

Commercialized History and Media in Türkiye: Prediction of University Students' Popular History Proneness

Research Article

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ABSTRACT

Popular history products are increasingly and successfully used as a means to brand entertainment media. However, there is a significant gap in empirical researches which considers variables that affect popular history consumption. The current study builds on social identity theory, theory of curiosity, and parasocial interaction theory aims to identify the relationships amongst popular history consumption in written, visual, and social media, nationalism, conservatism, nostalgia, and curiosity. The current research is predictive correlational research. In terms of time, it is a cross-sectional study. Study 1 indicates that the PHPS scale may become an important instrument in future research. Study 2 indicates that curiosity, nostalgia proneness, conservatism, and nationalism were the main predictors of popular history consumption in the media. Also, the research revealed that nationalism was shown to be an important mediator between conservatism and popular history consumption in media. In this way, a model has been proposed to comprehend popular history consumption, which constitutes a crucial component of the media and culture industry.

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Keywords:

Popular history proneness, history education, media, nostalgia, nationalism-conservatism, curiosity and exploration.

Introduction

Popular history found new domains with the diversification of mass media in the second half of the 20th century. The old domains evolved into new forms, e.g. popular history magazines and books, TV programmes and series, movies, novels, documentaries and websites (Bozkurt & Bayındır, 2015; Haydn, 2015; Ata, 2000; Alaca, 2017). Another result of this diversification was the emergence of television and cinema as the culture industry's outstanding components. The demand for these visual industries gradually increased. They also heralded the popular history's golden age by providing it with the new domains to flourish (Konuk, 2017). The media has been the source of the need for a sense of history (Ma, 2001). Thus, the masses consume popular history to satisfy their emotional needs (Korte & Paletschek, 2014). In such an environment, the

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historical culture has spread to almost every corner of the world. History has been popularized in the world. History programs on television have become increasingly popular (Çencen & Şimşek, 2015; Bell & Gray, 2007).

Interest in history and its popularisation started in the 1980s and continued in the following decades in an upward trend (Korte & Paletschek, 2014). An example of this phenomenon is the increment in the numbers of TV programs which dealt with historical themes in Europe (Bell & Gray, 2007). While the TV series "Tudors" appealed to audiences all over the world, "The Magnificent Century" caught the attention of Turkish audiences (Konuk, 2017).

The trend towards historical movies and TV series started with the TV series "The Magnificent Century" as a popular history production in Türkiye. The number of historical serials is increasing day by day (Güngör, 2019). "Muhteşem Yüzyıl" (i.e., "The Magnificent Century" in English) series reached more than 500 million viewers in 70 different countries, and the "Resurrection Ertuğrul" series reached approximately 1 billion viewers in 71 different countries (Karahana, 2018; Ustuk, 2019). These historical TV series draw inspiration from historical events and characters, crafting a fictionalized narrative (for accounts regarding historical fiction, see Saxton, 2020).

Despite such great interest, we still lack empirical studies and models dealing with popular history proneness. Studies on the concept of popular history were examined in the context of historical, historiography, culture (De Groot, 2016; Possamai, 2002), memory (Pozefsky, 2008; Şakrak, 2017), nostalgia and political propaganda (Çevik, 2019; Carney, 2018; Carney, 2019), education (Thorp, 2015), heritage, and identity (Wolff, 2020). As can be seen, these studies include certain dimensions.

Nostalgia proneness, which helps us to understand the consumption of individuals regarding the past, has been examined in the context of autobiographical past rather than the past of the nation. Few studies on historical films (Natterer, 2015) have failed to resolve the ambiguity of what kind of nostalgia is influential in the consumption of products related to the nation's past.

The effect of identities (nationalist, conservative) on popular history consumption in relation to nostalgia has generally been limited to review studies (Aditama, Rachmanti & Soekarba, 2019; Cetin-Erus & Erus, 2020; Chew, 2007; Boym, 2001). The nationalism and conservatism that account for popular history consumption have not yet been used in experimental studies (Beriş, 2010; Aydos, 2013; Carney, 2018; Carney, 2019). However, curiosity, which has a positive effect on popular history consumption, was not included in previous studies on the subject as a variable.

In addition to contributing to the elimination of the said uncertainty (which type of nostalgia is more effective in popular history consumption?), the current research contributes to the literature by examining identity (nationalism, conservatism, and nostalgia), curiosity, and popular history consumption with all their sub-dimensions. Moreover, it provides a more holistic understanding of the subject by developing a measurement tool that covers the consumption of popular history with all its dimensions (popular history consumption in written, visual and social media). More specifically, the current research is the first systematic attempt to empirically examine the relationships between identity, curiosity, and consumption of popular history.

Literature Review

The most used variable in explaining the interest in products reflecting the past is nostalgia. Nostalgia makes an important contribution to the explanations regarding the consumption of the products presented with the re-representation of the past (Carney, 2019). It is explained by the tendency of nostalgia in the consumption of products that appeal to the biographical past, especially in marketing and media studies (Chen, Yeh & Huan, 2014; Muehling & Sprott, 2004; Bambauer-Sachse & Gierl, 2009; Muehling & Pascal, 2012;

Marchegiani & Phau, 2011; Natterer, 2014). In some very few studies, personal and historical nostalgia has been found to be effective on historical films (Natterer, 2015). Explanations on popular history consumption with identity and nostalgia are based on Social Identity Theory (Sierra and McQuitty, 2007). Furthermore, positive correlations have been identified between historical nostalgia and purchase intention (Fariz & Putra, 2020). Some studies have drawn attention to the relationships between TV series and nostalgia, heritage, identity, and the history of places (Mahoney, 2022; Kim et al. 2019; Metaveevini, 2019; Lekngam, 2019). According to the studies conducted on the subject, Turkish historical TV series (Brileva, 2023; Karahan, 2018; Ustuk, 2019; Özalpman & Sarikakis, 2018; Kesirli Unur, 2020) as well as historical TV series from other countries (Fiorentino et al., 2021), have garnered significant attention both at national and global levels.

The identity (nationalism, conservatism) dimension contributed significantly to the explanations of popular history consumption. Accordingly, nostalgia proneness accompanying nationalist and conservative identities positively affects the consumption of nation histories (Xue & Almeida, 2011; Kalinina & Menke, 2016; Romanovska, 2020). Some studies have revealed that historical TV series serve political purposes (Carney, 2019; Mullin, 2019; Ahmed & Panetta, 2023). On the other hand, some studies have focused on the debates surrounding factual inaccuracies in historical TV series (McCann, 2019). Furthermore, historical TV series have been examined in terms of the roles of female characters, gender stereotypes, and post-feminist media culture (Donstrup, 2019; Lozano, 2020; Primorac, 2018)

However, some review studies have indirectly shown us that curiosity can be effective in popular history consumption. Accordingly, popular history products positively affect the consumption of curious readers, followers, and audiences by offering mysterious, interesting, and interesting environments (Donnelly, 2014; Bell & Gray, 2007; Glaser, 2015; Korte & Paletschek, 2014).

Theoretical Background and Research Hypotheses

In the current study, some theories were used to explain popular history consumption. The first theory on which current research is based is "Social Identity Theory". "Social Identity Theory" is an individual's identification with a group of similar individuals (in-group). In-group influences the behavior and preferences of the individual. In addition, in this definition, the individual sees his group (in-group) as superior to other groups (out-group) (Tajfel and Turner 1985; Tajfel, 1978; Tajfel, 1981). Social Identity Theory provides an effective projection for understanding consumption of popular history, which includes elements of nostalgia, nationalist identity, and conservative identity (Sierra and McQuitty, 2007). In this context, we can say that individuals with nationalist and conservative identities will be more interested in popular history products that nostalgically present the golden ages of these identities.

Another theory on which current research is based is Berlyne's "A theory of human curiosity". It is possible to mention several definitions of curiosity. "The urge to explore and discover" (Fitzgerald, 1999) and "the desire for acquiring new information" (Renner, 2006, p.305) are the prominent elements highlighted in these definitions of curiosity. From a theoretical perspective, curiosity is accounted for through drive-based and "information-gap" theories (Loewenstein, 1994; Berlyne, 1954, 1960). Furthermore, different types of curiosity can be discussed, such as epistemic, social, and entrepreneurial (Litman & Spielberg, 2003; Jeraj & Maric, 2013; Renner, 2006). However, further research is needed to operationalize and analyze the concept of curiosity effectively (McNary, 2023). Turning to the relationship between curiosity and the current study, we observe that popular history products provide exploratory environments. At this point, Berlyne's theory of curiosity suggests that curiosity is a prerequisite for exploratory behavior (Berlyne, 1954-1960). However, theoretically, there are two necessary conditions for perceptual and epistemic curiosity. The first of these is diversive exploratory behavior. "This state occurs in an under-stimulated state (e.g., boredom, wanting entertainment, or seeking a new experience)." Second condition is specific exploratory behavior. "This state occurs in an over-stimulated state when faced with inadequate information." (as cited in McNary, 2023).

Popular history TV series and films provide individuals with entertainment (diverse exploratory behavior) and specific knowledge about their ancestors or the past (specific exploratory behavior). Popular history products with mystery, adventure and interesting content attract the attention of audience, readers and followers with a high level of curiosity. Thus, individuals with a high level of curiosity will be more willing to explore the exploratory environments of popular history products. One way to explain the consumption of popular history in written, visual and social media is "Parasocial Interaction Theory". This theory refers to the symbolic relationship that the audience establishes with the media characters (Horton and Wohl, 1956). Based on this theory, we can say that nationalist-conservative individuals in Türkiye establish a symbolic relationship with the nationalist-conservative characters in historical films and tv series, and they will be more interested in these popular historical products. The theoretical background on which the present research is based is given in Figure 1.

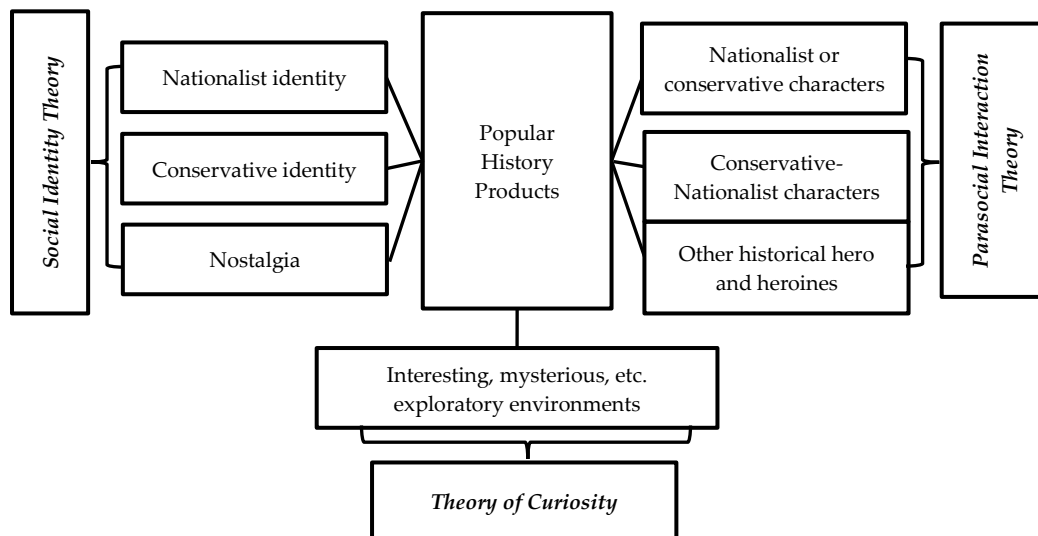


Figure 1. Theoretical background on popular history consumption

Also, a real photograph is presented in Figure 2 to support our theoretical background.



Figure 2. Curious audiences watching historical tv serials in nostalgic Turkish warrior wear "Alp".

Screens grabs from the webpage of the trthaber.com (Note: The editorial license of this photo has been purchased by the author from the Anatolian Agency)

Figure 2. shows us that curious audiences (Theory of Curiosity) are watching nationalist and conservative historical heroes (Social Identity Theory). They have interacted with the historical heroes in such a way that they watch the TV series (Parasocial Interaction Theory) by wearing old Turkish warrior wear.

Nostalgia

Nostalgia has many definitions. Srivastava et al. (2023) conducted a thematic analysis of definitions of nostalgia. According to this thematic analysis, nostalgia means “a yearning to recapture the positive emotional state of an idealized past through fond memories that are characterized by their ambivalent nature, though predominantly positive” (p.621). Even though there exists a singular definition for nostalgia, some scholars suggest utilisation of the concept’s dual definition based on personal and historical nostalgia (Marchegiani & Phau, 2010; Xue & Almeida, 2011; Yalçın & Elmas, 2017). In some studies, the concept of vicarious nostalgia is used instead of historical nostalgia (Stern, 1992; Merchant and Rose, 2013). It can be seen that there are different types of nostalgia (Baker & Kennedy, 1994; Stern, 1992). Furthermore, nostalgia is associated with the social identity (Sierra & McQuitty, 2007; Fariz & Putra, 2020; Chadborn & Reysen, 2018) and parasocial interaction theories (Myrick & Willoughby, 2019).

One of the more inclusive and commercialised qualities of popular history contents is the presentation of national histories as nostalgia and cultural heritage (Haydn, 2015). Also, nostalgia is one of the main tools of the cultural industry (Smith & Campbell, 2017). The television industry provides products with the themes of cultural heritage, nostalgia, national and other types of identities through popular history (De Baets, 2011; De Groot, 2016; Korte & Paletschek, 2014).

Nostalgic presentation of consumption-oriented history utilises roots and continuity (Taşkaya, 2013). It meets the needs for the continuation of the traditions and the values of the past (Xue & Almeida, 2011; Kalinina & Menke, 2016; Romanovska, 2020). Consequently, nostalgia becomes an important tool in constructing national memory and identity for the individuals who long for their common past and wish to establish connections with history (Kalinina & Menke, 2016).

A relationship exists between the past that consumers cannot directly experience and virtual/historical nostalgia. Through novels, historical writings and films, individuals get the chance to feel the distant past they have not experienced (Holak, et al., 2007). Audience vicariously participate in fictional worlds created by historical movies and TV series (Stern, 1992). Also, nostalgia proneness positively affects fantasies about past eras (Merchant & Rose, 2013). Thus, it was predicted that nostalgia would have positively significant effects on popular history proneness.

Hypothesis 1. Personal nostalgia proneness is positively related to popular history proneness.

Hypothesis 2. Interpersonal nostalgia proneness is positively related to popular history proneness.

Hypothesis 3. Virtual nostalgia proneness is positively related to popular history proneness.

Hypothesis 4. Cultural nostalgia is positively related to popular history proneness.

Nationalism and conservatism

As a feeling of aspiration to the golden past, nostalgia is a crucial element of conservative thought in Türkiye (Beriş, 2010; Yalçın & Elmas, 2017; Carney, 2019). Meanwhile, popular history products deal also with themes evoking nationalist sentiments (Vinterek, 2015). The essence of integrated and systematic nationalism and conservatism is the mystical romance centred on the soul (Beriş, 2010; Acar, 2018). Accordingly, popular history products dealing with national nostalgia, in a sense, appeal to nationalist and conservative identities simultaneously. Therefore, it is expected that individuals with nationalism and conservative identities are expected to consume popular history products.

Hypothesis 5. Nationalism is positively related to popular history proneness.

Hypothesis 6. Conservatism is positively related to popular history proneness.

Hypothesis 7. Conservatism is positively related to popular history proneness through nationalism.

Hypothesis 8. Conservatism is positively related to nationalism.

Curiosity and Exploration

Another quality of popular history products is that they appeal to curious audiences. For example, historical films are indispensable for enthusiasts due to their exciting and fascinating contents (Donnelly, 2014). It is argued that history is dealt with as a detective story in TV programs (Bell & Gray, 2007). In this way, popular history consumers are taken on a voyage in the fictional stories presented in popular history products (Glaser, 2015). Therefore, it can be argued that popular history meets the adventure needs of audiences (Korte & Paletschek, 2014). Thus, it was predicted that curiosity and exploration would have positively significant effects on popular history proneness.

Hypothesis 9. Curiosity and exploration is positively related popular history proneness.

Departing from the relevant literature, this study attempts to reveal the connections between popular history consumption and the university students' proneness such as conservatism, nationalism, nostalgia, curiosity and exploration. The conceptual model is presented in Figure 3.

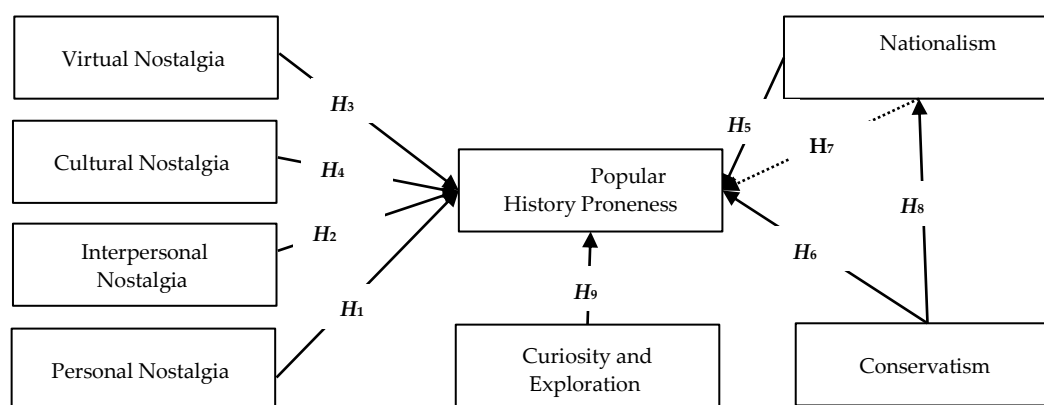


Figure 3. Conceptual (Hypothetical) model

Topics of Popular History and Consumption Platforms of Popular History

Traditional contents of popular history products include national histories, victorious commanders, military successes, wars, national heroes, great men and their biographies (Özcan, 2011; Haydn, 2015; De Groot, 2016). Newer elements have also joined the traditional ingredients of history recently. These are controversial topics, marginal histories, revisionist histories, rumours, conspiracy theories, and claims to reveal hidden facts (De Groot, 2016; Mencet & Ergin, 2018). Popular history platforms are movies and TV series, internet and social media, print products (News, magazines and novels). At the same time, popular historians have been a source in the production of popular history (Berger, 2014; De Groot, 2016; Poe, 2000; Mencet & Ergin, 2018; Korte & Paletschek, 2014; Bell & Gray, 2007; Konuk, 2017; Haydn, 2015; Lecker de Almeida & Bianchi, 2017).

Research Model

This study utilises predictive correlational research as a research model (Aksu, et al., 2017). In addition, this research is a cross-sectional study in terms of time. Cross-sectional studies are a type of research design that involves collecting relevant information (data) at a specific time. These studies aim to gather data from diverse participants to gain insights into a particular phenomenon or population at that specific moment (Kesmodel, 2018).

Study 1: Developing popular history proneness scale (PHPS)

The researcher has developed the Popular History Proneness Scale (PHPS) used in this study.

Population and Sample

The study sample consists of 304 university students in Türkiye, selected with the convenience sampling technique for EFA. Of the participants, 120 were male (39%), and 184 were female (61%). The ages of the participants vary between 18 and 25 (mean age: 20.92).

Transactions

The study drew on the three scholars' suggestions who have theoretical knowledge to ensure the scope and appearance validity of the PHPS. Complying with the recommendations received, one item from the internet and social media dimension, and two items from the reading and research dimension have been removed. After evaluating the scope and appearance validity, the final version of the scale contained 13-item Reading and Research, 6-item Internet and Social Media, 10-item nationalist-romantic TV series and movies, and 6-items Popular Historian dimensions.

Exploratory factor analysis (EFA)

Exploratory factor analysis of PHPS has been conducted employing the Principal Axis Factoring method. For the analysis, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin value has been found 0.906 and Bartlett's test significant ($p < 0.00$). The scale consists of thirty-five items. However, seven items have been removed from the scale as their total correlations were lower than 0.45. Items not contained by any factor or which overlap was eliminated and the exploratory factor analysis was reconducted. The final model consists of sixteen items in Likert-type and four sub-dimensions. Sub-dimensions are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Variance ratios explained by the Sub-Dimensions of popular history proneness scale

Dimensions	Eigenvalue	Variance(%)	Cumulative Variance (%)
Popular History Proneness for reading and research	5.85	36.58	36.58
Popular History Proneness on the internet and social media	1.63	10.18	46.77
Popular History Proneness for watching nationalist-romantic TV series and cinema	1.13	7.11	53.88
Popular history proneness for popular historians	1.10	6.90	60.78

The variance ratios given in Table 1. are as follows: the first factor with an eigenvalue of 5.85 explains 36.58% of variance, the second factor with an eigenvalue of 1.63 explains 10.18% of variance, the third factor with an eigenvalue of 1.13 explains 7.11% of variance, and the fourth factor with an eigenvalue of 1.10 explains 6.90% of variance. The total sum of variance explained amounted to 60.78%. This result suggests that the factor structure of the scale is strong (Seçer, 2015).

Confirmatory factor analysis

After conducting EFA analysis, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was applied to the group of 343 data. First-order factor analysis is presented in Figure 4.

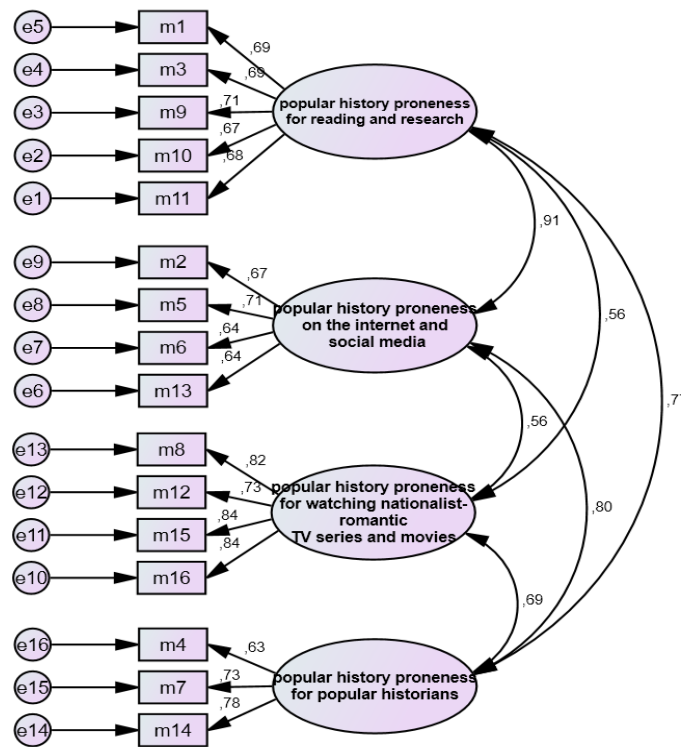


Figure 4. First-order factor analysis of the PHPS

As can be seen in Figure 3., goodness of fit values obtained as a result of the first-order confirmatory factor analysis have revealed that the proposed four-factor model is acceptable and fits the data $\chi^2 [98, N=343] = 245.727$; $p < 0.001$; $\chi^2/df = 2.51$; RMSEA=0.07; SRMR=0.05 GFI= 0.92; AGFI=0.88; IFI=0.94; NFI=0.91; NNFI=0.93).

Besides, applying a second-order confirmatory factor analysis in scale construction studies is recommended in the literature (Seçer, 2015; Gürbüz, 2019). Second-order factor analysis is presented in Figure 5.

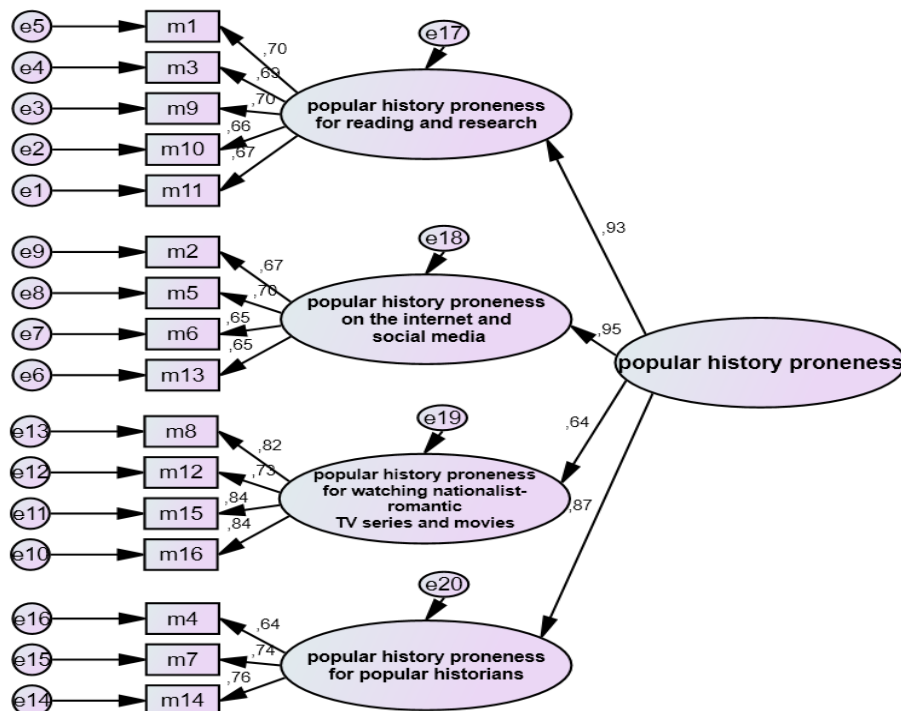


Figure 5. Second-order factor analysis of the PHPS

The second-order factor analysis values in Figure 4. show that the goodness of fit values are at an acceptable level and fit the data ($\chi^2 [100, N=343] = 267.965$; $p < 0.001$; $\chi^2/sd = 2.68$; $RMSEA = 0.07$; $SRMR = 0.05$; $CFI = 0.93$; $GFI = 0.91$; $AGFI = 0.87$; $IFI = 0.93$; $NFI = 0.90$; $NNFI = 0.92$). As both models' goodness of fit values are acceptable, first and second order models belonging to PHPS can be employed.

For whole PHPS, the Cronbach's alpha is ($\alpha = 0.81$), while the Spearman-Brown two-half reliability coefficient ($\alpha = 0.86$). Moreover, the test-retest coefficient of the PTES performed with a two-weeks interval is ($\alpha = 0.89$). For the scale's sub-dimension "Reading and Research", the internal consistency coefficient has been detected as ($\alpha = 0.81$); the split-half reliability coefficient ($\alpha = 0.78$); and the test-retest coefficient ($\alpha = 0.85$). Regarding the internet and social media sub-dimension, the internal consistency coefficient is determined as ($\alpha = 0.76$); split-half reliability coefficient ($\alpha = 0.77$); and the test-retest reliability coefficients ($\alpha = 0.71$). On the other hand, for the nationalist-romantic TV series and movies sub-dimension, the internal consistency coefficient is determined as ($\alpha = 0.88$); split-half reliability coefficient ($\alpha = 0.91$); and the test-retest coefficient ($\alpha = 0.74$). Finally, for the popular historians sub-dimension, the internal consistency coefficient is determined as ($\alpha = 0.75$); the split-half reliability coefficient ($\alpha = 0.70$); and the test-retest reliability coefficient ($\alpha = 0.78$). Departing from the fact that different reliability coefficients have been obtained, the study suggests that the PHPS has proved sufficient reliability (Seçer, 2015; Kartal & Bardakçı, 2019).

Convergent validity and discriminant validity

In the dimension of Nationalist-Romantic TV Series and Movies and Popular Historians, AVE values belonging to PHPS are above 0.50 (0.654; 0.511), while being very close to 0.50 in Reading and Research and Internet and Social Media dimension (0.470; 0.444). Nevertheless, as suggested, all CR values exceed 0.70 and AVE values. Therefore, it can be observed that the PHPS meets the CR values complying with convergent validity and approximates the expected values in AVE on a large scale. Indeed, Fornell and Larcker (1981) argues that convergent validity is still sufficient when the AVE is less than 0.5 and the CR is higher than 0.6 (as cited in Shah, Larson and Denton III, 2019). All AVE values belonging to the factors are greater than the square of the correlation coefficient among factors ($AVE = 0.44 > 0.08$; $AVE = 0.65 > 0.04$; $AVE = 0.65 > 0.03$; $AVE = 0.51 > 0.06$; $AVE = 0.51 > 0.06$; $AVE = 0.51 > 0.05$). Finally, the study's findings show that PHPS has obtained both convergent and discriminant validity (Kartal & Bardakçı, 2019).

PHPS Criterion Validity

The correlations between the PHPS and History Lesson Attitude Scale (HLAS) (Safran, 2006), which is considered the most related to PHPS, have been analysed to examine the criterion-related validity. While the HLAS's total score with PHPS has been determined as ($r = 0.52$, $p < 0.01$), its scores with PHPS sub-dimensions have been detected as follows: ($r = 0.44$, $p < 0.01$) with the reading and research sub-dimension, ($r = 0.28$, $p < 0.01$) with the internet and social media sub-dimension, ($r = 0.41$, $p < 0.01$) with the nationalist-romantic TV series and movies sub-dimension, and finally ($r = 0.59$, $p < 0.01$) with the popular historians sub-dimension, proving the existence of significant positive relationships among them.

Study 2: Prediction of the Popular History Proneness

Population and Sample

Since the current study is cross-sectional, the research data is also cross-sectional. The research population consists of 378 university students. The current investigation adhered to the guidelines outlined in the Declaration of Helsinki and obtained approval from the ethics committee of Bayburt University (The committee's reference number: 01.29.2021, E-79126184-050.99-3830). The study has utilised the convenience sampling technique during the data collection. The data of 35 participants were not evaluated since they did not meet the assumption of multivariate normal distribution. Thus, the final data set has included 343

participants. Regarding the gender ratio, while 270 (79%) of the participants are female, 73 (21%) of them consisted of male students. The ages of the participants vary between 18 and 26 (mean age: 20.64).

Data collection tools

Popular history proneness scale (PHPS)

Information about the scale developed by the researcher is given above.

Curiosity and exploration inventory-II (CEI-II)

The Curiosity and Exploration Inventory-II (CEI-II), developed by Kashdan et al., (2009) and adapted to Turkish culture by Acun, Kapıkıran & Kabasakal (2013), is used to measure the curiosity and exploration levels of the students participating in the study.

The index of nostalgia proneness

The scale was developed by Havlena & Holak (2000) and is utilised to measure the participants' nostalgia proneness in this study. The scale was adapted to Turkish culture by Özhan and Altuğ (2017). The score that the individuals obtain from the scale shows their level of nostalgia proneness.

Identity Level Scale (ILS)

It was designed by the researcher to determine students' levels of conservatism and nationalism.

Analysis of the data

The sample size met the requirements of the SEM. Because, 343 valid questionnaires were utilized (Aksu et al., 2017). The research data confirm the univariate normality assumption (Skewness: -0.627 and 0.285; kurtosis -1.171 and 0.564) (Tabachnick and Fidell, 2019; Seçer, 2015). Multivariate normality assumption is confirmed by research data (CR: .19<10) (Gürbüz, 2019). The correlation coefficients between independent variables was less than 0.7 (Pallant, 2016). Bootstrapping 5000 resampling technique was used during the mediation analysis conducted in the study (MacKinnon, Lockwood & Williams, 2004).

Findings

Measurement model

The study initially tests a measurement model in which the variables are modelled together before continuing with the structural equation model. Goodness of fit values obtained from the measurement model (χ^2 [25, N= 343] = 61.55; $p < 0.001$; $\chi^2/df = 2.46$; RMSEA=0.07; SRMR= 0.04; CFI=0.97; GFI=0.97; AGFI=0.92; IFI=0.97; NFI=0.95; NNFI=0.93) have revealed that the measurement model was fit and acceptable.

Structural model

Insignificant paths have been detected and removed from the model in the first analysis phase (Gürbüz, 2019). The insignificant paths are the direct effects of variables such as conservatism ($\beta=0.03$, $p > 0.05$), interpersonal nostalgia ($\beta=0.07$, $p > 0.05$), and cultural nostalgia ($\beta=0.02$, $p > 0.05$) on popular history proneness. The model that has been retested after the exclusion of the insignificant paths are presented in Figure 6.

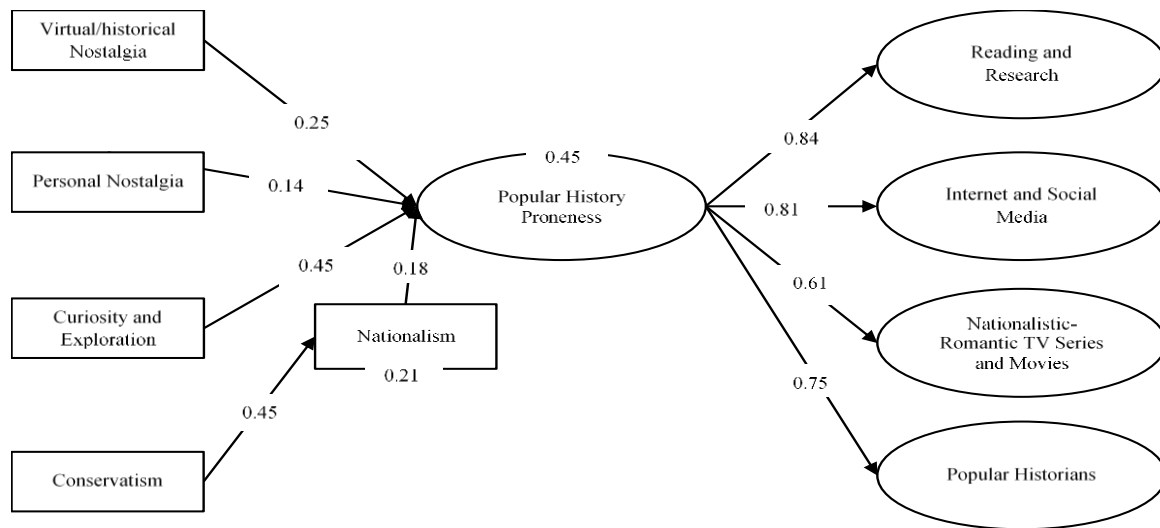


Figure 6. The Path diagram regarding the prediction of popular history proneness

Figure 6. shows the path diagram for the final model. Goodness of fit values obtained from the final model have revealed that the final model was fit and acceptable ($\chi^2 [22, N= 343] = 66.227; p<0.001; \chi^2/df = 3.01; RMSEA= 0.07; SRM = 0.05; CFI= 0.96; GFI = 0.96; AGFI = 0.92; IFI= 0.96; NFI= 0.94; NNFI=0.93$). In the obtained structural model, no insignificant path has been found. Table 2. presents the coefficient estimates regarding the model.

Table 2. Path analysis estimates for the proposed model

H	Effect	Structural Relation	Direction	Path Coefficient β	p	Result
H ₅	Direct effect	NAT → PHP	Positive	0.181	**	Significant
H ₈	Direct effect	CON → NAT	Positive	0.455	**	Significant
H ₇	Indirect effect	CON → PHP	Positive	0.082	*	Significant
H ₁	Direct effect	PN → PHP	Positive	0.142	*	Significant
H ₃	Direct effect	VN → PHP	Positive	0.255	**	Significant
H ₉	Direct effect	CE → PHP	Positive	0.446	**	Significant

**p<0.001, *p<0.01; PHP, popular history proneness; NAT, nationalism; CON, conservatism; PN, personal nostalgia; VN, virtual nostalgia; CE, curiosity and exploration.

The direct and indirect effect values are given in Table 2. Nationalism ($\beta=0.18, p<0.001$), personal nostalgia ($\beta=0.14, p<0.01$), virtual nostalgia ($\beta=0.25, p<0.001$) and curiosity and exploration ($\beta=0.45, p<0.001$) suggest a direct positive effect on popular history proneness. Furthermore, it is detected that conservatism ($\beta =0.45, p<0.001$) directly affects nationalism in a positive manner. Besides, the variables of nationalism, personal nostalgia, virtual nostalgia, curiosity and exploration explain 45% of the total change on the popular history proneness variable ($R^2=0.45$). The results of the bootstrapping analysis showing the significance of the indirect effects in the model are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. The Bootstrapping Analysis Results on Indirect Effects of Conservatism

Independent Variable	Mediator Variable	Dependent Variable	Standardised indirect effect (β)	%95 Confidence Interval		
				Lower Confidence Limit	Upper Confidence Limit	Confidence
Conservatism	Nationalism	Popular History Proneness	0.082	0.036	0.133	

As can be seen in Table 3., the lower and upper confidence interval values obtained with the bootstrapping analysis through the percentile method (percentile bootstrapping confidence intervals) do not

contain the zero value. Therefore, it can be argued that the indirect effect of conservatism on popular history proneness through the variable of nationalism is significant ($\beta = .082$, 95% CI [.036, .133]) (Gürbüz, 2019).

Discussion and Conclusion

The employed model has suggested that interpersonal nostalgia does not affect popular history proneness. This result makes sense when considering that interpersonal nostalgia mostly expresses the longing for an individual's past social environment. The results are significant when interpersonal nostalgia is conceived in relation, not to the ancestors' past, but individuals' past with their contacts (Güzel & Okan, 2016). The developed model displayed no effect of cultural nostalgia on popular history proneness. The results seem reasonable when cultural nostalgia is conceived as a generation's longing for their time's musical trends and clothing fashion (Keskin & Memiş, 2011, p.195).

If the weakest significant effect of personal nostalgia is left out, it can be argued that virtual/historical nostalgia is the sole genre that affects popular history proneness among nostalgia types (see Figure 5). Indeed, studies have found that nostalgia effects on consumers' behaviours, purchase intentions (Chen, Yeh & Huan, 2014; Fariz & Putra, 2020), attitudes toward advertisements, and products (Muehling & Sprott, 2004; Bambauer-Sachse & Gierl, 2009).

Studies on the subject support the empirical results of the research. For example, studies have found positive effects of both personal and historical nostalgia on attitude, buying intention, affective response, mood after consumption, and enhancing consumers' involvement with advertising (Natterer, 2015; Muehling & Pascal, 2012). Studies in the field of marketing show that personal nostalgia is superior to historical nostalgia (Marchegiani & Phau, 2011; Muehling & Pascal, 2012; Natterer, 2014). In the context of the film, both types of nostalgia are effective (Natterer, 2015). Current research has shown that historical nostalgia is more effective than personal nostalgia in the context of popular history consumption. Also, historical nostalgia/vicarious nostalgia is important for the success of historical contents (Lim, 2019). Because with vicarious nostalgia, consumers' vicarious participation in a historical era that is narrated in historical films, television series and novels are provided (Stern, 1992).

While a direct effect of nostalgia and nationalism on popular history proneness has been detected, conservatism has had merely an indirect effect on the concept through nationalism. The fact that popular history products present national histories that polish nationalist sentiments (Haydn, 2015; Bozkurt & Bayındır, 2015) makes the nationalism variable's effect on popular history proneness significant for the study. Furthermore, the nationalist and religious characteristics of history series produced in Türkiye endorse the mentioned identities (Güngör, 2019; Erman, 2016). On the other hand, that popular historical products appeal to nationalist-conservative identities is a general trend. Indeed, it is a given that political trends and ideologies affect historiography (Yazıcı & Yıldırım, 2018), which themselves nurture national identities. Also, cinema in Türkiye is a reflection of national identity (nationalist-conservative) (Aditama, Rachmanti & Soekarba, 2019; Cetin-Erus & Erus, 2020).

Nevertheless, revisionist historiography, prevalent on the internet and social media, cannot go beyond insulting, gossip and discrimination (Hanioglu, 2017). Even though the internet and social media provide the youth with easily reachable and entertaining information opportunities, this does not come by no means without any side-effects (Okumuş, 2019). Consequently, historical content on social media may be misleading and unreliable. The legends that ill-informed eyes cannot catch may spread in this platform (Poe, 2000; Çelik, & Elbasan, 2018). Giving media literacy lessons to students and teachers has been proposed to avoid this problem (Okumuş, 2019). Another proposal is to help students advance their historical awareness to make them wary of how history is used for political, economic and social purposes (McDaniel, 2015). Also, the

advancement of the history students and teachers' media-literacy skills would help prevent the harmful use of popular history.

Rising popular cultural nationalism is reflected in movies and television series. This situation is observed in countries where popular cultural nationalism is on the rise (Jing, 2006). For example, after the historical TV series, the fashion for old Turkish warrior clothes started in Türkiye (Kaymaz, 2018). Similarly, it is emphasized that the effects of political and cultural nationalism in the re-emergence of the qipao dress (Chew, 2007). Because, "Vicarious nostalgia represents a yearning for traditional, conservative, and community values of bygone eras" (Merchant & Ford 2008, p.17). Besides, the result obtained in the research is also meaningful in terms of the concept of restorative nostalgia that Boym (2001) stated. Indeed, "Restorative nostalgia is at the core of recent national and religious revivals"

Conservatism and nationalism substantially rely on history in identity construction. While the religious past is the highlighted element of conservative circles' affinity with history, the nationalist-conservative circles put the weight on the ancestors' victories and heroism (Aydos, 2013). In this respect, conservatism and nationalism variables' positive effect on popular history proneness that flourish on the national and moral values and heroic narratives is theoretically significant (Beriş, 2010). In other words, exciting popular history products attract individuals longing for the shared past and the heroism in their national history, helping them feel their identity.

The great demand of Turkish popular history products in the Balkans, the Middle East and Central Asia can be explained by the common history (Ottoman Empire history for the Balkans and the Middle East, more pre-Islamic Turkish history for Central Asia). Because, "Shared history also draws countries together in cultural-linguistic markets" (La Pastina & Straubhaar, 2005). To the same extent, cultural proximity and historical ties are other important factors (Cabric et al., 2013; Balaban, 2015; Zadrožna, 2017). The romantic presentation of Turkish history also includes the evocation of nostalgia (Roy, 2015).

The model developed in this study displays that curiosity and exploration have the most potent effect on popular history proneness. Put it another way; it is the feeling of curiosity and exploration that most affect popular history proneness. This effect can be explained by the interesting and entertaining contents of popular history products that attract individuals (Mencet & Ergin, 2018). In fact, imaginative adventure is constructed in vicarious nostalgic historical productions (Stern, 1992). In this way, curious consumers are indirectly involved in this adventure. Because the experience of watching entertainment or TV series satisfies the need for curiosity (Arslan, 2013; Batıgün & Sunal, 2017; Wagner, et al., 2021). As stated previously the TV series depict the Ottoman past in a glorious, romantic way (Zadrožna, 2017). Audiences watching TV series depicting the Ottoman past in a glorious and romantic way explained the reason for watching it with her curiosity about historical events (Kasap et al., 2018). If historical narratives are to be presented by commercial media, then popular curiosity and nostalgia come together (Jing, 2006). The previous studies show that history series significantly enhance viewers' interest (Faiz, & Avcı, 2020). This argument seems valid as the popular history products' main goal is to trigger the reader's excitement and curiosity (Glaser, 2015). Therefore, it can be argued that the individuals' curiosity and exploration impulses generate their interest in popular history products. From an educational perspective, the utilisation of movies is also recommended in history teaching. Pupils from different study levels and teachers have expressed that employment of historical movies and series in history teaching would make history lessons fun; that it contributes to the learning of historical places/architecture enhancing the historical understanding; that it provides effective and permanent learning and concretisation; and that it helped their ability to perceive time and chronology improve (Handa, 2010; Donnelly, 2014; Öztaş, 2015; Gezici & Demir, 2018). However, certain studies have also emphasised the necessity of special education related to the subject during utilising movies in history teaching (Demircioğlu, 2007; Donnelly, 2014). This is because the fictional feature of movies and TV series may go unnoticed by

viewers or students, consequently leaving the questions regarding their accuracy untouched. The myths circulated, the misconception of history, dependence on the popular history products in history education, violence and obscenity render special education on popular history more crucial than ever (Handa, 2010; Gezici, & Demir, 2018). On the other hand, popular history products can be utilised in classes as supplementary materials under teacher control to vivify the academic teaching (Bozkurt, & Bayındır, 2015). For example, history lessons can be made more palatable to children by adopting historical novels to their level (Ata, 2000).

According to the concept of similarity in Parasocial Theory, the individual wants to interact more with people who have similar attitudes and values in their interpersonal interactions (Byrne & Nelson 1965; Batıgün & Sunal, 2017; Aytulun & Sunal, 2020). From this point of view, conservative nationalist audiences in Türkiye interact with conservative nationalist historical heroes in popular history movies and the TV series.

Limitations and suggestions for future research

There are some limitations to the current research. First, the results of the research are limited to Türkiye and more specifically to university students. Therefore, the research is insufficient to explain the worldwide interest in TV series that tell Turkish history. Considering the theories and variables in the current research, studies with samples outside of Türkiye will make a great contribution to the relevant literature. In addition, historical curiosity scale (Passmore, 1987), which reflects the field of special curiosity, can be developed and used as a new variable. Finally, the use of national nostalgia (Smeekes, 2014), which reflects a special field, as a variable will contribute to this field.

Appendix

Popular history proneness scale (PHPS) and Personal Information Form (PIF)

1. I enjoy reading the biographies of great men and women in history.
2. I follow discussions on history on social media.
3. I plan to read the books dealing with the victories of my ancestors.
4. I enjoy listening to historians who tell about exemplary events in history.
5. I try to find historians' remarks who allegedly unveil the hidden facts of history on the internet.
6. I follow social media contents that deal with the heroism of my ancestors.
7. I would like to see historians on TV who talk about interesting subjects more often.
8. I like to watch history movies and TV series that tell about my ancestors' exemplary lives.
9. I recommend books dealing with controversial issues in history to my friends.
10. I read the life stories of successful politicians in history.
11. I investigate what the historian I like has to say about a controversial topic in history.
12. I recommend the TV series that deals with the history of my ancestors to friends.
13. I research unique history topics on social media.
14. I enjoy watching historians who excite me with what they tell on TV.
15. History TV series depicting the heroism of my ancestors excites me.
16. I would like more movies and series to be produced about my ancestors' great victories in history.

Note: Psychometric tests of the scale have been conducted in Turkish.

How much do you identify yourself as conservative?

How much do you identify yourself as nationalist?

never (1) scarcely (2) a little (3) somewhat (4) notably (5) much (6) too much (7)

Ethics Committee Approval:

The ethics committee of Bayburt University approved the current study (The committee's reference number: 01.29.2021, E-79126184-050.99-3830).

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