it can be stated that YouTubers who see themselves as active participants or vloggers do not have difficulty in connecting with the audience. It can be said here that dominating the process is not an important role. YouTube's original look has turned into a channel that people can consume anytime with videos from people in our everyday lives. In this respect, accessibility of YouTube is also important for the audience. Basically, a medium in which people can watch, comment, channel, shoot video and meet people in a common place is quite different.

In the literature, many findings and ideas support that vlogs via YouTube is a kind of self-representation and self-expression for ordinary people because these people could prefer internet-based videos or programs rather than television. Strangelove has also defined that, as a support of this situation YouTube is a post-television era. (Strangelove, 2010, p.174) In this context, television is still preferred by people, but people have expressed a division in the direction of their preferences.

The popularity of YouTube has also attracted the attention of traditional television channels. The series on the TV stream are broadcasted on YouTube in short videos on the official accounts of the channels. Among the most watched YouTube channels in Turkey, it is possible to see traditional channels with a great deal of viewing rates, such as ATV³, (ATV, 2018) Kanal D.⁴ (Kanal D, 2018) Fox TV⁵ (Fox TV, 2018) In this context, traditional channels may also try to produce content for YouTube based on the viewer's preferences.⁶ (YouTube, 2018) In other words, they produce various versions of series or programs published on YouTube.⁷ (YouTube, 2018) Hence, one of the most important thing in video diaries or vlogging culture is originality of concepts or difference of contents.

The authenticity of the audience and content for a new fandom culture is a very important element. For example, in Turkey, a famous YouTuber is talking about original content in his diss videos.⁸ (YouTube, 2017) Originality among YouTubers can cause competitiveness between themselves.

Another topic is web sites' interface used by people. YouTube interface designed to be practical and useful. The site has a very user-friendly design and

³ Turkish TV Channel: <https://www.atv.com.tr>

⁴ Turkish TV Channel: <https://www.kanald.com.tr>

⁵ Turkish TV Channel: <https://www.fox.com.tr>

⁶ Trending videos: <https://www.youtube.com/feed/trending>

⁷ Popular on YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCdxD5if2uHt2ZwIR6M1eBtg>

⁸ Enes Batur's diss video: <https://www.YouTube.com/watch?v=vNI2bc58BNs>

thanks to this interface people easily follow their channels; additionally, it is possible for users to have videos suggested and these videos can be evaluated with likes or dislikes by users. (Duncum, 2011)

2. AUDIENCE AND FANDOM

Generally, fandom concept is defined as passive and manipulated by various media tools, especially in mass media literature. Additionally, Lewis stated that the popular concurrence is the stigma which manipulated by media for adoring audiences at the entrance to the Adoring Audience: Fan culture and popular media books. (Lewis, 1992)

Joli Jenson began to his article with Fandom Pathology: characterization of fandom concept is defined in the literature as deviance and potential fanatics. In other words, fandom is accepted in literature as bordering on deranged behavior. (Jenson, 1992, pp.9-26) Furthermore, Jenson argued that fandom concept should be handled with psychological and social pathology. According to Jenson, people try to connect with celebrities' lives because of their own sense of psychological inadequacies.

The concept of fandom, which Jenson regards as a social pathology in his article, may differ in some points today. Jenson, who set out from the inadequacies of followers or people, can be said to think that normal people can reach them and satisfy themselves in some way. It is not wrong to say that today's fandom concept may have changed from certain angles when examined in the context of Fandom, television and YouTube. As noted earlier, one of the reasons why viewers follow YouTube phenomena is that they see themselves as one of them. In this context, the boundary between television celebrities and the audience can be said to be blurred on YouTube. In this context, it is not wrong to have some difference between fandom concept developed on television and fandom concept developed on YouTube.

According to Postman, the discourse on television has been edited and decontextualized (Postman, 2006, p.17) While comparing TV and YouTube contents, it can be said that one of the effects is the edited discourse and content in

television, while some of the YouTube videos are recorded at YouTubers' homes as they are "natural" and the naturality of YouTube contents may create a feeling of intimacy. In this context, the motivations of viewers who prefer YouTube instead of television today can be approached as fictional or "natural" content. Recently, YouTubers also have partnerships with mainstream televisions and television celebrities. In fact, quite a popular YouTuber in Turkey Enes Batur's movie was released. The stated situations may have caused a change in the viewer's point of view towards the YouTubers, or, unlike the situation, the possibility that someone who has come out of their own neighborhood has become famous is also open to debate.

If Jenson's opinion on the subject is to be returned; this is also defined as a response to the celebrity world and this respect representing for people passivity. At the end of the first part of Jenson's article, he stated that the concept of fandom is explained as a normal social process in very few sources. In general, Jason's ideas are based on the idea that the fandom concept is caused by the feeling of loneliness (Jenson, 1992, pp.9-26) concept of being a fan can be associated with many features of the audience as well as with the feeling of being alone. However, a discourse such as being a fan directly caused by solitude can be considered incomplete even though it is not wrong.

The concept of being a fan also refers to grouping together from an individual activity. There is a possibility that people belonging to a specific group will be affected by each other over time and adopt their movements. In this case, people have at least one thing in common because they liked the same thing even if they were fans of a person, a place, or an object. In this context, Fiske indicates that the fandom of the fan concept is the production and circulation of certain meanings. At the same time, according to Fiske, only the speech or the flow of meaning in local group is not provided with words. Changing people's hair and make-up, choosing clothes is a kind of social identity. For this reason, the change of people within the fan community refers to their desires to be approved by other

people. (Fiske, 1992, pp.30-50) It can be argued that Fiske came out on the road and considered the need to belong to a group as a fan. Because, as it is nowadays, being a fan can be interpreted as forming a group. On the other hand, used symbols, jargon, clothes can be considered as parts of an identity building process. In this context, people can relax at a certain level. Parallel to Fiske's ideas, it can be said that as people share, the feeling of belonging to the group increases. Fans belonging to a group can be influenced by each other over time.

Grossberg explains approaches to the definition of fandom; first approach about fandom is hugely connected to popular culture. According to this model, most of the popular culture contents and productions appeal to easily manipulated and least critical segments of the population. Fans are inadequate for realizing popular culture not only enjoy them but also manipulate their thoughts. (Grossberg, 1992, pp.51-69) Popular culture and fandom concepts are highly related to each other. On the other hand, the idea that the media manipulates people's thoughts has an important place in media studies. In this context, a connection can be made between the concept of fandom and manipulation.

There are differences between being a person consuming popular culture products and being a fan. Being a fan is not just consuming or watching a television program or movie. The Fandom concept also includes a reproductive process in its place. According to Fiske, fans often cause a mobility between the fan community. According to Fiske, there are a lot of differences between individual marketing of a popular cultural product and marketing within a group. (Fiske, 1992, pp.30-50) As mentioned before, people share elements with each other for constituting a form of unity. In this context, there are differences between a celebrity that is individually loved and a celebrity who is aware of being a group. Because fans develop this discourse and create a different culture. On the other hand, it can be said that in the formation of fan groups, a group of people should have an interest in the same subject or person, even with different perspectives. While Neil Postman explains people's habits of watching television,

tells that people find on television what they live in their everyday lives. (Postman, 2006, pp.109-111) Approaching from this angle, it can be said that people who see some things on television as they identify with their own lives have the possibility of making them feel close to each other. It can be argued whether teenagers who are researching on YouTube have their social lives also available on YouTube. Another issue is whether audiences with similar motivations and experiences have a common goal on YouTube. It is also important to discuss the absence or the opposite as much as the existence of something. To be more specific, it is also a matter of whether fan cultures on YouTube are excluding, posting opinions or attitudes. How YouTube fan groups describe the concept of "us" or "the other" is important in order to be able to perceive whether or not these communities are fans.

It is possible to establish various connections between fan concept and audience in many ways. At the same time, the relationship between television and audience is formed through various codes. The codes here are concerned with how the messages from the television are transmitted to the audience. Audiences receive messages in a variety of ways, with or without awareness. (Gorton, 2009, p.14) According to Gorton, these codes are visual, verbal, technical, nonverbal. At the same time, it transforms the viewer's message interpretation process into a polysemic medium. (Gorton, 2009, p.23) In the light of Gorton's ideas, audiences and media research could merely be regarded as discourses. These researches should also be evaluated in terms of nonverbal communication or semantic point of view. In communication, the message contains multiple features when it is sent to the recipient. For example; the voice tone of the person who gave the message, the clothes, and from which environment they transmit the message is quite significant. On the other hand, even if the source of the message is changed, it may be misleading to negate the effects of visual or nonverbal communication.

Parallel to Gorton's thinking, Postman also points out that one of the main missions of media tools, especially television, is to give the public an image.

(Postman, 2006, p.129) Even though there is no mass message like television in this context, YouTube videos on YouTube can be said to be aimed at creating a certain image such as being styled, rapping, humorous as mentioned above.

The concepts of YouTube and fandom can also be considered in the context of consumption habits. It is similar to promoting consumption through classical television content through advertisements. When we look at today, it's possible to see more than one ad embedded in the most viewed videos. However, unlike televisions, YouTube allows ad content to be skipped after a specified number of seconds. Similarly, Gorton noted that YouTube is a consumer incentive market for consumption. (Gorton, 2009, p.35) It is possible to establish a connection between television and YouTube in the context of increasing consumption by taking the path of Gorton. Unlike on TV, people on YouTube do not have to watch all of the ads embedded in their videos. Besides, there is no adflow specifically defined for YouTube. It can be said that on YouTube there are advertising activities carried out by YouTubers themselves. For example, in a makeup video, a makeup product can be clearly advertised.

On the other hand, unlike two media tools and advertising relations, it is useful to examine the fan concept in these two media. It can be said that the audience on TV and the audience on YouTube are fundamentally different from the viewing habits and the fact that the viewers are also in the manufacturer's position.

Neil Postman, on the other hand, explains the telegraph technology and masses of television audience with the metaphor of "the neighborhood where the strangers who know the most superficial information about each other", starting from the rapid spread of the contents on the television. (Postman, 2006, p.96) In this context, television fans are not visible, but on the Internet and YouTube, fans talk about each other in terms of being easier to organize, or whether they know each other or not.

Being a fan of a program may not just mean watching that program more than any other audience. In general, fans are interested in the contents of programs and the characters in the series they watch, as well as their lives. This separates the fans from interest and relevance to the general audience. In other words, they integrate the characters they watch on television or in another way into their own lives. This makes them active audiences. Likewise, Matthew Hills defines fans as the ultimate active audience at the entrance to the *Fan Cultures* book. (Hills, 2002)

The concept of being fanatic may seem like an individual action at first sight, but it can also be seen as a means of socializing on another dimension. The fact that one of the people is a fan of something or a program channel also increases the likelihood that people will interact with other fans. With the increasing use of the Internet, fans have become more organized among themselves. Fan groups have even started to form in other social media channels of people who are famous through a different medium. It is not wrong to say that fans of a television program are also grouped through Instagram, not only by fan groups but also by persons. This has led to the expansion of social communities, starting from a single common feature, at first sight, by people who love a celebrity or program. In this context, it would not be wrong to say that fan cultures have produced a community in social media and more rapidly. In parallel with this view, William W. Kelly also mentions that fan groups have produced a variety of aesthetic and cultural meanings to share this production among the people. (Kelly, 2004, pp.1-17)

In the concept of Fandom, the culture itself plays an important role in reproduction. Humans and fan communities re-create a new meaning by exploiting the sources they feed on. It is possible to define this production process rationally. Channels that resemble too many YouTube channels have begun to be reproduced by users. According to Henry Jenkins, fan communities are concentrated around the circulation of meanings, interpretations and fantasies.

(Jenkins, 2006, p.137) Fan cultures and the process of building this cult can be approached from many different angles. In the fan culture, a consumption process is also dominant at the same time that comes with production. In this context, Cornell Sandvoss, who explains the concept of football within the context of soccer sport, points out that fans are also consumers at the same time. (Sandvoss, 2003, pp.16-18)

2.1. Types of Fandom

Henry Jenkins notes that the origins of the fan concept are based on Latin word "fanaticus". Fanaticus means that "Of or belonging to the temple, a temple servant, a devotee" (Jenkins, 1992, p.12) In this context, it is not wrong to say that the concept of being fan expresses a commitment as etymologically. Jenkins stated that the fan concept was used to describe followers of baseball teams in the 19th century. At the same time, Jenkins emphasized that this concept was used to refer to "devotions" of followers in the newspapers. According to Jenkins, fandom studies in the media have emerged as a product of studies that have been done to influence the orientation of programs. (Jenkins, 1992, p.292) In this context, the concept of fandom is used in a very broad sense; it can be called to love something in particular other than to like that certain thing. This, of course, cannot be explained in the literature either by loving or liking actions. In the concept of fandom, it can be said that people need to explain why one wants to become a fan or program fan or a motivation. Along with Jenkins' statement, Drushel also points out that the concept of fandom was first used by football fans for matinee actors. Drushel, who mainly worked on the concepts of Star Trek and fandom, emphasizes the use of fandom for science fiction publications in the 1930s. (Drushel, 2013, pp.5-9)

Fan culture was first used for sports fans as in the examples given above. But later it was used especially in science fiction cinema, cinema stars, soap operas, music and popular culture. In this context, with the technology and new media environments, is today the tendency of young people to be fans changing?

The question becomes more important. From here it can be said that examining the fandom concepts that different genres have created is important in terms of understanding today's concepts and audience.

2.1.1. Soap Operas and Fandom

Ross and Nightingale stated that Soap Opera' with early researches (Arnheim, 1944) and (Warner & Henry, 1948) identified consumer or audience as "typical" and these people characterized as working-class woman and poorly trained or education for advancement. (Ross & Nightingale, 2003, p.127)

According to Geraghty soap opera description, it is seen as a way of describing the differences between the other types. Other types are also defined according to differences between them. the soap opera area is also a framework for how television research has progressed. Another feature of the soap opera is that which allows feminist work in the field of television. Finally, soap operas allow television to be seen as an area that produces different contents in mass production. At the same time, soap opera is used as a metaphor in areas such as politics, sports. Another prominent feature is that it gives clues to people's common pleasures about popular television viewing habits. (Geraghty, 2006)

Brunsdon deals with the ideological problem of soap operas. According to Brunsdon, the ideological problem of soap operas is the "personal life" of the narrative framework in the series. This personal life is also organized together with personal relationships. It can be romanticism, family, divorce or death. Brunsdon discloses this with Marxism and describes it as the domain of the individual outside the paid labor. In feminist terms, it refers to the sphere of women's 'intimate oppression'. Soap Opera was built as a kind of feminine space, and of course this is an ideological construction process. This personal area describes the feminine characteristics and competencies of women. (Brunsdon, 1981)

It is not wrong to say that the soap opera and fandom studies in the literature are shaped by the ideology of womanhood especially in the beginning. Both the characters, drama and romanticism have been associated with women, which has added a gender factor to fan culture studies. Soap operas were associated with the woman in the house.

Viewing motivation of audience is very significant for soap opera researches. For example; Ien Ang has conducted research about Dallas TV series and its fans' viewing motivations. The Ang work also includes direct comments on the series by fans. According to Ang, the fans associate their lives with Sue, one of the characters in the series. The fans have kinds of emotional connections with the character. The fans see the series character as a real person and call it 'real' human. Another fan says he finds him psychologically convincing. One of the motivations of fans internalizing this character is the reflection of the character's problems on the screen. According to Ang, the reason why audiences favorite character is Sue; she has also experienced the sadness and painful part of life. The character named Sue has a very emotional and melancholic structure. On the other hand, Ang points out that these characters are have policemic

aspect. Although there are fans who love the character of Sue Ellen, there are fans who criticize her at the same time. Ang does not present a comprehensive analysis of an intuitive melodramatic hero with her own expressions. Ang particularly tries to analyze the common pleasures of her followers and their motivation to follow her. To sum up in this context, Ang indicates that the reason behind the surrender to a melodramatic character may be the complexity and conflict of living in the modern world. (Ang, 1996, pp.73-75)

Nancy K. Baym tries to explain the concept of soap opera and fandom in one part of the book, according to her personal experience. Baym also deals with the relocation of these relations to the internet environment. Baym, indicate that

soap operas' fan groups are one of the first communities on the internet which name is 'net.tv.soaps'. (Baym, 2000, p.6)

Baym has discussed whether viewers should be treated as a community or not. Baym has reached the conclusion that the soap opera followers are close to each other by referring to from different sources and previous researches. According to Baym, the audience is constantly talking about the series with other fans which brings a more intimate relationship between fans. (Baym, 2000, p.15)

It is not wrong to say that in the fandom culture in the soap opera, as mentioned in above researches and references, the viewer correlates itself with the characters. On the other hand, the audience creates a catharsis with the characters and sees them as one of their own lives. In this context, sincerity and credibility is an important factor as it is in today's fandom and YouTube researches.

2.1.2. Football and Fandom

Sandvoss compared football and fandom cultures with other fandom cultures. According to Sandvoss, other fandom studies are more focused on subcultures and smaller groups. Sandvoss states that fan studies determined according to fandom' object. In this context, he notes that its of fandom research should be sociological researches, contrary to other psychoanalytic fandom studies when considering the massive fan base in the football. (Sandvoss, 2003, p.14) On the other hand, he emphasized that, firstly, football fans are spectators at the same time. Secondly, the fan word indicates that curiosity about sports. He argues that the concept of fan must be viewed from different disciplines and contexts. In this aspect, people who interested in science fiction, television programs or music are described as fans both in the academic world and daily life. At the same time, Sandvoss criticizes that the phenomenon mentioned in the fandom studies is regarded only as a concept of that one genre. He said that fandom concept is should be associated with another fandom researches such as; science fiction, soap operas or stardom etc. According to him, even though the

scope of each fandom is different, all the fandom studies try to establish a link between fan and text. And there is an interaction in all the fandom works. In this sense, they are in relation to each other. An experience that belongs to a fandom cult can be found in another fandom culture. In addition to these, he argues that the concepts of football and fandom must also be examined in relation to mass consumption. (Sandvoss, 2003, p.15) In this context, it can be said that associating the concept of fandom with other cultures and fields will bring richness in terms of concept. Thinking that the concept of fandom exists in a single species and unique way may lead to an incomplete and incorrect orientation. In this context, one of the main elements of this research, the fandom concept, will be tried to be associated with other types/genres. According to Sandvoss, soccer fans have gone beyond their individual boundaries. They categorize themselves in a particular football club and call themselves "us". He argued that football fans have intense emotional involvement in the football club. (Sandvoss, 2003, pp.78-79)

It is not wrong to say that intense emotional participation and sense of being we are not too difficult to see in other fandom cultures. In Fandom culture, it is very important for people to relate to an object or other people who love someone rather than love it. In this context, people can also be associated with the establishment of various fan groups on the internet. Today's fan culture also includes a participatory and productive culture. On the other hand, it would be wrong to say that the soap opera or soccer fans mentioned earlier were also not participants. In this context, it can be argued that today's fan culture is prominent with visibility and producer identity.

Sandvoss uses McLuhan's "extensions" concept to describe people's view of the television or football field as their own extensions. He argues that people function as a fan. From this point of view, football clubs have turned into symbolic representations of fans in their daily lives. Moreover, it adds that these clubs have become fans and extensions of their own world. At the same time, he

sees football clubs as a cultural reflection area. More specifically, football clubs are the self-projection area of fans. (Sandvoss, 2003, p.169)

Sandvoss argued that the concept of fandom with football and narcissism. He assumed that, what fans like to reflect them which is a kind of self-reflection for fan communities. Hence, according to him fans are not aware of this situation. On the other hand, according to Sandvoss, the football paradigm is an interface between internal knowledge (self reflection) and external knowledge (macro transformations) (Sandvoss, 2003, pp.47-48)

Sandvoss has evaluated the concepts of football and fandom from many different perspectives. From this point of view, it can help to understand what common and discrete aspects are for other fandom studies.

2.1.3. YouTube and Fandom Concept

People consume popular culture with various tools. In this context, it can be said that with the technological changes, the young generation provides popular culture circulation through the internet. When audience's habits and statistics are observed, YouTube's impact on this culture is quite high. On the other hand, YouTube has a lot of differences from past audience activities. In Digital Fandom, Paul Booth argues that the distinction between 'web 1.0' and '2.0' is a transition from static online consumption to dynamic online production and consumption. (Booth, 2010, pp.86-87) With the use of web 2.0 by people, it can be said that original content formats have evolved. In this context, the concept of prosumer on the internet is also widely used. At the same time, social media such as Facebook and Twitter has been involved in our lives after web 2.0.

Particularly, the concept of participation is very important for online events. Because new media and YouTube have changed people's viewing habits, they have also changed the relationship dimensions with technological tools. In

this context, the participation of people and the increase of participation dimensions are related to the concept of online fandom.

Participation creates various norms and traditions.

Accordingly, Dana Rotman and Jennifer Preece are defined purpose of online communities. The basic things in a unified common culture are; a common goal and interests, the interaction of participants, the content created by users, the existence of clear boundaries defining the purpose and practice of the community. (Rotman & Preece, 2010)

The research by Rotman and Preece, published in 2010, examines the aims and cultures of online communities from the perspective of YouTube users and producers. Based on the results of the research, YouTube is more than a publishing application for people. Interviewers see YouTube as a communication and interaction platform. The vloggers, who are content producers, define themselves as a kind of community and they have their own communicative terms. At the same time the content producers have a culture that creates linguistic integrity. In addition, the vloggers in the research indicate that they are connected to their own channels and they feel a sense of belonging. On the other hand, YouTube's enormous scope of people does not hold people from this feeling of sincerity. People are gathering in the sub-groups within the YouTube channels and within their own interests. Research is primarily focused on the connection between content producers and consumers. (Rotman & Preece, 2010)

YouTube is also an intercultural video sharing site. From comments on YouTube, it's possible to see where users are from around the world. This channel is a place where multinational fans can be created. (Thornton, 2010)

In this context which multinational fans of Gangnam style would be very impressive example for a relationship between popular culture and YouTube. This music video has a count of 3.152.490.520 views from many different areas of the

world.⁹ (YouTube, 2012) This situation creates popular cultural phenomenon from Korea. According to Kwang Woo Noh Prior to PSY's success, the success of Korean artists was on television or in movies. Together with YouTube, it has created a different fandom culture out of the traditional one-way media flow. Woo emphasized that Before PSY's videos, the albums of other Korean artists had not been marketed in the western world. But along with YouTube, the PSY's parody videos and imitations have also been watched and reproduced by the audience. PSY's success is based on a fan and popular culture that is actually established. (Noh, 2015)

In 2007, a survey was conducted by Jean Burgess and Joshua Green to uncover YouTube's ecology and the popularity ratings of popular videos. A set of examples were selected in the survey to measure video popularity on YouTube. These; most viewed, most favorited, most responded and most discussed. A total of 4,320 videos were compiled from these categories. Coding formality is based on textual and extra-textual features. Coding is separated from each other as origin, uploader, genre and themes. At the same time, the research was divided into two categories as traditional and user-created. As a result, Burgess and Green have come up with the results of YouTube's "Broadcast Yourself" slogan, on the other hand, YouTube's first stage slogan is "Your Digital Video Repository" but after when it's got popular, some strategies have changed, it is now addressing people differently. (Burgess & Green, 2009, p.88) The most popular one of the categories consisted of user-generated videos. In total 2,177 videos were coded as user-created sources. However, traditional media content has also a high rate of viewing and enjoying. The content that attracts the most attention here is; news, political debates, the fame of life and gossip, sports images and TV series on YouTube. The point of interest here; although the source of these contents is television, many contents have been uploaded by the users again. The most viewed contents are the vlog videos created by the users. The survey is that

⁹ PSY Gangnam Style Video: <https://www.YouTube.com/watch?v=9bZkp7q19f0>

viewers in Turkey and in the Philippines, follow the soap opera series on YouTube. (Burgess & Green, 2009, pp.38-49) From this point, it could be said that user generated video content has a critical role in people's watching habits.

YouTube is so popular especially among the young people/teenagers. According to Defy Media's report,¹⁰ (Defy Media, 2017) 77% of respondents aged 13-24 said that the reason why watching YouTube is boredom/time killer; on the other hand, only 47% said that learning how to do something on YouTube. Another point in this research is these 67% people stated that can't live without YouTube. From this point, it can be said that YouTube has an effect on especially young people¹¹ YouTubers are people who create various content such as gaming, real life activities, make up or science etc. for their audience. Because of the YouTube's reachability, many of these YouTubers effect on people especially teenagers from worldwide. (Manchanda A., 2015) Hence, YouTubers have affections not only doing shopping activities but also being more reachable instead of movie or TV celebrities. According to Celia O'Neil-Hart and Howard Blumenstein's report 70% of teenagers who are YouTube subscribers, say that they relate to YouTube creators more than traditional celebrities. Other interesting data of the report, 4 in 10 teenager subscribers say that their favorite creator understands them better than their friends. According to Hart and Blumenstein "Creators are at the heart of the cultural zeitgeist" because 7 in 10 participations of the survey say that YouTube creators change and shape culture.¹² (O'Neil-Hart & Blumenstein, 2016)

According to Wilma Westenberg, YouTubers increasingly affects young people. Some of these influences are that young people see them as role models.

¹⁰ http://defymedia.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Acumen_DL_booklet_16_12_04.pdf

¹¹ http://defymedia.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Acumen_DL_booklet_16_12_04.pdf

¹² <https://www.thinkwithgoogle.com/consumer-insights/YouTube-stars-influence/>

The rate of influence from YouTube is higher than the rate of influence from other television celebrities. At the same time, parents are not well informed about who they admire on YouTube. For example, in Netherlands, a YouTube person explains that young people wanted to take photograph with him when they saw him, but adult people do not understand this action. This example shows how the YouTube people are influences teenagers and that adults do not know about it. Westenberg also stated that YouTubers have some influence on behaviors of teenagers. Teenagers imitate the acts of YouTubers such as jargon, clothing and behaviors, that they see in their videos (Westenberg, 2016) Similarly, according to Variety.com's survey findings supported that YouTubers are more popular than traditional celebrities among young people.¹³ (Variety, 2015)

In Turkey, popular videos of 2 out of 4 on YouTube, currently, belongs to known YouTubers who are Barış Özcan¹⁴ (YouTube, 2018) and Berkcan Güven¹⁵. (YouTube, 2018) Barış Özcan has 454.226 views on YouTube¹⁶ (YouTube, 2017) and the other one is Berkcan Güven views¹⁷ (YouTube, 2018) 1.139.309 and this video has 5.990 comments.¹⁸ According to the web site *Socialbaker's* data, Enes Batur is most favorited YouTuber in Turkey¹⁹. (Socialbakers, 2018) In addition, some YouTubers have awards given by YouTube, such as Gold Play Button and Silver Play Button awards.²⁰ (Teknolojioku, 2016) Another popular YouTuber, Danla Bilic²¹ has 1.725.992 subscribers in YouTube. (YouTube, 2018) Generally, these videos have common features are sincerity, intimacy to the audience, simplicity of video, jargon etc.

¹³ <http://variety.com/2015/digital/news/variety-famechangers-youtubers-pewdiepie-1201545222/>

¹⁴ Turkish YouTuber, Barış Özcan: <https://www.youtube.com/user/b31416>

¹⁵ Turkish YouTuber, Berkcan Güven: <https://www.youtube.com/user/berkcanguven>

¹⁶ Barış Özcan's video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wGjjAnhsb20>

¹⁷ Berkcan Güven's video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iPxsvfhOaA0>

¹⁸ Berkcan Güven's video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iPxsvfhOaA0>

¹⁹ <https://www.socialbakers.com/statistics/youtube/channels/turkey/>

²⁰ <http://www.teknolojioku.com/haber/en-basarili-turk-YouTuberlar-kim-33727.html>

²¹ Turkish YouTuber, Danla Bilic: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCJXKKGzjjqnHAEkJsdC7ZKw>

The content of videos which are popular in Turkey as well as in the world is different from each other. Of course, there are a lot of common contents. Besides, producing an original content for YouTubers in Turkey has turned into an area where they try to prove themselves. The best examples are Diss videos. The general content of Diss videos is a critic made by a YouTuber on other YouTubers but made with R&B and rap music songs.²² (YouTube, 2017) For example, the contents of Enes Batur's diss videos; original content, comparison with others, total audience ratings, contradiction / sincerity and so on. He also used the expression "I am phenomenon, my subscriptions are slaves" when criticizing others, and so assessed the treatment they had given to other YouTubers' subscriptions. The gaming videos, on the other hand, are the content of YouTubers. In such videos, YouTuber shows the viewers how to play the game on the screen in real time. For example, this game has 3. 844.324 views.²³ (YouTube, 2017) There is a lot of profanity in the video. At the same time, YouTuber speaks to the audience in a way that can be deemed to be impaired even on daily basis. In the comments, it is noteworthy that audiences address YouTuber as "brother". It is a suitable example of different fandom concept on YouTube.

Another example to those YouTubers is Danla Bilic, who produces a variety of internal visuals, different from ordinary makeup videos in Turkey. She does not just do make up, she also adds humorous things to her videos by observing people. When you look at the number of her subscribers, she's one of the most popular YouTubers in Turkey right now. The titles of the videos usually include the characteristics of different parts of the society.²⁴ (YouTube, 2017) In addition, Danla Bilic was invited to the Beyaz Show²⁵, (Kanal D, 2018) one of the most popular talk show programs in Turkey. In this respect, she is famous for her

²² Enes Batur's diss video: <https://www.YouTube.com/watch?v=vNI2bc58BNs>

²³ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XCHHkvA0LNM>

²⁴ Danla Bilic's YouTube video: <https://www.YouTube.com/watch?v=QsfVhH-hNW8>

²⁵ Turkish TV comedy programme: <https://www.kanald.com.tr/beyaz-show/bolumler>

own channel on YouTube and it is important that she meets the audience on a mainstream TV channel.²⁶ (Kanal D, 2017)

2.2. Relation of YouTube to Other Concepts

2.2.1. Peer to Peer and Consumer Culture

Consumption, production and peer-to-peer concepts are related concepts in the new media. In this context, Alvin Toffler mentioned the concept of prosumer in 1980. (Toffler, 1981, pp.164-173) From these years, new habits were needed with the changing habits of the producing and consuming people. (Dijck, 2009) Various concepts were created to express the unity of these two seemingly different concepts. Thus, hybrid terms were used to indicate common uses such as 'producer' and 'co-creator'. (Bruns A. , 2007)

Toffler describes the concept of prosumer as people who produce goods and services at their own consumption at the same time. (Kotler, 1986) the reason why today's young people are regarded as prosumer is based on the fact that young people are both producers and consumers in this circulation of culture.

Strangelove states that YouTube's metrics are based on the creation of content by users. According to Strangelove; people who produce and consume contents are close to each other. Production, sharing and consumption activities are related to each other. At the same time, YouTube loads many videos from different channels for different purposes (mainstream TV channels, sports companies, nonprofessional media producers), each of which approaches YouTube on its own. (Strangelove, 2010, pp.174-177) Beyond that, within the scope of the link between YouTube and prosumer concepts, the value produced at the same time carries a capital quality. Morreale describes this as independent of the producers of the content on YouTube. Capital only wants to use the social and material value produced.

²⁶ Turkish TV comedy programme which invited Danla Bilic:
<https://www.kanald.com.tr/beyaz-show/bolumler/17-11-2017-beyaz-show>

Additionally, Morreale exploits many concepts while explaining the concepts of YouTube and producers in his paper. It mentions the consumption of sites like YouTube, where ordinary users produce content. Consumption and production are both important activities in such sites. Production activities on YouTube are different from others; because it's out of control of the capital and contains a creative authority; Morreale explains this situation using Lazzarato's "immaterial labor" expressions. (Lazzarato, 1996) In this mode of production, which Morreale explains using Lazzarato's immaterial labor concept, there is a social meaning, a common meaning, an emotional engagement that is not present before. Hence, when Morreale defines YouTube participants using this statement 'the ideal YouTube user is an amateur motivated by a desire for personal expression and creativity rather than financial gain' (Morreale, 2014) From this point, it can be said that the basic motivation of the producer is not primarily material. YouTubers also create their own communities while expressing themselves. Accordingly, it can be mentioned a new triangle between the audience, YouTube and fandom.

According to Dijck, YouTube should be assessed by taking advantage of different approaches, including cultural theory, economics, and business perspectives. Dijck states that the community created by the users is separated from cultural theorists in terms of participation, unlike the passive buyers of earlier stages of media culture. At the same time, if evaluated from different perspectives; economists and business executives are also looking at producing such contents instead of consuming it. In this context, the users define new leagues as amateur and volunteer in terms of qualitative labor relations. (Dijck, 2009) In concern with, According to Siklos, while user generated content is becoming popular, media experts have observed that the habits of people who produce content change. (Siklos, 2006)

Ritzer and Jurgenson said that YouTube allows people to upload as many videos as they like. (Ritzer & Jurgenson, 2010) This makes people more self-expressive and freer to produce content

2.2.2. Hedonism on YouTube

According to Cambridge dictionary, meaning of hedonism is 'living and behaving in ways that mean you get as much pleasure out of life as possible, according to the belief that the most important thing in life is to enjoy yourself'²⁷ (Cambridge Dictionary, 2018) The concept of hedonism in social media is complemented by situations where people feel better about themselves and show their lives to others. Burgess and Green point out that YouTube has mythologized it in a way that is based on fame and fortune. (Burgess & Green, 2009, p.22)

YouTube may have home videos, movie contents, television contents uploaded by the user in general. These are the contents that users create. According to Kim, it's possible to look at YouTube from many different contexts and perspectives. Kim also notes that YouTube is showing convergence between television and the internet. One of the most important points here; in relation to hedonism, suggests that YouTube emphasizes socio-psychological desire for people to become famous. Kim sees YouTube as a cultivation tool and allows new media technologies, especially YouTube users, to re-interpret original content. (Kim, 2012)

According to Garfield, YouTube is releasing the myth of the personal broadcast that he has created with the slogan "Broadcast Yourself" as a new rationalism. This rationalization in the digital age is 'I post, therefore I am'. (Garfield, 2016) This link between YouTube's own motto and its users explains people's desire to be famous. (Kim, 2012)

²⁷ <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/tr/sözlük/ingilizce/hedonism>

The article by Kathrin Peters and Andrea Seier on "Dance: Mediacy and Aesthetics of Self on YouTube," which has taken home videos of dancers, has addressed many different points. In the article, people evaluated the attitudes of users on YouTube with their attitudes on mainstream television programs. One point of caution is the comments in videos. According to the deduction that Peters and Seier have done, interpretations are often on the axis of 'talent'. They even regarded this as 'pure and raw ability'. Just as in other contest programs on television, the concept of 'talent' on YouTube is based on a concept that one has or does not have. Beyond these, people are motivated to be 'stars'. (Peters & Seier, 2009)

2.2.3. Gender

According to the article published by Molyneaux and O'Donnell in 2007, in a random sample, vlogs are broadcasted usually by only one person. 58% of men have a vlog account and only 33% of women have vlog accounts. On the other hand, 9% could not determine their sex. When there is more than one participant in the vlogs, one of the other participants is usually the person. 61% of Vloggers were between the ages of 20 and 50. Approximately 36% were younger than 20. The average age for vloggers was also 23. Age average was 21 for women and 24 for men.

As another finding of the same study; looking at the content, women share more personal vlogs compared to men. 60% of vlogger women share a personal vlog, while this rate is only 48% in men. Men's 'entertainment' videos outnumber other topics. At the same time, male users are producing more videos with technological content. Another interesting finding is that women interact more with the YouTube community than men do. On the other hand, vlogs are usually published without being edited. Entertainment and more public content videos are more organized. (Molyneaux H. , Gibson, O'Donnell, & Singer, 2007)

Another issue is the relationship that vloggers have established with the viewer in the research. Vloggers look directly at the camera at 4 selected videos. The shoulders and faces of the Vloggers appear on the video. This video technique is based on the views of Hansen in the research, establishing a close relationship between the vlogger and the viewer. (Hansen, 1988, pp.189-224)

This close relationship has an important place in audience research. The contents and technical details draw the viewer's attention. The discourse developed in the videos is different from the famous classical rhetoric seen on television. People often admire YouTubers and vloggers as one of their own while admiring the TV celebrities in general. This situation is created both with content, with discourse, with both space and technique. According Burgess & Green vlog culture reminds us of the lasting feature of face-to-face communication. This is one of the main differences between video and television. (Burgess & Green, 2009, p.54)

In conclusion of the study, the differences are mentioned. It has been noted that female users are more likely to interact with the viewer even though they have fewer videos. At the same time, the fact that men broadcast videos with more technological content does not mean that women are behind in terms of technical level. Women have higher rates in their interactions with the audience. (Molyneaux H. , Gibson, O'Donnell, & Singer, 2007)

3. YOUNG AUDIENCES, YOUTUBE CULTURE AND FANDOM CONCEPT IN TURKEY: AN IN-DEPTH ANALYSIS

The method of the "Young Audiences and YouTube Culture in Turkey" research has been identified as a qualitative method. The purpose of qualitative research is to prospect motivations underlying the participants' attitudes. The research is designed from the "real" life and environment.

Qualitative research is concerned with how people experience the environment they live in and tries to find out what human orientations and behaviors correspond to. It aims to explore the participants' natural environment by interfering with the participants' lives as little as possible, as well as to carry out the research by intervening as little as possible in the lives of the participants. It also tries to achieve as natural results as possible in an environment where actions take place naturally. Qualitative research avoids reaching quantitative data unlike quantitative methods and survey studies. (Henn, Weinstein, & Foard, 2009, p.160)

The methods used in quantitative research are very effective in reaching more participants, numerically reaching more data, and statistically correlating various data, although it can be said that the participants do not take individual experiences and results are insufficient to examine the in-depth motivations. The researcher has the opportunity to continuously acquire new insights into the research itself during interviews in qualitative research.

The research is not suitable for quantitative methods by means of its subject and the concept. In a quantitative method, it's generally aimed at reaching out to numerical data and to analyze this data. However, it's more important to find out the motivations, tendencies and how the participants interpret the media than the number of them. This research targets to create a reasonable relation, not reaching out to results based on numerical statistics. Quantitative research could

be useful to illuminate the preferences of the participants accordingly with the viewing rates. But in this research it's a priority to analyze the reasons for these preferences, therefore the qualitative method is chosen. The relational reasons were considered as not obtainable by doing an online or face to face survey. The construct of this research is to inspect the determining factors of motivations and preferences, instead of numerical results.

In-depth interviews have been conducted within the scope of this study to identify the reasons for the YouTube viewing habits and motivations of youth as well as audience cultures and fan culture motivations. In the context of media studies, an in-depth interviewing technique, which is included in qualitative research methods, has been used in this study, which explores the audience concept from a broad and historical perspective, YouTube channels in particular. Participants were individuals aged between 10-14 years. In-depth interviews were conducted within the framework of a semi-structured interview form with participants. The contents are reported with analytical analysis.

Some of the advantages of qualitative research are as follows: to observe participants' responses and the dialogue that emerged during the interview from the first joint, to understand the in-depth motivation of young people watching YouTube, and to enable them to analyze answers with causality. In the context of the research, young people's motivation to watch YouTube has been thoroughly examined. In qualitative research, the researcher, who tries to reveal the underlying causes of the actions and thoughts of the participants, also assumes an active and dynamic role throughout the research. In-depth interviews in qualitative research, according to Marvasti, aim to elaborate on the participants' answers. (Marvasti, 2004, p.32).

Purpose of the research is to take a holistic perspective on the viewing habits and motivations of the young audiences on YouTube. From this point of view, the qualitative method is thought to be more suitable for the purpose of the

research. In this context, the way audiences determine their preferences, participation, being a fan and being producer are the basis of researching concepts.

On the other hand, the disadvantage of the research could be a possible prejudice that may occur in the participants or a feeling of obsession with participants and avoidance of thoughts. It may lead to restrictive consequences when collecting instantaneous, emotional or physical changes of the interviewer and interviewed persons. In addition to that, since the size of the sample is kept small because the research is qualitative, it may not be possible to reach a wider judgement than a quantitative research.

3.1. Discussion and Analysis

The research using a qualitative method is planned in two stages. In the first stage, it reaches out to 12 participants. At this stage, attention was paid to the gender of the participants. The participants are informed in advance and are young people in the 10-14 age range who want to support the research. Attention was drawn to the fact that the participants were from different districts when the participants were selected for the research.

The other purpose is to draw attention to the issue of how the genders of the participants caused differences in the viewing rates of the YouTubers. In-depth interviews were conducted with 12 participants from 10 to 14 age groups from the selected high schools in Istanbul. Negotiations were held in public places where participants requested. Of 12 participants interviewed within the scope of the research, 6 is female and 6 is male. Confidentiality information and identities of participants interviewed in the research are kept confidential for research purposes.

3.1.1. General Findings

According to data obtained through interviews, participants described their YouTube watching motivations as "fun" in general, but they said they watched

YouTube learn something new, as well as fun. For many of the participants, YouTube is seen as a means of emptying their minds. At the same time, participants are looking for funny and innovative video content. The content choices of the participants are shaped by their interests. Many of the participants stated that they wanted to create their own channels, while others already have their own channels. On the other hand, few participants who did not want to open a channel stated that they were hesitant about bad comments that they would possibly receive. In addition, some participants expressed that they couldn't create a YouTube channel because of their parents' intervention.

Channels frequently followed are the ones of Enes Batur's and Orkun Işıtmak's.²⁸ (YouTube , 2018) Male participants tend to prefer games and vlog videos while girl participants follow both vlog and fashion and make-up channels. In this context, there was no significant gender difference between the views of Youtuber who produced vlogs such as Enes Batur and Orkun Işıtmak. According to genders, video preferences indicate that male participants choose game videos to watch in general, while female participants followed makeup and fashion channels.

At the beginning of the reasons why the participants prefer a video, the video is fun and humorous. The reason why they do not prefer to watch a video on the other hand is because they find the channel "childish" and they do not like the videos that contain "swearing". As digital media usage increases among younger ages, children can watch videos of younger children. As a result of this, a child can position himself/herself as different and mature compared to other children in the YouTube environment.

Some of the participants support Youtubers to work with an agency or a manager because they think they will contribute to their content, while others do not support the idea of interfering with the content to limit "naturalness". Also,

²⁸ Orkun Işıtmak's YouTube Channel:
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCIXYyHANDvinQMIdauzSNJA>

many of the interviewed participants consider "being a YouTuber" as a profession, while the question of how much money YouTubers earn is still a vague condition among the participants. A large number of participants have considered YouTubers sincere and have stated that they have a connection between their lives and YouTuber's lives. In this context, it became clear that the sincerity between YouTuber and the audience is very important, while "insincerity" is a prominent concept for participants who think that YouTubers' lives were not how they reflected. On the other hand, it's very important for the most of the participants to talk about YouTube in their social environments since it affected their social relationships.

All of the participants evaluated the concept of being a fan in a positive way. Many of the participants described being a fan of one as something that made them "happy". It turns out that the elements that feed the enthusiasm of the participants are group membership, feeling close to YouTubers, naturalness, interaction, feeling of being, friendship, a role model. On the other hand, it was revealed that all participants watched TV, but some participants consider all characters and programs on TV as fictional. In addition, it was seen that all of the participants felt themselves closer to a YouTuber than a TV celebrity.

While many of the participants indicated that they preferred watching YouTube at home on their mobile devices, some indicated that they watched YouTube on TV via smart TVs. Most of the participants were interfered with their family regarding watching YouTube, while watching TV is considered as a family activity.

Finally, the most important difference between TV and YouTube is the interaction. At the same time, YouTube has the choice of reaching the desired video at any time, with more options being one of the reasons for YouTube's preference. On the other hand, it has been seen that developing TV technology changed the viewing habits of the new generation. In-depth interviews also support the findings in literature reviews.

In summary, the ideas that emerged in the interviews on motivations, trends, social and everyday life, fan, watching habits and media description areas above. Below, the discussions on these six topics are discussed in detail. The data obtained from in-depth interviews are as follows.

3.1.2. Interview Topics

In the semi-structured interviews, the framework of the questions to be asked of the interviewees was based on the literature review. In this context, during the in-depth interview that will be conducted under the research model, the topics to be discussed are as follows:

3.1.2.1. Theme 1: Motivations

It was emphasized whether participants had the viewing habits that were supposed to be motivated by watching videos on YouTube, such as learning, sharing, enjoyment, leisure activity, interaction, spending time, curiosity and pursuit. How participants describe motivations and how they describe the motivations, what motivates them to follow the videos, what attracts them or breaks their motivation to follow them are also discussed.

The reasons for mentioned motivations and which reasons feed the tendency of watching these videos are the main outputs for this topic. Especially the motivations of individual follow-up are the basic concepts of "entertainment" and "leisure activity". Participants described their YouTube watching motivations as "fun" in general, but they said they watched YouTube learn something new, as well as fun. According to Postman, the upper ideology of television is fun. (Postman, 2006, p.122)

The participant K1 (10) stated that the process was curious and she was interested in how the YouTubers were entertaining them. In addition, "funny" videos are an important motivation for the participants. On the other hand, it is also interesting to see how YouTubers provide the necessary conditions for video

viewing, especially for the participants who have their own channels or those who want to have.

The K2 (10) participant said that she discovered YouTube when she was very little, and YouTube reminds her of a toy she used to have, a stereo photo viewer with a clown image on it. The same participant stated that she generally watched YouTube "when she was bored". E2 (11) stated that he preferred to watch YouTube because he had his own channel. E1 (10) preferred to watch gaming channels in general because he likes to play games, but he also follows other vlog videos. E1 (10) stated that he loved the YouTubers' behaviors, found them very sincere and wanted to meet them continuously.

K3 (13) described YouTube as interesting, beautiful and fun, but stated that just entertaining is a motivation enough. Unlike other participants, K4 (10) identifies her motivation as YouTube being "exciting". E5 (13) said that he likes to play basketball and soccer sports and follows these sports channels on YouTube. E4 (14) stated that he watched game videos especially in order to spend his spare time and in an uneasy period, because he wanted to feel better and get away from his troubles. He also mentioned that the characters he encounters in his social life were imitated by YouTubers and it was funny to himself, and he mentioned the videos of "9 types in neighborhood matches" as an example. Some participants, besides their motivation to entertain and spend their time, stated that they were watching the videos when they felt angry and that this activity relieved themselves.

E3 (11): stated the motivation as "... I am having fun while they are having fun ...".

K6 (12): said, "... I follow especially the make-up and fashion vlogs. I do my hair the way I see it in the videos, I used to be unable to do my hair myself in the past, but now I do, fashion vlogs are interesting ... "

The participants stated that they were impressed by the instant reactions and the spontaneity. On the other hand, male participants have preferred game videos other than vlog videos, and girl participants have followed vlog and makeup videos. In the literature, Molyneaux and O'Donnell's 2008 research on vloggers supports the idea that female vloggers have more personal videos and male vloggers have more entertainment videos. (Molyneaux H. , Gibson, O'Donnell, & Singer, 2007)

For users, entertainment is at the forefront as an inclusive attribute. At the same time, the participants' diverse interests play an active role in YouTube channel choices and preferences. In this context, YouTube watching motivations of audiences should not be considered as disconnected from their lives. On a Youtube channel, being interesting, remarkable and exciting could be counted as positive features. At the same time, watching YouTube videos is an activity that fills children's free time. Part of the other answers shows that it's an escape from troubled moments, especially when they are bored. In addition, participants' responses to the question "*Why are you watching YouTube?*" are implicitly related to YouTubers and their lives.

Among the channels that are frequently followed; *Enes Batur*, *Orkun Işıtmak*, *Unlost*²⁹ (YouTube, 2018) *Buket Sena Özdemir*,³⁰ (YouTube, 2018) *Furkan Yaman*,³¹ (YouTube, 2018) *Gereksiz Oda*,³² (YouTube, 2018) *Berkcan Güven*, *Oğuz Aslan*³³ (YouTube, 2018) *Başak Karahan*,³⁴ (YouTube, 2018) *Jahreim*,³⁵

²⁹ Turkish game channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC1WPpGXSgMIKBJx9u8ovXxA>

³⁰ Turkish YouTuber: <https://www.youtube.com/user/modabenimhayatim>

³¹ Turkish YouTuber: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCNxfnR-xoreEMSHOmvcBRmA>

³² Turkish YouTuber: <https://www.youtube.com/user/GereksizOda>

³³ Turkish YouTuber: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCnVUwPN2F149BhG2PomcRoA>

(YouTube, 2018) *Oha Diyorum!*,³⁶ (YouTube, 2018) *YapYap*,³⁷ (YouTube, 2018) *Barış Özcan*³⁸, (YouTube, 2018) *Uras Benlioğlu*³⁹ (YouTube, 2018) came into prominence.

According to participants, among the main reasons for a channel to be either repulsive or attractive to them is that the channel is interesting, innovative, funny, entertaining or instructive. According to the personal interests of the participants, the content of the videos they watch or their attitudes towards the videos are changing. For example, while a person who is personally sensitive to the environment is concerned that YouTubers should not throw garbage out, most participants have stated that the bad language in videos are repulsive and unnecessary. "Swearing" is not welcomed by the participants. On the other hand, the participants, who stated that they did not watch the repulsive content because they found it "childlike", expressed the YouTuber's childhood behavior as insincere and intolerable. Some participants stated that while Enes Batur's videos were unlikeable and childlike, some participants found the videos of Orkun Işıtmak or Berkcan Güven childish. Also, "looking at everything funny" is unattractive for some of the participants.

To sum up, motivations are seen to converge at the "fun" point for each participant at a certain scale. On the other hand, in response to the question "*What are you watching other than YouTuber or vlog videos?*", participants indicated

³⁴ Turkish YouTuber:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC8OWw58bmGim6oVK0TzgleQ>

³⁵ Turkish YouTuber: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCfo8l0mgO_eleaditz0ECIA

³⁶ Turkish YouTuber: <https://www.youtube.com/user/OhaaDiyorum>

³⁷ Turkish YouTuber: <https://www.youtube.com/user/yapyap>

³⁸ Turkish YouTuber: <https://www.youtube.com/user/b31416>

³⁹ Turkish YouTuber: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCnmrz900lpZqlxWzN3co2wA>

that they watched course videos or watched music channels in order to support their classes especially during the exam periods.

3.1.2.2. Theme 2: Tendencies

The main points here to investigate is whether or not YouTube contents, especially YouTuber videos, have an impact on the viewer, the viewer's tracking habits in the tendency to be producers in the YouTube environment and whether viewers follow YouTuber's suggestions and recommendations.

It should be discussed whether audiences follow the suggestions they received by YouTube or what they find necessary. On the other hand, it's important to determine whether they buy the products of other YouTubers use, what do they think of YouTuber's clothing styles, how do they analyze their jargons, in what extent they are influenced by these jargons and styles under the title of tendencies. The research is also going to refer to audiences' point of view regarding YouTubers and their collaborations with agencies, also the opinions of audiences and their tendencies to keep following them. It is also going to be discussed here to determine their attitudes towards the idea of being a YouTuber, their role models if they would create a channel, the concept of this hypothetical channel, or the success factors of a channel according to their mindset.

K1 (10) responded to the question of whether she was influenced by the recommendations of YouTuber, by giving examples from the dance video channels she followed and expressing that she started later in the gymnastics sport because she liked the videos very much.

While a number of participants indicate that they could purchase recommended products if the YouTubers use them first, E1 (10) stated that he was interested in everything that was suggested in videos and he wanted to "have it straight away". E4 (14) said that he bought a t-shirt because one of his favorite YouTuber was wearing it in a video, and he was very happy with it.

Some participants indicated that they did not want to buy the products because it was enough to just see them. While some participants support YouTubers to work under an agency, some participants have indicated that they support YouTubers to work independently. Those who support YouTubers working with an agency or manager have indicated that YouTubers can reach more people in this way, that shooting techniques and their cameras will evolve and that more "quality" videos can emerge.

The participant K6 (12) used the following expressions to describe the concept of "quality".

"... YouTuber's financial support allows them to shoot with more advanced cameras. Because it is very important for me to have good light, sound and vision in a video, YouTubers may not be able to buy that camera in their normal life ... "

The same participant also stated that the independence of the channels could have positive outcomes.

"I think they are more relaxed when they shoot videos on their own, it can be tense when someone is in front of them ..."

K6 (12) said, when talking about the shooting difficulties of videos:

"... I think it's hard to shoot video. Even on a video I watched, they were doing 21 times again to start the video ... "

On the other hand, those who support independent YouTubers have stated that the YouTubers working with agencies may "have to shoot the videos that agencies want" because the videos of YouTubers will be intercepted by agencies. This was seen by the participants as a factor limiting the freedom of the YouTubers.

Participants expressed different opinions about the YouTubers' daily lives and lifestyles. Participants who supported YouTube monetization generally stated that video shooters had more stressful lives and that the process of editing the videos was rather difficult.

Participants contemplate that YouTubers have uncomfortable lives, unlike what they seem to be, and they have made it very difficult to share the video on time and to make a lot of "effort" for the videos.

Some of the participants expressed their appreciation for YouTubers they like to make money from YouTube, they also think the YouTubers they don't like do not deserve the money they gained. At the same time, they accepted that this was due to their prejudice. Besides, the end result is that the participants regard being a YouTuber as a profession. In this context, many of the participants have searched how much money did YouTubers make on YouTube. Some participants said they earned a lot of money, while some other said they earned little. In this context, there is not a consensus on this issue between the participants. Some participants stated that YouTubers had a financially "rich" life, and that they did not have a standard life, as seen in the videos. On the other hand, E3 (11) has used the following statements to describe Enes Batur making little money from YouTube.

"... Even Enes Batur's monthly income is very low. Enes Batur has been on YouTube for 6-7 years and he's using the money he has saved. He said it in a video about himself a year ago ..."

On the other hand, some participants stated that they have similarities with their lives and the lives of YouTubers and that they also have a "normal" life. They have expressed that they are "sincere".

Sincerity is a concept that is emphasized by the participants in many places. Some of the participants thought that the YouTubers were living a normal life, while some participants stated that they did not live as they showed. From

this point on, it has been determined that participants had different opinions about the YouTubers' lives. Their homes, their family or their daily lives on their videos are not a sign of their normal life for some of the participants. Another issue is the uncertainty among participants is about the incomes of the YouTubers. While approaching to making money from the Internet as a fact, they do not have a clear knowledge of how much this income is and how it is obtained.

Participants with other perspectives came to the conclusion that YouTubers' discourses and lives on videos were different. As one of them, E5 (13) explains his idea in this context:

"... their videos are different from their real lives because although the person nicknamed *BelgoTürk* ⁴⁰ (YouTube, 2018) was sorry that his dog disappeared but he was laughing on his video. If my dog was lost, I would not be able to shoot a video because of my sadness and I would explain the reason from my social media accounts why I could not shoot videos. I also see that *Enes Batur* often lies, and while he says he sold his car in one of his videos, we can see his car in his other videos ... "

The expression of E5(13) is an indication that users are following the content carefully. The users take note of Youtuber's discourses and detect discrepancies between their discourses. It was also found that participants were susceptible to swearing in general, as well as sensitive to other issues.

E4 (14), while talking about YouTubers who have taken vlog videos about a day of their lives, said that he thought;

"... it's like they were doing things they would never normally do..."

On the other hand, E1 (10) said;

"... for example, when *Orkun Işıtmak* took a video with the disabled people, I feel so glad that such sensitive people exist. I find them very

⁴⁰ Turkish YouTuber <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCZvSNBeCMFMeOh27m1ywXZw>

sincere... At the same time, as the number of subscribers increases, there are more people to share their lives with, like having a community of friends ... so I think they have a comfortable life ... "

Here, too, the sensitivity and carefulness of the users have come to the forefront. Users are more critical of the things they are personally sensitive to.

According to Rotman & Preece, too many people watching YouTube do not prevent them from feeling intimacy. YouTube followers create a sub-community within their own interests. (Rotman & Preece, 2010)

It was determined that the participants in the study had disagreements about the life styles of YouTubers. Some participants expressed that YouTuber's lives are as they are, while others expressed that there are some changes. In terms of lifestyles, those who think YouTubers have comfortable lives are outnumbered by those who think that they have stressful lives. According to them, YouTubers have a very well financial situation. The E1 (10) participant said:

"... YouTubers' houses and their lives are very beautiful. Their clothes and the decorations of their houses are interesting, so even the videos do not always go well, I enjoy watching their lives ..."

According to many other participants, YouTubers have stressful lives because of situations like sharing videos on time, video editing and especially dealing with bad comments.

On the other hand, many participants stated that they want to have their own channel. Kim has addressed the desire of people to be famous in the context of hedonism. (Kim, 2010) Some of the participants added that they wouldn't open their own channels because of the reason that their parents wouldn't allow them to.

The motivation of being famous for people is defined by participants as entertaining people, laughing at things together and being recognized. In the literature, Woo points out that people are both producers and consumers on YouTube. (Noh, 2015)

Participants who wanted to have their own channel replied that they would shoot vlogs or "funny" videos similar to their favorite YouTubers', in response to the question "What kind of channel do you have?" They also pointed out that they would shoot "informative" videos and stated that they wanted to give information that they would not "meet in real life" with their videos, according to their personal preferences and information. Participants who wanted to have their own channels stated that "introducing oneself" is very important. In this way, the viewers are more likely to "connect" to themselves. Many male participants stated that they would especially share "game" videos, and some of them stated that they could also take vlog videos such as *Enes Batur* and *Berkcan Güven*. The participants that stated they would only share game videos explained the reason as there was no "interesting" thing in their lives. Describing the concept of "fun" as being funny, entertaining and engaging, the participants generally stated that Berkcan Güven's mother or Enes Batur's uncle was interesting. They also said that their lives and especially their conversations were interesting. On the other hand, there were also participants who wanted to shoot videos "invisibly" on their own channels. Participants who wanted to shoot video without showing the face indicated that showing their hands only was enough. In response to the question of why they have a preference in this direction, they have said that their parents would not appreciate this, but in a positive way the "secrecy" would create "curiosity" among the audience.

K2 (10) described the secrecy and creating curiosity concepts as:

"... If I had a YouTube channel, I certainly would not show my face, I would always turn the camera to opposite direction. When the quality of my camera is good and my edits are good, my subscriptions would

increase, but if I'd have a lot of subscriptions and they insist that I show my face, then I would do it. When I reached 1 million subscribers, I would show my face. But then, unfortunately everyone would become familiar with my face and the contents would change. "

Some participants stated that seeing themselves gave them pleasure. They said that it was like looking at the mirror. In the literature, Tobias Raun explained the video blogging culture with the metaphor of the mirror. According to Raun, vlogger culture is self-realization, reflection, and a social tool. (Raun, 2015)

Regarding their use, the participants, who indicated that they were being restricted by their parents, expressed that they were sorry for this situation with the statement "If only my parents would allow me". On the other hand, E3 (11) stated that he had his own YouTube channel but that was closed afterward, which in fact it was "innocent", and he had a "rage" against YouTube for this reason. Participants who did not want to have the channels think that they can not overcome with bad comments in general. By taking the example from there, it turns out the bad comments on YouTube and some of YouTube's applications have had a negative impact on users. Users are reading bad comments left on YouTubers and are afraid that the same thing will happen to them as well.

K4 (10), actively broadcasting on her channel, said that:

"... my sister and I prefer to shoot funny videos together and we want to entertain our audience. We usually play games based on competition and rating ... "

In the literature, Paul Booth compares web 1.0 and web 2.0 and argues that web 2.0 is dynamic online production and consumption period. (Booth, 2010) The expression "our audience", which the participant has used, is an indication that they want to create an audience of their own.

E4 (14): "... I have already opened channels, but it is very difficult to reach the number of the subscribers of other channels, people are using bots

(increasing the number of followers). This also took me away from the idea of making effort for a channel. If I would continue to shoot video again, I would like to give information about the history of computer games ... "

Having a high rate of viewing, such as the YouTubers they follow, is an important factor for the participants. Also, as in other examples, it has been found that the participants want to create their own channels in the direction of their personal interests.

To sum up, the participants have shaped their YouTube channels according to the people they love. Participants who are distant from the idea of having a YouTube channel turn out to have some concerns, usually due to increased subscriber numbers of other YouTubers. These worries are usually about receiving bad comments and the fear of how people will react to.

3.1.2.3. Theme 3: Social and Daily Life

The topics to be discussed here are whether it is the role of YouTube and YouTuber in the social and active lives of participants, the spoken ratios of the videos mentioned in the friend environment, the tendency to talk about videos and share them with their friends, whether the videos are used to get close to each other and to have conversations, the place and importance of the videos they watch in their social life, whether they are influenced by friends or not, whether they are better adapting to the friendship environment if they follow it, or if they do not follow it, they are having difficulty communicating with their friends in their social lives.

K1 (10): "... I spend most of my time on YouTube on the internet, watching lesson videos is boring. If YouTube would not exist one day, I would be really sorry."

Many participants, such as K1 (10), point out that YouTube has a very important place in their lives because it's a resource for entertainment for them. In

this context, according to many of the participants, YouTube is an irreplaceable platform. On the other hand, some participants indicated that YouTubers could broadcast via Instagram application if they could not broadcast from YouTube, indicating Instagram as an alternative to YouTube. As mentioned before, YouTube's place in the lives of participants is primarily "entertainment" and "learning" secondarily. Participants, on the other hand, generally prefer to watch videos about their personal interests, rather than watching lesson videos.

E2 (11): "...we are talking with friends about what is on YouTube or watching videos together at school. If there are "swearing" in the video we do not like it. I watch every video, so I have never been excluded..."

According to many participants like this example, swearing is a very repulsive situation, which causes participants to change their attitudes toward video.

E6 (10) replied to question "*What will happen if YouTube is not in your life?*" as:

"... this would be really bad. Because then we cannot watch movies, we have no songs, no entertainment, and we can not see YouTubers ..."

For many, YouTube is not just a platform for watching YouTube videos. Many of the participants watch the episodes of the series they follow on TV on YouTube, listen to music and watch different videos according to their interests. In this context, it can be said that YouTube has multiple features for audiences.

The same participant also said about YouTube and friendship issues:

"...we are talking to our friends about our own channels and predict topics of YouTubers' next videos..."

Many participants expressed that YouTube is important when talking to new people. They also expressed that they are happy when they like the same YouTuber with the people they love, and they feel closer to them.

According to Susarla, Ha Oh & Tan, YouTube allows people to engage in new social interactions. (Susarla, Tan, & Ha-Oh, 2012)

E1 (10): "... we are talking about the important moments of the videos with my friends, we find the funniest minutes in different videos, my friends always call me to talk about the videos because I know all of them ..."

The same participant expressed that he influenced by the friendships of YouTubers and said that he wanted to be *Berkcan Güven* if he had the chance of being one of them. This motivation is that *Berkcan Güven* 's friend environment is very nice and entertaining.

Some of the participants told that they talk to their friends about YouTubers' way of life. For participants, it's very important that houses that YouTubers live in, what they wear and especially their relationship with their family and friends. On the other hand, some of participant told that they don't talk with friends about YouTuber but they interested in them friends circle.

E3 (11): "...I don't talk to many people at school, but I love watching YouTuber's relationships with their friends. I am happy that they are happy, for example, *Berkcan Güven*'s friendships are very good. It feels like we're having fun together ... "

Participants stated that they mostly talked about famous YouTubers and criticized the videos together, after they watched separately. They also said that they came together in their spare time at school and watched YouTube videos. The participants stated that when made new friends, they firstly talk about favorite YouTubers of each other.

Some participants indicated that they were talking about YouTube as to start a conversation, while others said that they will talk to YouTube after they know someone. In this context, there are disagreements among participants regarding the place of YouTube in the social environment.

K5 (11): "... I do not talk about YouTube with the people I just met, but when the conversation goes a little bit, I ask which YouTubers they like most..."

On the other hand, the participants expressed that they feel bad when they can not follow the videos on YouTube, and that they cause difficulties when they chat with their friends.

E5 (13): "... a situation that I often encounter a lot, I can not talk about the trends my friends talk about when my internet connection is limited, and I am reluctantly moving away from my friends. I watch the video later, but the conversation is going on and another trend is starting..."

Many of the participants stated that they watched videos they did not know when they went back to their homes. At the same time, many participants stated that they were not allowed by their parents, so they did not spend time with computers or telephones on weekdays, so they also had to watch the videos afterward.

Some of the participants have expressed their discussions and groupings in terms of fandom (*Batuber, Işıtmak, Furkan Yaman*) in their friends' environments and especially in the school about their favorite YouTubers. Other participants stated that they liked the videos of the famous YouTubers because they resemble each other as subjects. The variety of topics on YouTube is also very important for the participants. The fact that the videos on YouTube being distorted are also seen as a useful feature in their social environment.

To sum up, many of the participants believe that new conversations can be opened through accounts they follow on YouTube. On the other hand, those who did not watch all the videos on *Trending Now* expressed that they were excluded from chatting and so they watched the mentioned videos when they went home.

The attitudes and constraints of families towards digital media, especially in the home environment, also affect the participants' ability to follow the videos. Participants expressed YouTube's place in their lives differently. They consider watching videos from YouTube as an activity they did together with friends at school, but also consider it as an "entertaining" and "instructive" activity which they watched the videos at home alone and shared their experiences with their friends afterward.

3.1.2.4. Theme 4: Being Fan

Whether or not participants have a "fan" definition of their own, how they describe the fan concept, from which point or afterwards they become fans of YouTuber, how they describe the characteristics of fan status, whether they go to events, whether they are curious about YouTuber's private life, whether you are following the YouTubers from other social media accounts, whether there is a difference between the feelings they have for a music group, a player or a football player, and the feelings they have for a YouTuber, how they describe YouTubers, how recently YouTubers assessed their presence in different media environments (TV, cinema, advertising).

How often they want to reach out to YouTuber, or how they identify themselves with the YouTubers in terms of a television celebrity, whether or not there is a difference between someone who is famous as YouTuber. Whether they find it easy to access from the point of view of accessibility or easiness, whether the interactive media on YouTube has a role in the concept of fan, what kind of fan culture they have developed, attitudes towards becoming fans, how they describe themselves and other groups if they belong to a group of fan cultures that have led to a division among themselves (*Batubers*, etc.)

What kind of attitudes they exhibit in this context, whether there is a fan page of their own or whether they follow it, whether groupings cause a closeness or distance to other people in their social lives are the main points to be

emphasized here.

E4 (14) while talking about the concept of being a fan and admiring one

"... I have a great desire to meet *Cantuğ*. I feel very sorry that I could not go to the events. I write to him constantly, but they are so busy that they can not look at their messages, but it's good enough to feel the excitement, I think. The activities are very crowded, so I even thought about camping the night before to where the activity was..."

In the scope of the research, the majority of the participants wants to go to the activities of YouTubers. Going to the events is an opportunity to see the YouTubers they admired, as well as to get together with people who are fans like themselves. As the participant E4 stated, the activities are very interesting. According to Hurriyet Newspaper⁴¹, Enes Batur's activities are even canceled because of the confluence. (Hürriyet, 2016)

In this context, being a fan is seen as an exciting element.

K1 (10): "... being a fan is such a thing that I wish I was in their place ... when I watch each of their videos, I wish they were with me and I think that I can take pictures with them ..."

E6 (10): "...being a fan is like when I get answers to my messages, Orkun Işıtmak replies to my messages from Instagram and I feel delighted and happy ..."

K6 (12): "... I think this is a very happy feeling, because I am always very happy and relaxed when I watch the channel."

In this context, many of the participants have always approached the word "fan" positively. According to many participants, it's happiness to admire one. Participants expressed that they were happy because they were fans of one. In addition, the concepts of interaction and relaxation under the concept of "positive"

⁴¹ Hurriyet: Turkish newspaper. <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr>

in the participants' statements also draw attention. Participants say that, besides being fans, interaction with YouTubers also brings happiness. In this context, it can be said that the interaction is important for the concept of fandom in a digital environment. YouTuber's response to messages gives many participants excitement and happiness. In this context, the interaction is seen as a reinforcing effect on the concept of admiration.

E3 (11): "... When there are people I love, I always follow them, I love each of them individually. *Başak Kayahan, Orkun Işıtmak, Uras Benlioglu* all have a separate place in me. They are all very real and not at all greedy. I feel very close to them ... "

Many of the participants seemed to feel closer to YouTubers, whom they find natural. Sincerity and naturalness are, as has been mentioned a number of times, important features that a YouTuber should have to be admired by audiences. It turns out that participants did not negatively describe the concept of being a fan. Being a fan is a happy thing for the participants. It is important for them to follow people who are close to them.

K4 (10): "... to be a fan, to love someone is a very nice thing. Because you feel yourself belonging to a group, you even feel like YouTuber ... "

Participants seem to have positively approached themselves to feel belonging to a group, although not as much as a football fanatic. Participants like to go to activities and love a YouTuber with their friends. At the same time, this situation has contributed positively to their social and everyday life. Although the concept of fandom that develops at this point is closer to the football fandom with the tendency to be a group, YouTube fans do not have as much admiration as football fans. It is similar to the concept of fandom of soap operas, another field of fandom. As in the soap operas, they are affected by the identification of characters, the similarities between characters, and the naturalness of their fame.

E5 (13): "... I am very impressed with them because I want to be like them, so I admire them. Their behavior affects me because I love them very much. I can always change myself when I act like them. When I act like someone else, his behavior is passed on to me and that can change. I could be another person tomorrow ... "

None of the participants negatively assessed being a fan of YouTubers. They have defined the concept of fandom as happiness and feeling of belonging to a group. At the same time they did not hate the YouTubers who were not fans of the participants, but they defined the YouTubers they did not follow as insincere and childlike.

In the context of being a fan, when the participants were asked if they were curious about the private lives of YouTubers, some of them replied as they did not have such a curiosity since they see almost everything about the YouTubers' lives, including their homes, families and special relationships on the videos since YouTubers share almost everything on their channels and for that reason there is nothing left to be curious about them. On the other hand, some participants expressed their curiosity about what was happening in their private lives, how they were supposed to be and how they were successful.

K6 (12): "... For example, TV celebrities are followed by magazines, but we follow YouTubers. I wonder if they spend their days like me, so I follow not only on YouTube, but also on Instagram. They make me very happy ... "

This expression of the participant is very important. Because the participant is attracted to the difference between YouTube celebrities and TV celebrities. The lack of a magical life of YouTube celebrities can be one of the main differences between YouTube celebrities and TV celebrities. Also, the fact that the participant refers to themselves as "we" indicates that there is a connection between YouTuber fans.

K2 (10) "... I am curious about the private lives of YouTubers whom I love sincerely. For example I follow *Çağla Kenanoğlu's*⁴² (YouTube, 2018) account very much. A very sweet girl, for example, she replied to my messages with heart emojis. Çağla also has a shop, I would embrace her if I went there... "

In this context, it is important to interact with YouTuber for YouTuber fans The participant who is interacting feels closer to YouTuber.

K2 (10): " ... I would not want Çağla to be my friend. I'd get used to her because of seeing her every day and I would not be an admirer of her, but I want to miss her and I want to see her when I miss her, that's why I'm that curious about her private life ... "

E6 (10): "... I am very curious about where they live. I would like us fans to see where they live, go and ask, "How are you?", because we are fans ... "

Some of the participants thought that the fan concept was not different from being a fan of televised celebrities, soccer players, or series players, while others thought it was a different thing to be a fan of YouTuber. In this context, there are disagreements in the minds of the participants.

K5 (11): "... They are not themselves on TV, so they are acting, but YouTubers are showing their own lives. The celebrities on television could have been better if they were being themselves. But I am also very happy when I watch the Korean series. They immediately make me laugh, they have much better quality than Turkish series have, moreover, Turkish series are copying lines from the Korean series. The series reach the whole world and this shows how small this world is ... "

The same participant explained her idea regarding the differences between two media:

⁴² Turkish YouTuber:

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCmy_RNVBQKQyPA0VzBfXmwig

"... Başak (Karahan) is always the same and always a good person, but when a girl in the Korean series acting as a good character, while she acts as a bad person in another series. Başak is like me ..."

In parallel with the participant mentioned above, K1 (10) expressed her opinion on differences between TV fandom and YouTube fandom as follows:

"... I watch the "Güldür Güldür Show"⁴³ (Show TV, 2018) on TV but I get bored, some sketches are funny but I enjoy more watching Enes Batur's virtual reality videos. Every line on "Güldür Güldür Show" are memorized, but Enes Batur is acting like the way he feels at that moment. This is more natural than that. It's funny when it's natural ..."

The fictional figures on television attract the attention of participants. Even if the participants are like the programs on TV, Youtuber contents are more intimate to them.

The same participant added in order to explain better the difference between two fandom concepts:

"... How close can you be to a football player? Footballers don't come to you and say "Hello friends" ..."

In this context, participants seem to pay attention to discourses. The sincere rhetoric on YouTube and the word "friend" influence participants.

In the literature, Strangelove talked about the way of amateur video publishers representing themselves in the YouTube environment while comparing TV experience with YouTube experience. (Strangelove, 2010, p.89)

E6 (10): "...TV celebrities and footballers will not respond to my messages, but for example, once the Orkun Işıtmak had responded to my message, that's why I feel closer to them..."

⁴³ Turkish Comedy Program: <http://www.showtv.com.tr/programlar/tanim/guldur-guldur/1534>

On the other hand, the participants who find the real life-inspired TV series realistic, expressed themselves to feel closer to those characters. Regarding those characters, who live under difficult circumstances in these real life stories, participants have also expressed their feelings such as responsibility and distress and they put themselves in their place.

Abiocca draws attention to the concepts of reality and self in the perception of media messages by audiences. (Abiocca, 2016)

While some participants consider being a YouTuber fan a friendship, other participants have stated that it is very difficult to reach them, just like television celebrities.

E6 (10) explains the difference between being a fan of a YouTuber and being a fan of a celebrity in other circles:

"... You can take photograph in a stadium, but you need to reach the YouTubers or you must be at their events to take a photograph with them..."

What is important here is that the E6 identifies football fans with the idea of having space. To be more specific, a soccer team fan can satisfy himself even if he does not meet the football player. In YouTuber's admiration, it is possible to talk about a more individual concept of admiration.

Participants used the following expressions when talking about differences between a YouTuber celebrity and a television celebrity.

E5 (13): "... YouTubers are generally known because they are introducing themselves, so they are sincere. TV celebrities do not even introduce themselves, they are behaving according to the programme... "

The point to be emphasized here is that the participants view television contents as fictitious. Participants are critically approaching the programs and are carrying out audience activities in the awareness of what they are watching. They play an active role in the watching process.

E4 (14): "... One is very famous, a footballer or a musician; they are very famous, but YouTubers are making real efforts, making an album and becoming famous. But it's so hard to do that, so I tried to play the guitar but I could not play it ... "

K6 (12): "... The YouTubers I follow read the messages I send them, but it's different to be an actor in a series, and maybe I find it nice because I want to broadcast on a channel one day myself. Making of a TV series is very difficult, it takes days but shooting a video is very easy..."

The most important point here is that the participants think they need a skill to be on TV. Moreover, the process of television content is more difficult to participate. YouTube, on the other hand, draws attention as an area where they can interact and broadcast.

K4 (10): "... I follow "Arka Sokaklar"⁴⁴ (Kanal D, 2018) series on television, but they are not where we are. It is very difficult for us to go where the shootings are, but for example we are watching video of Meryemcan⁴⁵, (YouTube, 2018) she shot the video at home so we can see her house, therefore it is more natural. For example, Danla Bilic makes fun of herself, which is very nice, so she seems very sweet to me. Make-up is not so important ... "

For the participants, it could be said that the way of doing is more important than what is done in the videos. What draws a attention of the audiences in the video content is the potential for fun and entertainment, sincerity and being informative. Also, referring to the expression of K4, the feeling of intimacy that the environment in the video provides to the audience is very effective.

A small number of participants indicated that there is no difference between a YouTuber and a TV celebrity. The expression of one of these participants, K3 (13), is as follows.

⁴⁴ Turkish TV series: <https://www.kanald.com.tr/arka-sokaklar/bolumler>

⁴⁵ Turkish YouTuber: <https://www.youtube.com/user/beautykitty95>

K3 (13): "... I think there is no difference between watching TV and video, those people on TV are special, and also on YouTube ..."

On the other hand, there are also participants who think that YouTubers are more famous than TV stars.

K2 (10): "... The people on TV are not as famous as the ones on YouTube. If there was a phenomenon in the past, then (he or she) is famous, but a new actor or actress is not famous than a YouTuber..."

Many of the participants said that they tried to reach YouTubers by actions such as posting, commenting or going to their activities. The most common one of these methods is to send private messages to YouTubers via Instagram. In addition, all participants use Instagram, and they all follow their favorite YouTubers' Instagram accounts.

K6 (12): "...Of course I tried to reach them, I sent messages from the Instagram, and I even received some answers. I would go if there were activities but my family would not allow me..."

As in this example, parental control is at the forefront of digital media use and in children's activities. Parental control has also been shown to play an important role in children's channeling requests. According to the statements of the participants, many parents are approached negatively about the channeling of children. Also, some of the parents allow their children to go to the activities, while some others don't.

E5 (13): "...I tried to reach Uras Benlioglu's cameraman friend, Sekom⁴⁶. (YouTube, 2018) Sekom never showed his face, but I heard the name and voice in the background, so I tried to reach him. And I did, "I wonder if you please show me your face?" I asked him, then he showed me, that really impressed me that he answered me ... "

⁴⁶ Sekom: Turkish YouTuber's cameraman: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wrO13_psgLU

E4 (14): "... I would like to meet them very much, I wrote to Cantuğ from Discord app that I want to meet with him, but he must be very busy so he can not see my message. I also tried to get him through Steam app. I would want him to see me... "

Aside from all participants having their own instagram accounts, they try to reach YouTubers also from different social media platforms.

E6 (10): "... I'm trying to reach them, I'm going to the events and trying to make friends from the events. Because there are many people like me ... "

K2 (10): "... it's nice to love someone in common with my friends, it's nice to know that there are people like me, but when I love a person I want him or her to be special only to me..."

E4 (14): "...Cantuğ⁴⁷ (YouTube, 2018) (referring to him as "brother") is like my family, I love people who love him, and I feel myself better with them..."

In this context, it has been determined that the personally initiated interest of the participants is accompanied by a community feeling together with the activities, and that the constraints of their families in the digital environment are also in their social life.

Participants were found to differ in their attitudes and responses on reaching to their favorite YouTuber. Some of the participants have been responded to messages by YouTubers and so they see themselves as lucky. In addition, some of the participants stated that they sent gifts to YouTubers by using the cargo addresses which they announced from their accounts. A small number of participants who do not try to reach or send a message to YouTubers think it is very difficult to reach them.

⁴⁷ Turkish YouTuber: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC1WPpGXSgMIKBJx9u8ovXxA>

Participants who thought that it was difficult to reach YouTubers who have great numbers of followers, stated that it's easier to communicate with YouTubers who have fewer followers and are recognized by fewer people.

In general, the participants did not specifically feel themselves belonging to a fan group, but they expressed their enjoyment of meeting someone who loves the same YouTuber with themselves. They expressed that they have preferences among YouTubers according to their content. They point out that the reason for not preferring a content is that they generally think of it as "childlike, repulsive, non-creative, contrived".

In addition to the entertainment and teaching features of their preferences, authenticity is also very important for the participants. The content's being unique makes it more engaging and it's creative of YouTubers "doing something never done before" with the expression of the participants. Besides, all participants indicated that they went to the cinema to see the movie of Enes Batur. While most of the participants stated that they liked the movie, fewer participants said that they found the movie "exaggerated".

E5 (13): "... he acted like he did on YouTube. It was like a two-hour YouTube video. In the end – Yes, friends – he said in the movie. The films of YouTuber are like the foliage of a flower opening and growing. For example, with the film of Enes Batur, I have reached a road. I found something for myself, I found a purpose. "What happens if I do that?" I answered this question. In the movie, he tells how easy or difficult it was to reach some things in life. He says he had to do research on a thing before something happened. This was my result..."

In the literature, Westenberg emphasizes that YouTubers are role models especially for young people. (Westenberg, 2016)

K5 (11): "... I liked the funny scenes in the movie very much. The film tells the story of Enes Batur's difficulties in childhood and then his rise, the agency's finding him and the fact that he has a lot of followers. His friends are saving him ... "

On the other hand, a small number of participants stated that they found the film very long and that they could not pay attention, so it was a waste of time. There are disagreements among the participants in this context.

To sum up, it is seen that many of the participants are not organized among themselves, from time to time they identify the TV celebrities with themselves, but they find YouTubers closer to them, many participants feel happy about belonging to a group but they do not specify this with a person. While addressing the TV celebrities with their names, it has been emphasized that especially the male participants call the YouTubers as "brother" of themselves and express them so, and they try to reach them. Being a fan of them gives them "happiness".

3.1.2.5. Theme 5: Watching Habits of YouTube Audiences

The difference between watching television and the practice of watching on YouTube is that what types of videos are considered successful or unsuccessful, whether they follow foreign content videos, what they view on YouTube, other than YouTuber videos, attitudes towards other videos, which places they watch videos (public transport, at home, etc.), their tendency to watch in the media, how often they share a video or comment, how many videos they watch per day, what content videos they find boring or gender, what for they watch on YouTube (how-to videos, TV channels videos, course videos, documentaries or music videos) will generally mean how much time they spend on YouTube videos on the internet, whether they watch videos that YouTube recommends or not is the main issues to be handled.

E1 (10): "... YouTube seems strange to me, Enes Batur and some YouTubers are on TV but it's hard to see someone on TV that shooting games video. For example, I like to watch television more but I do not want to meet television stars. There are strange things happening in the news and in the series I watch... "

Participants at this point compared the behavior of a TV celebrity with a YouTuber and touched upon the differences between them. The fact that a footballer not calling their fans as "Hi, friends" or TV celebrities not shooting gaming videos reveal the difference in fandom tendencies.

Participants who chose YouTube expressed their ideas as follows.

E6 (10): "... there is a square on YouTube, and I like that square. I can watch everything I want to do, but there is no such thing on TV ... "

As stated in the research literature, YouTube's interface makes it easier for users to use YouTube more interactively compared to TV. Moreover, the word "square" expressed by the participant is very important. It can be argued that when users watch only the shoulders and head-looking videos, the content of the videos could be adapted more quickly.

Hansen talked about YouTube videos being closer to the viewer in terms of semiotics. In the literature, Hansen argues that appearance of only the shoulders and face of Vloggers creates closer contact with the audience. (Hansen, 1988, pp.189-224)

While the participants talked about their watching habits, they also talked about the differences between YouTube and TV environments. This particular issue of users is also mentioned in the definition of media. According to many participants, the ads on TV are long and boring. At this point, YouTube is becoming more controllable by users. For users, it's important to be able to track all of the ads on YouTube. It has also been seen that the TV experiences of young people are different with developing TV technology. Participants' expressions in this context are as follows.

E4 (14): "... the duration of the advertisement on YouTube is 5 seconds and you can pass right away. I do not like to wait. It is very important to

advance and rewind. I am watching all of Cantuğ's videos (referring to him as "brother"), but I'm moving forward..."

K4 (10): "... they have to make the ads shorter on the television, you can continue to video on YouTube, and the ads are shorter, and you can skip them..."

E3 (11): "... I watch YouTube on our television because our television can be connected to the internet. If it is not live broadcast, it seems to me very old, so live broadcasts in Instagram are more real to me..."

Many of the participants mentioned that they did not do anything different than their parents by watching videos on YouTube and that their parents watched videos but watched family TV. As stated in the heading of social and everyday life, participants use YouTube to share with their friends. On the other hand, many participants watch YouTube for only a limited time, after returning home from school, in the absence of a brother or sister. In this context, it has been determined that many parents follow the children's time on the internet. In addition, many parents who have restrictions on weekday use allow weekend use.

In relation to the subject, a large number of participants have their own phones, while a few others access YouTube from their parents' phones.

K2 (10): "... I have permission to do whatever I want until 19.00, including watching YouTube, iPad playing ... but only until 19.00, then my dad is taking the iPad back and checking what I've been doing. After 19.00, I watch TV with my family ... "

When participants were asked whether they would follow their foreign content, it became clear that the most watched channel was "Pewdiepie". Some participants stated that they only follow the YouTubers in Turkey.

On the other hand, it has been determined that the videos of the Turkish YouTubers', especially Orkun Işıtmak's, shot abroad, are of interest to the participants.

Participants can watch videos on YouTube 1-2 hours a week as they have limited digital media usage by their families, as mentioned earlier. On the other hand, there were also participants who expressed that they had video viewing times around 4-5 hours on weekdays. On weekends, video viewing time ratio of participants is increased.

To sum up, many of the participants chose to watch a video on YouTube instead of watching TV, but they also enjoyed watching TV. While watching TV, they prefer to watch series inspired by true stories and soap operas as well as comedy contents and contest programs. They watch TV with their parents in general, but according to this research results they watch YouTube alone. They are annoyed by the length of commercials on TV, they watch YouTube videos on TV.

3.1.2.6. Theme 6: Definition of Media Environment

Whether YouTube and television environments are defined by users, how participants think and attitude about television and YouTube formats, how they relate to the generations of being YouTube watchers, whether they create a space for themselves on YouTube, the differences between the television medium, The representations of YouTube and the audience of the TV are the basic topics to be discussed here.

E1 (10) about the conditions that the TV offers:

"...We can also record on TV and watch it later, or change the channel..."

Some participants indicated that the difference was caused by social media. They said that it is easier to interact with celebrities who have followers on YouTube.

E5 (13): "... YouTubers respond to comments or messages ..."

Many participants expressed that YouTube has more suggestions and options, and that they can reach more content in the direction of their desire. In this context, the fact that there are many options is a reason for preference.

K2 (10): "... I watch YouTube also from television screen, I'm very fond of YouTube..."

Some participants noted that the most important difference between YouTube and Television is that one can access everything on YouTube anytime, while TV broadcast does not offer such an option.

On the other hand, it was determined that the developing television features changed the viewing activities of the participants. Features such as pausing the broadcast, fast-forwarding recorded videos and connecting to the Internet are important elements for participants.

Many participants said that they follow the Trending Now videos and these videos help them reach more options in the direction of their interests.

While defining the media environment, many participants have repeated that they felt themselves closer to YouTubers and it was more difficult to reach television celebrities, as noted in the previous headlines. As for the content, they think the videos on YouTube were shot in a natural and friendly environment, and the television was fictional.

The participant K1 (10) and K3 (13) used the following expressions to describe the difference between the two environments.

K1 (10): "... We can find TV contents on YouTube, but the YouTube contents are not on TV..."

K3(13): "...If I miss a word in a program on television, I can not return that moment. On the other hand, I can come back on YouTube. I think this is YouTube's best feature..."

To sum up, this chapter generally puts forward the opportunities that YouTube environment provide to audiences and the time limitations of participants and differences between YouTube and TV environment.

CONCLUSION

In this study, young audiences in Turkey, YouTube culture and fandom concepts were investigated. Research is based on the audience habits of watching TV up to the day and the changing of digital media and audience habits. The change of the environment in which people receive the message is a topic that has a very broad literature on audience researches, since people become more active and later become producers with digitalization. In the research, it was preferred to look at today's YouTube generation from a broad perspective, along with television practices, in order to understand how and in what context audience research and habits change today.

The concept of fandom, which constitutes the other important part of the research, is not restricted to YouTube in the literature as it is in audience researches. The concept of fandom has been examined in the context of YouTube by comparing it with the tendencies of other fans, which are discussed with contemporary audiences. The everyday place of YouTube, peer conception, consumer culture, gender differences, hedonism are the topics covered in the literature.

In this study, which dealt with the concept of youth culture and fandom in the youth, a total of 6 girls and 6 boys aged 10-14 years were interviewed. Preliminary research conducted before the in-depth interview was a key factor in determining the ages of the participants. The research sample, which will cover 14-18 year old high school students, has been reduced with the awareness that the tendencies to become fans in this process have begun at younger ages. The reason for the selection of participants between ages 10-14 in this study is that children have personal tablets and computers at these ages. Individuals' characteristics of children come to the forefront. In this process, concepts such as personality, being an individual, interest and learning skills, attention and remembering are gaining

importance. Moreover, According to Dogan, children's abstract perceptions develop during this age and children can think critically. (Dogan, 2007)

The key element in qualitatively determining the method of the research is to understand how young people have produced this culture and to examine the underlying reasons for their tendency to be fans. The questions directed to the participants were semi-structured and created in the light of the literature review.

In the analysis part of the research, a detailed analysis of these answers was carried out. The starting point and anticipation of the research is that young people follow YouTube more than TV, and accordingly change their viewing habits. In the research, audience habits and the resulting fandom concept were not limited to digital media because of the fact that it would be restrictive in the literature. In this context, research has been done with the aim of establishing links between time-changing habits, fandom tendencies and differences between these tendencies.

Participants see YouTube as a source of fun and think that YouTube's most important function is entertainment. In this context, YouTube is basically associated with the entertainment function of the television mentioned in Neil Postman's book *Amusing Ourselves to Death*. According to Postman, the super-ideology of all kinds of discourse on television is fun. (Postman, 2006, p.122) The main point here is that Postman is criticizing television not for being fun, but for every program on TV and its content being presented with entertaining elements. (Postman, 2006, p.101) The videos preferred by participants in the research are already entertainment, vlog or gaming videos. Indeed, the participants prefer videos whose main purpose is to entertain viewers. It is a natural outcome if participants are thought to be 10-14 years old and want to be entertained by a person close to their age group. The issue to be argued here as a problem is that participants don't tend to prefer contents that are not entertaining or exciting. In this context, although teaching feature of a video is the second choice in the

preferences of the participants, there is a great difference in terms of audience preferences between entertainment and learning purposes. Although audiences prefer something informative on YouTube or some YouTube channels according to their interests (makeup, fashion, sports, games, etc.), Neil Postman says that all of these contents reach audiences with entertainment infrastructure. (Postman, 2006, p.122) On the other hand, Neil Postman exemplified Sesame Street in the context of learning by having fun on television. Postman notes that Sesame Street is a program approved by parents and educators. In the case of children, this situation is seen as a transition from learning from television to entertainment, which is not seen as a means of entertainment for the school, nor as a fun tool for the school. (Postman, 2006, p.160) Nowadays, it is quite common for children to learn things from digital media about their lessons or everyday life. In this context, participants directly associate YouTube with entertainment, fun and curiosity; although other videos may have different contents. There are many tutorial videos on YouTube that are very different from each other. Children find videos that are taken in school and classroom environments boring and instead of them, they prefer videos more popular and vlog style, such as the videos of Barış Özcan. As an example, Barış Özcan's video⁴⁸ (YouTube, 2017) "Kim Ulan* bu Elon Musk?" is matching with YouTuber formats by camera angles, editing and footage, video title and declamation style, despite having content-related differences. At this point, children are looking for videos that are close to YouTuber format and style while learning through videos.

Although female participants generally prefer makeup and vlog videos, male participants prefer more games and vlog style videos, but there is no significant gender difference as indicated in the analysis. In this context, channels of YouTubers, such as Enes Batur and Orkun Işıtmak, are seen as videos addressing both genders and age groups. The most important point here is the reflection of the lives of individuals who shoot vlog-style videos with their

⁴⁸ Barış Özcan's video: <https://www.YouTube.com/watch?v=hQXLrPlcbeo>

personal relationships. There are many videos of Enes Batur with her girlfriend Başak Karahan, who also appeared as YouTuber. In this context, it is thought that the participants of both sex groups find their own elements in the videos.

Another important finding in the research is that the participants intensively want to buy products that YouTubers offer or that they see on YouTubers, which suggests that YouTubers are an important factor on the participants' buying habits. Participants are thought to be interested in the products they can buy or access.

Participants' positive attitudes towards opening a channel individually are seen as a reflection of the environment they are in. Beyond opening channels for participants, self-promotion is seen as an important element. It is also stated that channeling is viewed as a means of earning money and that being a YouTuber is seen as a profession. In this context, the result is the positive attitude of the children to the approach of earning money from the internet.

Introducing oneself on YouTube by participants is often associated with their personal lives. To share daily routines in today's society through social media is to think that the moment is not real unless it was shared. In this context, the participants are shaped in a social structure based on "show".

On the other hand, this is a clear indication of the participants' passing from passivity to interaction through a communication and production process. Participants stated that they considered the process of opening a channel as well as the contents they will use, so that clearly indicates that the process of production fills the participants' imagination and affect their actions in everyday lives. The main concern of those who hesitate to open a channel is bad comments that audiences will make. In this context, it has come to the conclusion that the comments of the viewers in the digital environment are contained in the children's thoughts and that this situation has turned into a tool of oppression at times. In

addition, the concept of prosumerism and channeling are described as "looking at the mirror". It is very important to understand the mirror concept here, because the meaning here is different than looking at a real mirror.

Participants want to look at something that everyone can see, so they want to be recognized. Parental limitations come into play at this point. Some participants stated that they could not open channels because parents did not want them. It is explained that the parents have made arrangements for the use of digital media in the home by the children.

Some of the participants said that they would show their faces if they were insisted by their "audiences" while expressing that they would not show their faces in the videos for the sake of privacy and curiosity. What is important here is that the participants have actions and thoughts such as having followers in their minds, awakening the curiosity of that audience, attracting too much attention, then behaving in the direction of incoming requests. It is noteworthy that the participants set it all up and spread to a cyclical process.

The result is that the digital culture of the participants is very prevalent. It has been observed that the participants used the digital culture jargon without hesitation, which is generally English (bot, edit, etc.). Digital culture emerges as a culture that affects participants in this context and at the same time is affected by participants.

Another topic that has been discussed in the research is the definition of the relationship established with YouTubers. The most prominent adjectives in this context are sincerity, insincere, childlike, natural, close, fun. Sincerity is the most important and positive concept for YouTube participants, and insincerity is an equally important and negative concept. Sincerity comes with naturalness. The elements of naturalness are shaped by how YouTubers can make natural and simultaneous jokes, how they address the audience, the surroundings, and the

environment. Insincerity, on the other hand, includes concepts such as inconsistency, exaggeration, being childlike. The insincerity of a person or content causes viewers to find content repulsive. One of the two most important elements that stand out at this point is inconsistency. Following the discourse of the videos, the audience pays attention to the content. In this context, the participants are approaching the videos critically and consciously. One of the most important elements of research is the concept of childhood. Many participants think that the YouTubers, the ones participants don't like the contents of, are childish. Here it should be considered that there are videos for younger kids on YouTube and younger YouTubers also exist in YouTube environment. YouTube offers an environment in which children can compare their childhood and maturity to other videos. More precisely, when the YouTubers and the audience are younger, participants find themselves in a different situation when they find similar content that they think is for children in their own content. In the past, when a larger age-scale audience was thought to be watching cartoons, it could be concluded that children did not make such a distinction in the past. The study found that YouTube is an important part of children's everyday and social lives. Many of the participants talk about YouTube favorites or Youtube during chatting with someone. In this context, YouTube is an important tool for socializing.

All participants, including those who did not talk to their friends about YouTube, were impressed by YouTube chat in a friendly environment. Even if these participants do not actively take part in YouTuber chats, YouTuber videos play an active role in the formation of the concept of "friendship". Another issue is that they are excluded from the social groups when they can not follow YouTube videos from the social environment. At this point, peer influence is observed.

Another question, "*What will happen if YouTube is not in your life?* ", revealed that not only participants would feel the absence of it, but also all of

them had another social media accounts. Participants, who usually have Instagram accounts, stated that they can also watch YouTuber videos from there. This statement is an indication of both the multifaceted use of social media and the fact that having an Instagram account is common especially for audiences aged around 10 years.

On the other hand, with regard to the notion of fandom, the participants grouped around their favorite YouTubers, but this grouping was not as radical or paranormal as in the football fanaticism.

As regards the concept of "being a fan", which constitutes the second part of the research, the first result that emerged was that no participant was negative about the concept of being a fan. Being a fan is defined as seeing someone as a role model, being excited to meet that person, trying to reach her or him, being happy when received replies to sent messages, feeling close to someone, being friends, being one.

Similarities and differences of YouTube fandom with other fan concepts, which is one of the main aims of the research, have been also determined. There are similarities between being a fan of a YouTuber and being a fan of a celebrity in television, in terms of finding self-esteem, feeling close, desire to reach, building an emotional connection, and setting up a catharsis. The concepts mentioned in both fandom concepts are intensely felt. Participants, on the other hand, are puzzling with the answer given by the most obvious line between YouTube and a TV star, "Whom do you find closest to yourself?"

Almost all of the participants feel closer to YouTubers they admire, indicating that YouTubers are just like themselves. Some users even expressed their admiration to YouTubers with words such as "family" or "brother". One of the reasons the participants feel closer to YouTubers is that their vlog videos are shooted in home environment. The audience can thus enter into the private lives

of YouTubers and comment on their relationship with their families. They do not need magazines information about YouTubers, while it's very common phenomenon in television celebrities. In fact, they think they already know everything about YouTubers. In this context, there is also a difference between being a YouTuber fan and being a TV celebrity or being a fan of a footballer.

It is also very important for the participants to be able to interact at the same time. While a large majority of the participants indicated that it was easier to reach a YouTuber than any other celebrities, they also explained it as one of the basic motivations that supported their admiration. The fans who like YouTubers because they find them closer to themselves also want to be like them at the same time. From this point, the vast majority of fans have come to the conclusion that they have internalized YouTubers and considered them as role models for themselves.

Many of the participants tried to reach YouTubers because they thrilled with the thought of reaching a YouTuber. It is seen as a product of fandom cultures that develop in a digital environment in order to exist equally in an environment where they can directly reach YouTubers. As a matter of fact, many participants think that it is harder to reach a television star or a football player. Yet, some of the participants still think that it's equally hard to reach a YouTuber. The important point here is that YouTube culture being categorized as including YouTubers hard to reach and easier to reach. It's hard to reach YouTubers having a lot of YouTube subscribers, while sub-grouping and fandom practices develop around a YouTuber channel with fewer subscribers.

In addition to this, a fandom culture that develops on the internet makes fans more visible, and fans in the social media can meet on an online common

platform, as can be understood from the Instagram fan pages.⁴⁹ (Instagram, 2018)
⁵⁰ (Instagram, 2018)

While referring to the fandom cultures born and developed in the digital environment and the fandom cultivated in different fields, it is worth mentioning that the participants explain the existence of celebrities in television or a footballer with "talent". By taking the expressions of the participants, a talent or feature is necessary to get on TV, while it's not necessary on YouTube environment. Television is a difficult media to reach, but YouTube does not need people to be celebrities in order to open a channel.

One of the most fundamental differences between being a fan of television celebrities and being a fan of YouTubers is that they think that the content on television is based on being fictional. The stereotypes in the television contents and the fact that the actors do not reflect their own lives coincide with the internalization of the participants in the tendency to be fans and their sense of finding their lives close to their own lives. The fact that television celebrities not reflecting their own lives is not natural to participants. At this point, the discourses are again intersecting with sincerity. In this context, participants are impressed by the people they believe to be more real. At the same time, the home environments in videos also make participants feel closer to Youtubers. The contents of the television are mostly taken in the studio or on a set so does not bring out closeness. On Youtuber's videos, on the other hand, they are faced with objects and environments that they can possibly see when they look at their home. Finally, the fact that all participants involved in the search went to see Enes Batur's film supports the idea that a YouTube celebrity can reach the target audience through other media tools. Participants also liked the film in general.

⁴⁹ https://www.instagram.com/enesbatur_fc00/?hl=tr

⁵⁰ https://www.instagram.com/orkun_isitmak_fann/

Within the scope of audience watching habits, many participants chosen to watch YouTube at their homes since they didn't have personal smartphones and it's forbidden to watch videos at their school.

As there are few users who say they have not seen a difference in action between watching YouTube and watching television, the duration of commercials on television is uncomfortable for many participants. Another reason for this inconvenience is due to the inability to intervene in some points unlike in YouTube. It is a fact that along with developing technology, television watching practices has become an active process in terms of the audience. Today's smart TVs have been actively used by participants with functions such as stopping, recording, and connecting to the Internet. Aside from these, YouTube's interface and recommended videos have increased the participant's choice in the media context. In this context, the diversity of channels that enter our lives in the de-massification period of TV and increase in options according to the areas of interest continues to exist in the digital environment by changing dimensions. Another point to be paid attention about the interface is that shooting YouTube videos generally in the head and shoulder level should be interpreted via semiotics point of view. In such a "square" that consists of only head and shoulders, there are less distracting elements and it's easier to impress the audience in short notice and to connect with them. On the other hand, although there are very few questions about parenting in the research, parents have a key role to play in limiting children's YouTube viewing habits. Another key role for parents is their attitude towards channel opening.

Although research attempts to include a broad perspective on audience and fandom work, it has to focus on certain points. So it focuses primarily on Youtube's audience habits and fan tendencies in different contexts. On the other hand, studies that will focus on parent and child roles in digital media use can be made in future studies, especially with young individuals and children. It is also thought to be a literary contribution to the study of digital cultures, subcultures,

and interrelationships in the context of YouTube for future work. Finally, to draw the structure of a YouTube viewer profile within the scope of a quantitative study which will be held in Turkey will be useful in the field of fandom matters. Fandom quantitative studies to be conducted in the area would be useful to create a YouTube audience profile in matters within the scope of Turkey.

Finally, I would like to talk about my personal experience. This period was a process for me to discover new things at every step, to identify the differences and similarities that I associated concepts with. My motivation at the beginning of the research was listening to YouTube and the young people and fans who are an important part of YouTube's culture and discovering their world. It was a big curiosity for me to find out what YouTube young people like about video contents, why they follow YouTubers, and what motivates them to open their own channels. Even more deeply, I wanted to discover why younger people loved YouTubers. Having benefited from television researches and different fandom studies, I felt that I was on the right way during all process and it added to me a lot.

Throughout the research I have gone through many different reality processes. I personally became aware of the definition of the reality process. In the beginning, the fan concept that was ambiguous for me – even though I was a fan of some characters in TV series – yet it has become increasingly meaningful and integrated with audience actions. On the other hand, in this research, I found the opportunity to listen to how television perceived by children, from children who grew up with both digital and traditional culture.

It's been an illuminating experience for me to find out that children have conscious choices and they could analyze what they watch, to analyze how they are positioned in such a digital producing, sharing and showing the process and to realize how much they care about sincerity.

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APPENDIX

APPENDIX-1

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM



**İstanbul
Bilgi University**

LAUREATE INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITIES

bilgimedya

İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi Medya ve İletişim Sistemleri Yüksek Lisans Program Direktörlüğü'ne,

Yüksek lisans programı direktörü Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Esra E. Bilgiç danışmanlığında yürütülmekte olan “Young Audiences, YouTube Culture and Fandom Concept in Turkey” (Türkiye’deki Genç İzleyiciler, YouTube Kültürü ve Hayranlık Kavramı) konulu tez çalışmasında katılımcı olarak yer almayı gönüllü olarak kabul ettiğimi beyan ederim.

Kişisel bilgilerimin ve görüşme kayıtlarının yalnızca araştırma verisi olarak saklanacağı, hiçbir şekilde üçüncü şahıslarla paylaşılmayacağı ve hiçbir mecrada kesinlikle yayınlanmayacağı hususunda araştırmacı tarafından bilgilendirildim.

Tarih :

Katılımcı Ad Soyad :

Katılımcı İmza :

APPENDIX-2

PARENT CONSENT FORM



Sayın Veli,
“Young Audiences, YouTube Culture and Fandom Concept in Turkey” (Türkiye’deki Genç İzleyiciler, YouTube Kültürü ve Hayranlık Kavramı) konulu tez çalışması İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi Medya ve İletişim Sistemleri Yüksek Lisans Programı bünyesinde, program direktörü Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Esra E. Bilgiç danışmanlığında yürütülmektedir.

Araştırma kapsamında 10-14 yaş grubu katılımcılar ile, her biri yaklaşık 20-30 dakika sürecek olan yüz yüze mülakatlar gerçekleştirilecektir. Mülakatlar sırasında sorulacak olan soruların “doğru” veya “yanlış” yanıtları yoktur. Katılımcılarla tamamen günlük hayat deneyimlerinde YouTube izleme alışkanlıkları üzerinde konuşulacaktır.

Katılımcıların kişisel bilgileri ve görüşme kayıtları yalnızca araştırma verisi olarak saklanacak olup hiçbir şekilde üçüncü şahıslarla paylaşılmayacak ve hiçbir mecrada kesinlikle yayınlanmayacaktır.

Araştırmada velisi olduğunuz kişilerin katılımcı olarak yer almasını gönüllü olarak kabul ediyorsanız, lütfen aşağıda bulunan tarih, veli ad ve soyadı, imza kısımlarını doldurunuz.

İşbirliğiniz için teşekkür ederim.

Tarih:
Veli Ad / Soyad:
İmza:

Saygılarımla,

İpek Kesici
İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi İletişim Fakültesi
Medya ve İletişim Sistemleri
Yüksek Lisans Öğrencisi

APPENDIX-3

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1.Motivations

- Why are you watching videos on YouTube?
- How do you define your motivation to watch Youtube videos?
- What are the attractive and repulsive features of YouTube and YouTubers' videos?
- What kind of video contents do you follow on YouTube?
- Could you describe YouTube as an entertainment medium or leisure activity?

2.Tendencies

- How do you evaluate suggestions and recommendations on YouTuber videos?
- Do you want to buy a product that YouTubers recommend?
- How do you find the lifestyles of YouTubers?
- Would you prefer a YouTube channel to be independent or work with an agency / manager?
- How do you approach the idea of opening your own channel? What kind of concept would you have if you had a YouTube channel of your own?
- What kind of channel do you have?

3.Social and Daily Life

- How does YouTube and YouTuber videos create a conversation environment in your friends' circles? Who are the YouTubers you mentioned?
- Do you have new conversations with your friends through YouTube videos?
- What are you talking about YouTuber with your friends?
- Have you ever been excluded from chatting because you haven't followed certain YouTube videos?
- What would happen if YouTube was not in your life?

4. Being Fan

- How do you define the concept of being a fan?
- Are you curious about the private lives of the YouTubers you follow?
How do you define your motivation to follow them via different social media accounts?
- How does it feel to be a fan of a YouTuber?
- What kind of differences do you have between being a YouTuber and being a fan of other people (football player, TV actor/actress, music band)? How do you evaluate these differences?
- Have you tried reaching your favorite YouTuber? (Attending to events, sending direct messages, joining competitions)
- How do you evaluate television celebrities and YouTube celebrities?

- Whom do you find closest to yourself?
- Could you describe yourself specifically as belonging to a fan group?

5. Watching of YouTube Audiences

- How do you see differences between watching TV and watching a video on YouTube?
- Which foreign channels are you following?
- Where do you watch YouTube videos? (Public transport, home etc.)
- How do you evaluate habits or tendencies such as commenting or sending direct messages?
- How much time do you spend on YouTube in a day?
- What are the contents you prefer watching on TV? Do you prefer watching with your family or individually (via mobile)?
- What are you watching other than YouTuber or vlog videos?

6. Definition of Media Environment

- How do you define the common and different aspects of television content and YouTube content?
- What kind of environment does YouTube create for you?
- What kind of environment does TV create for you?