Spotify effect in new podcast markets. Combined model proposal for analysis of increasing interest in podcasting: The case of Turkey

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Abstract

Podcasts have been offered as a new service by digital music providers for several years now. The shift from Really Simple Syndication (RSS) distribution to central distribution channels has increased the interest in podcasts in low-consumption markets. This study aimed to examine the reasons for the recent increased interest in podcasts in Turkey. To analyze the growth in the popularity of podcasts, a model based on the technology acceptance model and the uses and gratifications theory was used, and a questionnaire targeting the users who listened to podcasts through *Spotify*, the most popular music streaming service in Turkey, was administered. According to the data obtained, the majority of the participants had first heard about podcasts through *Spotify* once they announced that they were offering podcasts as part of their services. The perceived ease of use in listening to podcasts served as the major factor behind listening motivations, perceived usefulness of the services, and attitude toward use. Therefore, although the popularization of podcasts in new markets seems to be associated with their unique content, the decisive factor driving the popularization of podcasts is actually more related to the ability podcasts offer users, who are faced with so many stimuli, to access the preferred content anytime and anywhere in a clear and straightforward manner.

Keywords

Podcasts; Podcasting; RSS; Audiences; Technology acceptance model; Uses and gratifications theory; *Spotify*; Central distribution networks; Perceived ease of use; Webcasting.

1. Introduction

Podcasts have recently been attracting greater attention as a popular form of broadcasting in Turkey. Despite its long history, podcast broadcasting in Turkey still has relatively limited production and interest. However, over the last few years, radio stations and free content producers have stepped up their efforts to broadcast podcasts more frequently than before to cultivate a greater demand in their audiences. For instance, the *Google Trends* data for the period between 2014 and 2021 indicate that the frequency of searching the term "podcast" started to increase in 2019 and peaked in April 2020, a date that aligned with the onset of the global Covid-19 pandemic. Although *iTunes* started to offer podcasts after 2005, global market players like

> Turkey had the highest increase in the world in the rate of people listening to podcasts in 2020

Google and *Spotify*[1] began to create movement in the podcast market in 2018 and 2019, respectively, a factor believed to have increased the interest in podcasts in Turkey.

With the inception of the Really Simple Syndication (RSS) distribution format some time ago, podcasts were adopted by the producers of professional and independent contents in the U.S. and Europe. Podcasts were seen as symbols of the "do-it-yourself" approach, one of the main principles of Web 2.0. The more personalized listening experience offered by podcasts and the options these experiences create for advertisement opportunities compared to those of traditional radio are perceived as both an advantage and a challenge for traditional broadcasting (**Markman**; **Sawyer**, 2014). As podcasts have evolved, they have turned into an attractive media format, insofar as they go beyond a simple fill-in-the gap secondary audio medium. With their on-demand, time and space independent, and mobile-powered features, podcasts serve as an essential audio tool for today's demanding media consumers (**Chan-Olmsted**; **Wang**, 2020). In high-lighting how online platforms have been making invest-ments to enter the podcast market in order to access new advertisers and increase their advertising revenue, **Sullivan** (2019) noted that such actions have changed the relevant market.

> " Listeners in the podcast system of Turkey are concentrated in the younger popula-tion and there is a high level of dedica-tion to the act of listening "

It has often been mentioned that not enough research has been conducted on podcast broadcasting (**Bonini**, 2015; **Bottomley**, 2015; **Markman**, 2012; **McClung**; **Johnson**, 2010; **Mou**; **Lin**, 2015). Despite the regularly conducted research on the educational use of podcasts, it has been argued that most of the limited amount of research conducted within the scope of broadcasting was carried out in the infancy of this media (**Bottomley**, 2015). In Turkey, there are only a limited number of studies on podcasts, which is still a very new market, and in these studies, the subject has only been dis-cussed conceptually (**Akıner**, 2011; **Budak**, 2019; 2021; **Kutlu**, 2020; **Şener**, 2020; **Soydan**, 2016; **Tufan**, 2020; **Yıldırım**; **Kalender**, 2018; **Yücel**, 2020). The history of market analyses on podcasts covers the last couple of years, with the first of these analyses involving a questionnaire administered by *Podiolab*, a Turkish podcasting site, to its audience. According to the results of this questionnaire, 69.9% of participants stated that they listened to podcasts every day (**İbrişim**, 2019). Another study showed that Turkey had the highest increase in the world in the rate of people listening to podcasts in 2020 (**Koyuncu**, 2021). The latest research published by *Ipsos* (2021) revealed that in Turkey, *Spotify* was the site on which podcasts were listened to the most.

More research on podcast listeners in emerging markets like Turkey is needed. Podcast broadcasting, which is based on RSS feeds and has an irregular distribution model, has undergone a transformation by transitioning to a platform-based distribution model. In terms of visibility and accessibility, music streaming platforms offer a more useful environment for podcast broadcasting than RSS. Although RSS is considered a useful add-on for websites, it has not been widely adopted by internet users. According to the present study, the addition of podcasts to the content catalog of *Spotify* increased the interest in podcasts in Turkey. The aim of this study was to determine the factors driving *Spotify* users to listen to pod-casts by conducting a survey based on a model that adapts the measurement instruments of the Technology Acceptance Model and the Uses and Gratifications Theory. It is believed that the data obtained will provide important information related to defining user response to the changes in the distribution format of podcast broadcasting and to the develop-ment of new markets like Turkey.

2. Literature review

2.1. Definition of podcast

Podcasts, which are digital audio and video files that were developed at the beginning of the 21st century, when social media and cloud computing did not yet exist, have a decentralized distribution structure with open source RSS support and a variety of sources, from professional ones, like radios, publishers, journalists and educational institutions, to inde-pendent producers, artists or amateurs, and they can be downloaded to a computer, *iPod*, or mobile media player for later play back (**Bonini**, 2015; **DeLys**; **Foley**, 2006; **Lee** *et al.*, 2009; **McClung**; **Johnson**, 2010; **Menduni**, 2007; **Mou**; **Lin**, 2015; **Stachyra**, 2017).

The term "podcasting" is based on the combination of the words broadcasting and *iPod*[2] ; however, the mindset behind that technology is rooted the world of blogging (**Crofts** *et al.*, 2005). Essentially, the first podcasts were even described as audio blogs. The emergence of podcast begins with Mark Curry, a former *MTV* VJ, who looked for a solution on how to download audio files automatically from the Internet to make his job easier. Because Dave Winer, the creator of the blog syndication code Real Simple Syndication (RSS) had adapted RSS software to handle audio files, a solution arose for Cur-ry. According to **Berry** (2006), Winer and Curry began discussing how this technology could be used to get content from the web automatically. Curry created the first version of *iPodder*, a tool for capturing pods. Then, Curry's Daily Source Code program took the digital consumption model of podcasting mainstream in August 2004; Winer helped develop RSS for this purpose for his program *Morning Coffee Notes* (**Prince**, 2020). Consequently, podcasting software directories such as *iPodder* became available, and podcasting increased in popularity. Shortly after that, *iTunes* began to offer pod-casts to users (**Menduni**, 2007; **McClung**; **Johnson**, 2010; **Markman**, 2012; **Botomley**, 2015). However, it has been ar-

gued that the popularity of podcasting seems to revolve around a company (*Apple*) and is even associated with a player (*iPod*) released by that company; therefore, a bias against *iPod* developed among the listeners (**Bottomley**, 2015).Within a short period of time, files that allowed listeners to access and use the broadcasts at their own discretion became known as "podcasts" (**Swanson**, 2012). A number of researchers have argued that the RSS feature is what distinguishes podcasts from other audio feeds and downloadable online audio files on the internet (**Bottomley**, 2015). Unlike many cultural media found on the web today (e.g., *YouTube* for videos, *Flickr* for photographs, and *Facebook* for socializing), the platform for podcasts serves as a central point connecting producers and audiences (**Sullivan**, 2019). More precisely, podcasts are conceptualized as a unique form of online participation that is characterized as grassroots media. Contrary to traditional structuring, a podcast broadcaster does not need studios, transmitters, or licenses, an advantage that facilitates the transition from listener to producer (**Berry**, 2006). Podcasts offer traditional broadcasters the opportunity to expand their reach and internet users the opportunity of becoming a media producer without being subject to traditional editorial oversight, advantages that are considered to be a reflection of the internet's great symmetrical communication potential (**Markman**; **Sawyer**, 2014; **Nyre**; **Ala-Fossi**, 2008). Therefore, podcasts can be understood as an example of user generated content (UGC), which is closely tied to the culture of convergence (**Hartley**, 1996; **Jenkins**, 2006; **Spurgeon**; **Goggin**, 2007).

> *Spotify*'s acquisition of *Gimlet Media*, *Anchor*, and *Parcast* in 2019 drew the attention of investors, advertisers, and content creators toward the podcast sector in Turkey

Although podcasts support audio, video, or multiple formats, users tend to equate them with audio and associate them with radio (**Markman**; **Sawyer**, 2014). Podcasts, by their very nature, are dependent upon the cultural definition of audio files as a secondary medium and are designed to accompany daily life practices. Thus, in this sense, they are similar to old radio broadcasts that try to draw the attention of audiences (**Morris**; **Patterson**, 2015). In fact, podcasts have been compared to the broadcasting works of amateur radio operators (**Menduni**, 2007). However, those who emphasize that podcasts are not live and instant like radio suggest that podcasts should be considered as a new instrument and form of communication rather than a digital, mobile, and on-demand extension of radio (**Chan-Olmsted**; **Wang**, 2020; **Perks** *et al.*, 2019; **Perks**; **Turner**, 2019). However, the potential that podcast broadcasting has to evade institutional constraints has attracted the attention of sponsors and turned podcasting into a profitable business (**Stachyra**, 2017). In fact, predictions about the commercial future of podcasting have emerged since it became widespread in the USA. In addition to having the same features as traditional media like radio, its other features such as time-shifting, user control, portability, and global coverage provide it with potential for an applicable commercial medium (**Claburn**, 2005). Drawing attention to the effort of brands to exist on developing platforms to reach consumers under today's conditions when media consumption is increasingly fragmented, **Bezbaruah** and **Brahmbhatt** (2022) have emphasized that although podcasts offered by music platforms are at a very new stage, they attract advertisers and a significant number of consumer groups. Podcast advertising, with high approval and conversion rates, is characterized as extraordinary at a time when many consumers are trying to abstain from advertising (**Moe**, 2021). Although it has been highlighted that the number of podcast followers has increased exponentially, that advertisers believe that podcast hosts have become trustable influencers among the listeners, and that advertisements have yielded positive results for brands, industry experts agree that the transcendent commercialization of podcast has yet to materialize (**Brinson**; **Lemon**, 2022).

Pointing out that the definition of "podcast" has changed over time, **Olmsted** and **Wang** (2020) argue that "downloadability" and "audio" are no longer absolutes. Podcast producers and consumers commonly use *YouTube* as a distribution platform, and discussions about video podcasts have become popular. Another change has been the replacement of the "download and listen later" model with the "listen now" model. Podcasts are no longer simply contents that can be accessed via an RSS feed, but rather, have turned into a cloud-based audio format that can be synchronized between phones, tablets, computers, and other audio devices connected to a network (**Berry**, 2016).

2.2. Podcast as a broadcasting format in Turkey

Although the history of podcasts dates to the early 2000s, it is often highlighted that podcasts are a very new concept for Turkish audiences. In fact, according to one study, only 11% of people in Turkey have heard about the term "podcast" (*Ipsos*, 2021). Data from *Google Trends* show that the frequency of searches for the term "podcast" gained momentum in 2005 and peaked in 2006. The search frequency of the term, which was relatively low up to 2017, peaked again in April of 2020. Trends data further show that the queries most relevant to podcasts included the terms "*Spotify*" and "*Spotify* podcast".

In early studies in Turkey examining podcasts as a form of broadcasting, the concept appears as a distribution technology and extension of radio (**Akıner**, 2011; **Soydan**, 2016; **Yücel**, 2020). However, limiting the idea of podcasts to technological instruments and the ability to use them has been criticized (**Şener**, 2020). According to **Tufan** (2020), the adaptation to podcasts in Turkey has gone slower than the speed of the transition from radio to internet broadcasting.

> *Spotify* is the most preferred music platform in Turkey, and podcast consumption is mostly done through it
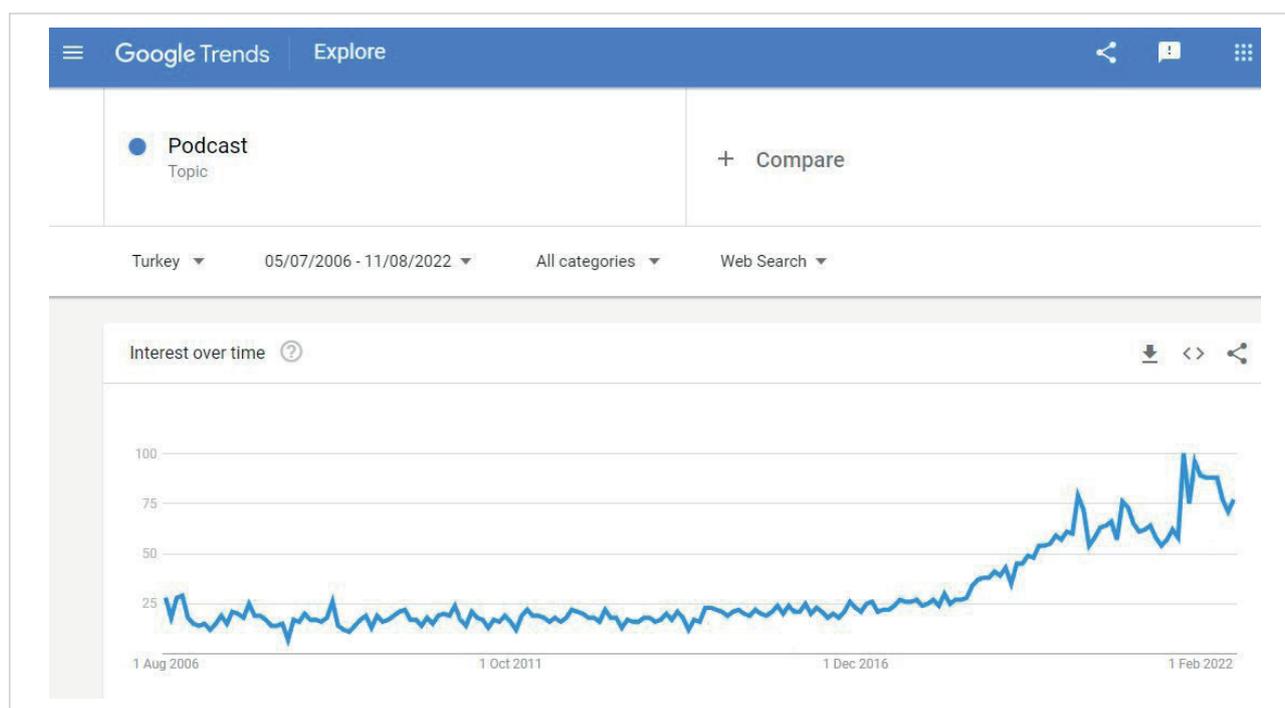
Figure 1. Interest over time (2006-2022) of the word "podcast" in Turkey, according to *Google Trends*

The fact that podcasts offer mass broadcasting opportunities to amateur content producers without requiring advanced technology knowledge and infrastructure is viewed as a practical way for those who have difficulty making their voices heard through mass media in Turkey, as well as for journalists who have been removed from mainstream media for whatever reason, to reach the public (**Budak**, 2021; **Kutlu**, 2020; **Şener**, 2020). Therefore, in this sense, podcast broadcasting is positioned as alternative media. However, emphasis is placed on the potential that podcasts offer in broadcasting cultural, educational, and informative content, rather than entertainment content, due to their structure being independent of general broadcasting. Data from the relevant literature indicate that some traditional media organizations in Turkey have also aimed to reach podcast audiences by converting their news content or television programs on their websites into audio files (**Kutlu**, 2020). However, the majority of these podcasts are simply a continuation of the aforenoted contents and programs and offer no podcast-specific content (**Tufan**, 2020). Therefore, researchers argue that podcasts produced by media organizations are insufficient in terms of quality and quantity, thus, they are far from being competitive on a global scale (**Semiz-Türkoğlu**; **Ağca**, 2021).

Academic research on a new form of media for Turkey mostly deals with podcasting at a conceptual level and market research is limited, which does not provide a sufficient data set to define Turkish podcast listeners. However, the data that *Podiolab*, a Turkish podcast site, has conducted in one of the pioneering studies released can be a clue. Based on these data, 34.2% of the site's followers who participated in the study regularly listened to a podcast in the last 1–3 years. Of the participants, 49.1% reported that they listen to podcasts to learn new information, 28.7% for personal education (e.g., learning a new language), and 17.9% to follow daily news and developments. By age distribution, 41.9% were 25–34, 29.5% were 18–24, and 19.5% were in the 35–44 age range. The data obtained indicated that podcast listeners listen to approximately 80–90% of a podcast broadcast uninterruptedly (*Digitalage*, 2019). It can be claimed based on these results that listeners in the podcast system of Turkey are concentrated in the younger population, and that there is a high level of dedication to the act of listening.

An academic study, conducted with 11 podcast listeners, that differed from other studies in terms of being listener-oriented, examined the participants' motivations for listening (**Kaynar**, 2021). The results of the study showed that participants listen to podcasts to spend time well, to learn new information, to follow current events, and to spend high quality free-time. Participants also noted that they often listen to podcasts while doing daily tasks that do not require attention, walking, or travelling. They regard podcasts as both an alternative and a complementary element to traditional broadcasting tools. Another result obtained from this study was that although participants previously used other podcast platforms, they now prefer *Spotify* for its ease of use (**Kaynar**, 2021).

It can be argued in light of the limited data obtained from these studies that the significant factor among the motivations that lead to podcast use in Turkey is obtaining information. Having fun and spending time as other motivational factors also draw attention. In this context,

> Although podcast publishing became more active in 2019, especially in the field of journalism, Turkey is still at the entry level in this sector

podcast listening trends in Turkey are in line with the listening trends in countries where podcast listening is common. A study conducted by **Craig** *et al.* (2021) with university students found that entertainment, escape, and obtaining knowledge were dominant motivational factors. This study also reported that entertainment was

> This study focuses on not only the intrinsic motivations but also on the external motivations responsible for triggering the interest in podcasts

a strong predictor of podcast listening, and that both entertainment and escapism were predictors of positive attitudes toward podcasts. Another study revealed that podcasts were preferred for listening using portable devices, and that listeners could listen to the content they wanted whenever they wanted, were the prominent motivational factors (**McClung**; **Johnson**, 2010). According to **Perks** *et al.* (2019), who argue that listening to podcasts is not just about the podcast itself, podcast is an easily intertwined medium that fits effortlessly into the cramped, media-rich lives we live today.

2.3. Central distribution networks and podcasts

The increased interest in podcasts can be attributed to their global platforming. After web 2.0, as the internet transformed into an area where platforms developed and expanded, social networks have become the central points where internet users are concentrated (**Sullivan**, 2019). Digital platforms are now central to the generation, distribution, and monetization of cultural contents. The search engines, social networks, photo and video sharing services, messaging apps, operating systems, app stores, and cloud services operated by these platforms shape visibility and access to cultural content (**Poell**, 2020).

As a result, the RSS-based and decentralized structure of the Internet in the early days began to centralize in parallel with the increase in the effectiveness of social networks. RSS developers have focused on a structure that will allow users to set their own online preferences. However, social networks, likewise RSS, provide a feed of the latest news from the Internet. This structure also provides greater benefits to companies that oversee networks. Although RSS continues to power many applications on the web today, it has become an obscure technology for most people (**Target**, 2019). Even though RSS is actively used by websites, it needs to be emphasized that it does not attract the attention of Internet users; moreover, most users who do not adopt RSS do not understand what RSS is, and some users are not aware of whether they use RSS or not (**Ma**, 2015). A study on the use of RSS in educational fields reported that students do not tend to subscribe to RSS feeds; instead, they preferred to download media files manually (**Lee** *et al.*, 2009). It is noteworthy that Internet browsers that offer RSS support and companies that develop popular RSS readers no longer update these programs, which is a negative development. Although RSS podcasting is argued to be a distinguishing feature from other on-demand audio formats (**Hoyt** *et al.*, 2021), RSS also enables the proliferation of inconsistent and idiosyncratic podcast metadata on the Internet, thus causing a problem for the user in terms of keeping track of these podcast series. On the other hand, **Winer** (2021) criticizes the efforts of companies such as *Spotify* to dominate podcasting on its blog and points out that users should own the technology design underlying the podcast and that developers should rebuild it from scratch to preserve the freedom that podcasting provides to listeners and creators.

Over time, podcasts have evolved from do-it-yourself amateur niche media to commercial mass media (**Bonini**, 2015). In markets where interest in podcasts is high, music streaming services have expanded towards podcast audiences to commercially evaluate their commitment profiles as active listeners. Users who believe podcasts are superior to other audio media platforms also tend to be heavy users of online music. Recognizing this trend, *Spotify* and *Pandora*, two giants of the music streaming sector, have started to invest heavily in podcasts to appeal to audio audiences (**Chan-Olmsted**; **Wang**, 2020). Companies offering podcast hosting charge content producers subscription fees, which are usually scheduled monthly and/or on the number of downloads. However, the increasing demand for podcasts on a global scale has also increased the value of the podcast hosting business. At this point, purchases among companies providing podcast services constitute the first steps toward centralization of their fragmented structure. The success of business models based on monthly subscription payments, such as *Netflix*, has set an example for podcast service providers, and RSS-based open access has gradually started to transform into subscription-based listening (**Yücel**, 2020).

Spotify's acquisition of *Gimlet Media*, *Anchor*, and *Parcast* in 2019 drew the attention of investors, advertisers, and content creators toward the podcast sector in Turkey (**İbrişim**, 2019). According to İlkan Akgül, one of the co-founders of the podcast site *Podfresh*, Turkey is a *Spotify* country and Turkish subscribers' interest in podcast content has increased because most digital music consumption is carried out through *Spotify* (**Nebil**, 2020). **Küpeli** (2020) from *Podimag*, a Turkish podcast magazine, also emphasizes that *Spotify* is mostly used to listen to podcasts in Turkey. However, according to **Uzunoğlu** (2019) –one of the founders of *Mediapod*, another Turkish podcast website– there is not yet a common approach to what a podcast is in Turkey. It is even debated whether it is suitable for Turkish culture. **Küpeli** (2020), on the other

hand, argued that many social media celebrities started podcasting during the pandemic with the enthusiasm and excitement of being a pioneer in this new publishing field for Turkey, thus contributing to an increase in the awareness of podcasting. However, according to Küpeli, the most difficult part of this new medium is the confu-

> It is more effortless and easier to listen to podcasts that have transformed from RSS-based distribution to platform-based access

sion about how to listen to it. There are many applications, primarily *Spotify*, where the podcast publisher can meet with the listener and this, at some point, has made it difficult for listeners to make a choice among them.

Based on data of the *Chartable* site, which carries out podcast measurements globally, in Turkey in 2020, there was a 3.5-fold increase in podcast production compared to the previous year's data, whereas there was a 5.2-fold increase on the listener side (**Zohrob**, 2021). Although this seems related to Covid-19 restrictions, it has been stated that almost half of podcast listeners in Turkey listen to podcasts via *Spotify*, and that podcast genres most listened to are comedy and interview (**Muradoğlu**, 2021).

Commercialization, which **Bonini** (2015) calls the second age of podcasting and associates it with the first business models that started in the US in 2012, seems to have just started for the Turkish podcast ecosystem. Following a very weak production and consumption process, *Spotify*'s positive impact on the awareness of podcasts merged with individuals' confinement to their homes during the pandemic and provided an opportunity for them to discover new experiences. Therefore, in addition to increasing listening rates, increasing content production has also led to the search for business models. However, according to **Uzunoğlu** (2019), there are still some obstacles to the popularization of podcasting in Turkey that need to be overcome. That author proposes the obstacles include that podcast production requires freedom of expression and comfort, that the podcast genre is useless without creativity, openness, and polyphony, and that the economic model of podcasting has not yet been established and is a field awaiting investment. Although podcast publishing became more active in 2019, especially in the field of journalism, Turkey is still at the entry level in the podcast sector.

3. Research model and hypotheses

In research on podcast audiences, the theoretical framework is generally based on the uses and gratifications approach. This theory argues that people's communication-based attitudes are shaped around their needs and desires, where it is assumed that audiences actively scan the media to meet their personal needs (**Ongena** *et al.*, 2013 as cited in **Katz** *et al.*, 1973). Motivation and satisfaction are the two core constructs of the uses and gratifications (U&G) theory. From a general perspective, motivation refers to what consumers seek and expect, while satisfaction refers to what consumers actually obtain (**Chan-Olmsted**; **Wang**, 2020). Assuming the presence of a purposeful and intentional audience will provide a good theoretical framework to understanding podcast audiences (**Perks**; **Turner**, 2019). The motivation factors in the research on the motivations of listening to podcasts include mobility and ability to listen to any content anytime and anywhere (**McClung**; **Johnson**, 2010), customizable experiences and multi-tasking (**Perks** *et al.*, 2019), entertainment, escape and information (**Craig** *et al.*, 2021), and helping to fall asleep (**Samuel-Azran** *et al.*, 2019). It is believed, however, that this theoretical framework, which focuses on intrinsic motivations and satisfaction factors, would offer only a one-sided approach to analyzing the reasons for the rise of podcasts in Turkey. This study therefore focuses on not only the intrinsic motivations but also on the external motivations responsible for triggering the interest in podcasts.

There are many studies investigating the adoption and use of informational technologies. These studies have developed theoretical models to reveal how consumers adapt to technology. One of these models, the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), is often preferred as a framework model because it offers a lean approach to the adoption of innovations. Using the concepts of Perceived Usefulness (PU) and Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU) at the technology adoption stage, **Davis** (1989) aimed to reveal users' behavioral tendency in the adoption of technology, as well as the real purpose behind the use of technology. PEOU has a significant impact on PU, and both have an effect on Attitude Toward Use (ATU). The model structure allows the adaptations to be understood in terms of the relationships between the variables [e.g., the Technology Acceptance Model 2 by **Venkatesh** and **Davis** (2000); the Technology Acceptance Model 3 by **Venkatesh** and **Bala** (2008); and the Combined Technology Acceptance and Usage Model seen in different studies (**Venkatesh** *et al.*, 2003, 2012)]. As a tool set used in many empirical studies, TAM contains the statistics needed for a meta-analysis (**King**; **He**, 2006).

This model has also been preferred as a theoretical basis for examining the acceptance and use of online media. However, researchers who have pointed to the limited capacity of TAM to address business processes have noted that the model should be combined with the U&G theory to better identify the internal and external motivations regarding media usage behaviors (**Cha**, 2013; **Luo** *et al.*, 2006). Although U&G is not a theory of business technology use, it nonetheless does not exclude the technology used from the context of consumer motivations. While TAM is often associated with organizational targets, the theoretical focus of U&G is personal. Another relevant approach proposes examining the differences in user acceptance patterns for productivity-oriented and hedonic-oriented information systems in TAM research. Accordingly, users are likely to be either more hedonist or more pragmatic in their tendency to use information systems (**Van-der-Heijden**, 2004). The difference between TAM-based models and U&G is claimed to be the scenario applied (**Stafford** *et al.*, 2004). It has been noted that technological innovation, which is the subject of TAM research, takes place in environments where the use of technology is imperative. For this rea-

> For the question on where they had heard about podcasts, the most ticked option was *Spotify* (32.1%), followed by social media (30.9%). *Spotify* was the most preferred site for listening podcasts

son, **Al Omoush** and **Amin** (2010), who considered the voluntariness dimension to be controversial, worked on an extended model with U&G that examined why people use media and the satisfaction derived from media use and access. **Huang** (2008) analyzed e-consumer behaviors through a technology acceptance model that included two U&G attitudes. **Joo** and **Sang** (2013) performed research that combined TAM and U&G theory to specify the motivations affecting the adoption and use of smart phones by Koreans.

Podcasts have been available on *iTunes* for a long time. However, it was not until platforms like *Spotify*[3] entered the market that the interest in podcasts in Turkey really picked up, as it has become easier and requires less effort to listen to podcasts once their access transformed from an RSS-based distribution to a platform-based service.

Accordingly, a framework model wherein TAM and U&G methodologies were integrated was designed for the present research because PEOU, the basic independent variable of TAM, is an important factor. While TAM mostly focuses on the impact of technological innovation within a workflow on business efficiency, the choice of listening to podcasts is personal. Therefore, the motivations within the U&G approach are included in the model to define both internal and external motivations.

Perceived ease of use (PEOU): It is a predictor that measures users' beliefs about the effortless use of a specific technology. PEOU of technology affects both PU and ATU. People are more willing to use a new technology when they consider it easy to use (**Davis**, 1986; 1989). According to this study, *Spotify* had a significant impact on users' PEOU and PM in terms of accessing the podcasts through the platform.

> H1a: PEOU has a significant impact on INF.
> H1b: PEOU has a significant impact on EN.
> H1c: PEOU has a significant impact on PASST
> H1d: PEOU has a significant impact on ESC.
> H1e: PEOU has a significant impact on SC.
> H2: PEOU of the platform has a significant impact on PU.
> H3: PEOU of the platform has a significant impact on ATU.

Listening motivations: According to U&G theories, an individual's behavior is shaped by their needs. This variable can serve as a basic indicator for understanding how and why users utilize media (**Al-Omoush**; **Shaqrah**, 2010). Ultimately, target-oriented action meets one's needs. Studies examining the reasons for watching television have shown that the reasons include passing time, resting/relaxing, friendship, social interaction, habit, entertainment, information, stimulation, and escape (**Abelman** *et al.*, 1997; **Albarran**; **Umphrey**, 1993; **Rubin**, 1983). Research on the motivations to use the internet yielded similar results (**Cha**; **Chan-Olmsted**, 2012; **Ferguson**; **Perse**, 2000; **Papacharissi**; **Rubin**, 2000). In studies conducted to identify the reasons for listening to podcasts, different motives have been reported. However, these studies focused on uses in more established markets and were related to RSS-based distribution forms. Therefore, it is important that user behaviors, as they relate to the new market of podcasts, be analyzed in the new music platform distribution services. Usually in such cases, types from existing media are selected and analyzed in relation to the new media (**Perks** *et al.*, 2019). This study thus focuses on the motivation factors that U&G research often intersects. In this context, the motivation factors most frequently encountered in U&G research are information (INF), entertainment (EN), passing time (PASST), escape (ESC), and social interaction (SC).These motivations are believed to have a significant impact on both PU and ATU.

> H4a: INF, a listening motivation factor, has a significant impact on PU.
> H4b: EN, a listening motivation factor, has a significant impact on PU.
> H4c: PASST, a listening motivation factor, has a significant impact on PU.
> H4d: ESC, a listening motivation factor, has a significant impact on PU.
> H4e: SC, a listening motivation factor, has a significant impact on PU.
> H5a: INF, a listening motivation factor, has a significant impact on ATU.
> H5b: EN, a listening motivation factor, has a significant impact on ATU.
> H5c: PASST, a listening motivation factor, has a significant impact on ATU.
> H5d: ESC, a listening motivation factor, has a significant impact on ATU.
> H5e: SC, a listening motivation factor, has a significant impact on ATU.

Perceived usefulness (PU): This term refers to whether users consider a specific technology to be useful for what they aim to do. In the original model, this term is expressed as the degree to which an individual believes that using a certain system will improve their work performance (**Davis**, 1986; 1989). As often emphasized in previous studies, PU directly affects attitude toward use (ATU) within the context of technology adoption. In this study, PU was associated with the perceived benefit that audiences receive from using podcast services.

> H6. PU of the platform has a significant impact on ATU.

Attitude Toward Use (ATU): According to original TAM research, ATU measures people's beliefs regarding the use of a certain technology. It represents definite spectrum of positive and negative attitudes, such as like or dislike and good or bad. ATU is determined by PU and PEOU (**Davis**, 1986). In this study, ATU was associated with attitude toward listening.
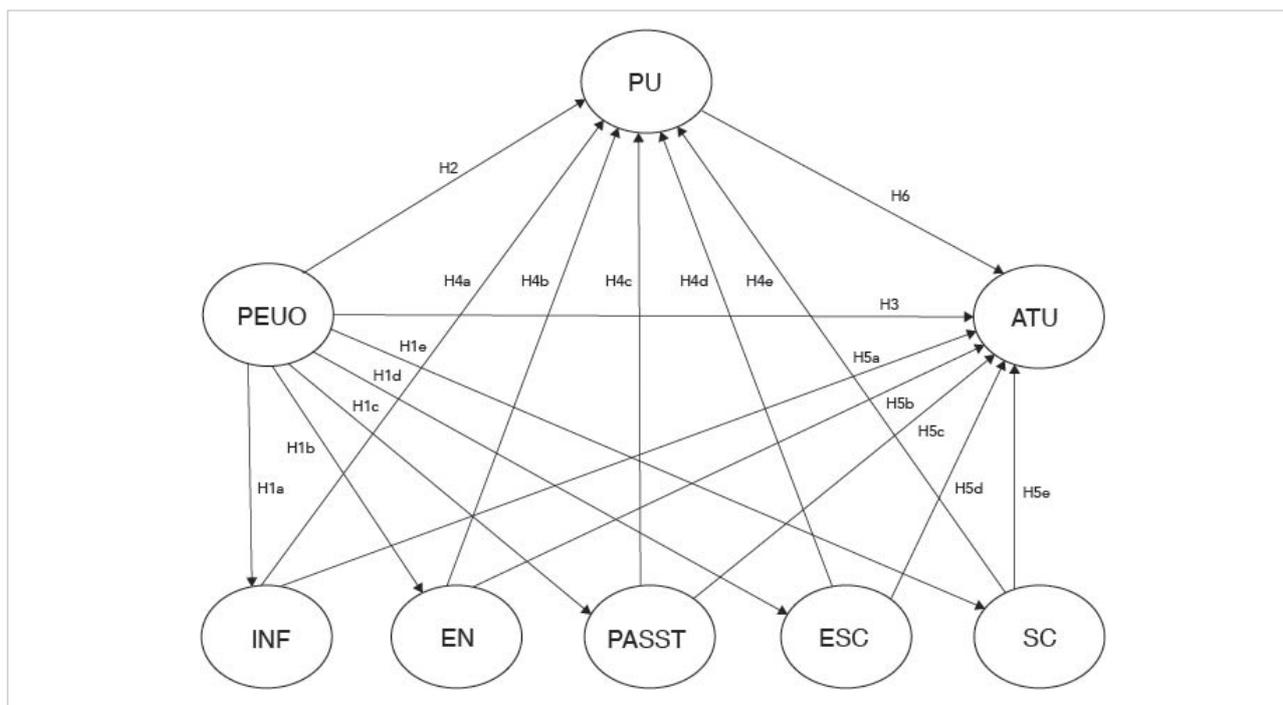
Figure 2. Proposed research model

4. Method

4.1. Population and sample

According to research conducted by the research company *Ipsos* (2021), 53% of active podcast listeners are under the age of 25, and 43% live in the Marmara Region of Turkey. The sample for the study was drawn in September 2021 from a population of 67,241 students studying in different programs (associate-bachelor-postgraduate) at a university in the Marmara Region. It was easy to contact the selected sample and there was the opportunity to collect robust data as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic conditions, which was an advantage. Random sampling was used to select the participants for the sample. Although there are no fixed standards in advanced statistical analyses, it is recommended that the ratio between the sample size and observed variables not go below 1:5 (**Hair** *et al.*, 2010). On the other hand, one of the most important factors affecting the sample size is actually the size of the model, in other words, its complexity. As the model grows (becomes more complex), the sample also needs to grow. According to one approach in factor analysis, a sample size of 50 is very poor, 100 is weak, 200 is adequate, 300 is good, 500 is very good, and 1000 and above is excellent (**Tabachnick**; **Fidell**, 2020). In this study, to determine the sample size, the formula of $n= \pi (1- \pi)/(e/Z)^2$, an error margin of 5%, and a confidence level of 95% were applied, with the results indicating a minimum sample size of 382. To disseminate the online questionnaire form among students, invitations to take part in the questionnaire were sent to the accounts of active users of *Facebook*, *Twitter*, and *Instagram* and to other social groups from the selected university. A total of 736 participants were contacted in this way. The response forms of 103 participants, 91 who stated that they were from other universities and 12 who provided false information, were excluded from the analysis. The remaining 633 response forms and other study data were analyzed with the *Statistical Package for the Social Sciences* (*SPSS*) program and the *AMOS* package programs. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was applied in the present study.

Of the participants, 45 were studying in an associate degree program, 546 were studying in a bachelor's degree program, and 42 were studying in a postgraduate program. Moreover, 63% of the participants were female, while 37% were male. A majority of the participants (54.5%) were between 20 and 22 years of age, followed by the 23-25 year age group (19.7%), the 17-19 year age group (15%), and the 26 and above age group (10.7%).

4.2. Data collection and scale development

The measurement instruments selected in line with the TAM and U&G theory were those that have been commonly used in previous studies and thus could be considered highly reliable and valid. Accordingly, the scale items related to PEOU, PU, and ATU that formed the model were adapted from the studies of **Davis** (1989), **Davis** *et al.* (1989), **Davis** *et al.* (1992), **Mathieson** (1991), **Venkatesh** and **Davis** (2000), **Venkatesh** *et al.* (2003),

> ' This study suggests that although podcasts have been offered for a long time in Turkey, the increased interest in them in recent years is related to the new form of distribution, offered by music services '

Van-der-Heijden (2003), **Pavlou** (2003), **Shih** (2004), **Cheng** *et al.* (2006), **Huang** (2008), **Al-Omoush** and **Amin** (2010), and **Cha** (2013). The items related to U&G were adapted from previous U&G studies. Along with the studies by **Rubin** (1983), **Albarran** and **Umphrey** (1993), **Abelman** *et al.* (1997), **Papacharissi** and **Rubin** (2000), **Ferguson** and **Perse** (2000), **Hanson** and **Haridakis** (2008), and **Cha** and **Chan-Olmsted** (2012), research studies on the podcast listening motivations were also utilized (**Chan-Olmsted**; **Wang**, 2020; **McClung**; **Johnson**, 2010; **Perks** *et al.*, 2019). To address each of the hypotheses, a 5-point Likert-type scale (1=Definitely agree, 5=Definitely disagree), which is commonly used and familiar to the participants, was used.

A pilot test of the questionnaire form was conducted in late May 2021 with 12 people through face-to-face interviews (video chat) to identify ambiguities or any other errors in the 41 scale items and prevent any issues regarding the comprehensibility of the items. Results from this pilot test revealed that two of the statements on the socialization motivation (SC) were similar, and therefore one of them was excluded from the scale. A similar action was also taken for two of the statements on entertainment motivation. These similarities were believed to be related to the daily language practices in the official language of the country where the questionnaire was originally administered. In the second step, in June 2021 the questionnaire form was administered to 100 people through an online module to test the factor distributions and reliability levels of the hypotheses; one of the SC statements was found to have received loads from at least two factors and thus was excluded from the study.

Table 1. Reliability coefficients

Dimensions		Statements	Reliability coefficients (Cronbach's α)
TAM	Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU)	5	.852
	Perceived Usefulness (PU)	4	.864
	Attitude Toward Use (ATU)	5	.938
U&G	Information (INF)	5	.874
	Entertainment (EN)	4	.895
	Passing Time (PASST)	4	.862
	Escape (ESC)	2	.882
	Socialization (SC)	4	.800

Table 2. Variance distribution

Component	Extraction sums of squared loadings		
	Total	% of variance	Cumulative %
1	12.625	38.258	38.258
2	2.998	9.086	47.344
3	2.116	6.412	53.756
4	1.577	4.779	58.536
5	1.508	4.569	63.105
6	1.314	3.983	67.088
7	1.158	3.510	70.598
8	1.105	3.350	73.947

In the last step, Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) and reliability tests (Cronbach's alpha) were performed to determine the structural validity and reveal the factor structure on 33 statements. Per the reliability test data, the reliability level was observed to increase significantly after two out of the six statements forming the Perceived Usefulness (PU) dimension were excluded. Furthermore, the reliability coefficient was found to increase significantly after three out of the five statements related to escape motivation that were adopted from U&G studies were excluded.

Principal component analysis and oblique rotation were preferred in this study because the former is the most frequently used analysis used in practice and the latter is preferred when there is correlation between the factors. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Sampling Adequacy value was found to be 0.919, while the Bartlett test result was calculated as $\chi^2(528) = 6108.7981$, $p < 0.05$. These results indicated that a sufficient size was achieved for the correlation between the items constituting the structure, which included 33 statements and 8 factors and explained 73.9% of the total variance.

‘ Previous studies defined podcasts as subscription-based content that can be downloaded through file-based systems and identified RSS as being the most distinctive feature of podcasts ’

Table 3. Factor analysis results

	FACTORS							
	ATU	PEOU	SC	INF	EN	PASST	ESC	PU
I think listening to podcasts through *Spotify* is a good idea	.858							
I think using podcast services through *Spotify* is a good idea	.857							
I think that the podcast services offered through *Spotify* are useful	.802							
I like the idea that podcast content is included on *Spotify*	.786							
I think listening to podcasts through *Spotify* is fun	.771							
Accessing podcasts through *Spotify* does not require much mental effort		.830						
I find the process of accessing the podcast contents of *Spotify* to be very clear and understandable		.799						
Learning to use the podcast content offered on *Spotify* was easy for me		.777						
I find it easy to find the podcast I want on *Spotify*		.736						
I generally find accessing the podcasts through *Spotify* to be easy		.723						
I can listen to podcasts with my friends			.818					
I can listen to podcasts with my family			.784					
I can talk to my friends about the podcasts I listen to			.729					
I can communicate on podcasts with other podcast listeners			.587					
I can learn how to do something I have never done before thanks to the podcasts I listen to on *Spotify*				.837				
I can learn about things that can contribute to my personal development from the podcasts I listen to on *Spotify*				.767				
I can gain information about new developments from the podcasts I listen to on *Spotify*				.744				
I can learn new things from the podcasts I listen to on *Spotify*				.699				
I can learn about others from the podcasts I listen to on *Spotify*				.645				
The podcasts I listen to on *Spotify* help to relax me					-.852			
The podcasts I listen to on *Spotify* help make me happy					-.827			
The podcasts I listen to on *Spotify* can entertain me					-.817			
The podcasts I listen to on *Spotify* help me to have a fun time					-.754			
If I do not have anything better to do, I may prefer listening to podcasts on *Spotify*						.734		
Listening to podcasts on *Spotify* can help pass the time when I am bored						.716		
Listening to podcasts on *Spotify* can keep me busy in my spare time						.626		
Listening to podcasts on *Spotify* can be a quality way to pass time						.571		
Listening to podcasts on *Spotify* can help me escape from my personal problems for a while.							-.879	
Listening to podcasts on *Spotify* can help me escape from my school problems for a while.							-.865	
I can listen to podcasts easily with *Spotify*								-.862
I can access podcasts anywhere using *Spotify*								-.744
I can quickly access the podcasts offered by *Spotify*								-.675
The podcasts services of *Spotify* are generally useful								-.617
Extraction method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation method: Oblimin with Kaiser normalization.								
a. Rotation converged in 13 iterations.								
PEOU: Perceived ease of use, PU: Perceived usefulness, ATU: Attitude toward use, INF: Information, EN: Entertainment, PASST: Passing time, SC: Socialization, ESC: Escape								

5. Results

5.1. Descriptive results

Of the participants, 50.6% stated that they listened to podcasts, whereas 49.4% (313 participants) stated that they did not. Among the participants who did not listen to podcasts, 51.8% (162 participants) had no idea about what a podcast was, 39.6% (124 participants) were not interested, and 8% (25 participants) knew what a podcast was but still did not listen. Two participants (0.6%) knew what a podcast was but did not have time to listen to them. For the question on where they had listened to a podcast, which was asked to the 320 participants who were podcast listeners, the most ticked option was *Spotify* (32.1%), followed by social media (30.9%).

According to the responses given to another question asked to the participants who stated that they listened to podcasts, *Spotify* was the most preferred method for listening to podcasts, followed by *YouTube* (15.8%) and downloadable applications (8.4%).

Table 4. From where or whom did you learn about podcasts? (multiple choice)

	N	Percent
My friends	91	13.4%
Social media	209	30.9%
Websites that I follow	80	11.8%
iTunes	21	3.1%
Google podcasts	10	1.5%
Spotify	217	32.1%
Radio channels	24	3.5%
News	7	1.0%
Search engines	13	1.9%
E-mail	2	0.3%
YouTube	2	0.3%
Other	1	0.1%

Table 5. From where do you listen to podcast? (multiple choice)

	N	Percent
Website of the radio that I follow	31	6.5%
iTunes	31	6.5%
Google podcasts	18	3.8%
Spotify	256	54.0%
Websites offering podcast distribution and listening service	23	4.9%
Applications that can be downloaded to computers and/or mobile devices to listen to podcasts	40	8.4%
YouTube	75	15.8%

On the questionnaire, a set of questions on RSS, which is considered to be the common distribution form of podcasts, was asked to the participants. Of the participants who said they listened to podcasts, 232 (72.5%) stated that they did not know anything about RSS, while 59 (18.4%) partially knew about RSS and 29 (9.1%) fully knew about RSS. Among the participants who partially and fully knew about RSS, 65.9% (58 participants) stated that they did not use RSS services. Of the 30 participants who stated that they used RSS services, 21 used RSS to listen to podcasts, while nine did not utilize RSS.

The participants were also asked whether they regularly listened to podcasts on *Spotify*, to which 265 participants reported that they regularly followed podcasts through *Spotify*, while 55 participants reported that they did not follow the podcast broadcasts through *Spotify*. At this point of the analysis, question groups containing the hypotheses were directed to 265 participants.

5.2. Structural model and hypothesis tests

In the 8-factor structure obtained through factor analysis, a structural equation model (SEM) was developed to reveal the correlation between the factors. SEM is a frequently preferred analysis technique for testing the causal relationships between observed and non-observed variables. The goodness of fit indices were examined first to assess the fitness of the model. In many evaluations conducted on goodness of fit indices, a wide variety of opinions have been offered (**Barrett**, 2007; **Goffin**, 2007; **Tomarken**; **Waller**, 2003). There is nonetheless general agreement that a range of values, (RMR, RMSEA, AGFI, TLI, GFI[4], NFI, IFI, CFI, RFI), especially the chi-square fitness value, should be considered (**Bentler**; **Yuan**, 1999; **Browne**; **Cudeck**, 1992; **Hooper** *et al.*, 2008; **Kenny**; **McCoach**, 2003). Despite the absence of consensus on which of these values should be considered more or excluded, it is not recommended to use all parameters together. Generally, it is emphasized that different goodness of fit indices can be used depending on the researchers' aims, and that at least one of the three goodness of fit test groups should be used (**Garson**, 2015).

The initial analysis values were χ^2=1175.125; df=477; p=0.000; χ^2/df=2.464, TLI=0.860; IFI=0.882; CFI=0.881; RFI=0.784; and NFI=0.817, and the RMSEA value (0.048) was within the estimated value range. Since the chi-square and RMSEA values were within the suitable ranges but the CFI value was low, the Modification Index was examined to achieve a better fit in the analysis. While there are different opinions about the use of the modification index

> The structural model analysis results indicated that Perceived Ease of Use had a significant relationship with all dimensions

(**MacCallum** *et al.*, 1992), it is known that the modification index can serve as a guide for a more complex model structure than the theory assumes, and that a limited configuration can yield better results. Improvement recommendations for the index, especially for the U&G-related dimensions, were added as covariance to the model, and a second analysis was performed. The analysis yielded the following values: χ^2= 884.181; df= 467; p=0.000; χ^2/df=1.893, TLI=0.914; IFI=0.930; CFI=0.929; RFI=0.834; and NFI=0.862; and the RMSEA value (0.038) improved. It was assumed that the values of chi-square, RMSEA, and CFI supported the acceptability of the structural model.

The structural model analysis results indicated that PEOU had a significant relationship with all dimensions, while the relationship between motivation dimensions and other dimensions varied. The relationship between PU and ATU was also found to be significant.

Table 6. Hypothesis test results regarding the structural model

				β1*	β2**	SE	CR	p	Result
H1a	IN	<--	PEOU	0.254	0.343	0.096	3.592	<0.001	Supported
H1b	EN	<--	PEOU	0.389	0.500	0.086	5.803	<0.001	Supported
H1c	PASST	<--	PEOU	0.380	0.472	0.091	5.205	<0.001	Supported
H1d	ESC	<--	PEOU	0.235	0.527	0.158	3.346	<0.001	Supported
H1e	SC	<--	PEOU	0.319	0.579	0.134	4.315	<0.001	Supported
H2	PU	<--	PEOU	0.392	0.484	0.078	6.202	<0.001	Supported
H3	ATU	<--	PEOU	0.212	0.243	0.072	3.366	<0.001	Supported
H4a	PU	<--	IN	0.053	0.048	0.063	0.766	0.443	Not Supported
H4b	PU	<--	EN	0.129	0.124	0.072	1.727	0.084	Not Supported
H4c	PU	<--	PASST	0.35	0.347	0.080	4.362	<0.001	Supported
H4d	PU	<--	ESC	0.028	0.015	0.033	0.465	0.642	Not Supported
H4e	PU	<--	SC	0.048	0.033	0.045	0.726	0.468	Not Supported
H5a	ATU	<--	IN	0.262	0.222	0.053	4.163	<0.001	Supported
H5b	ATU	<--	EN	0.113	0.101	0.059	1.691	0.091	Not Supported
H5c	ATU	<--	PASST	0.21	0.194	0.069	2.803	0.005***	Supported
H5d	ATU	<--	ESC	-0.048	-0.024	0.027	-0.900	0.368	Not Supported
H5e	ATU	<--	SC	0.028	0.018	0.037	0.480	0.631	Not Supported
H6	ATU	<--	PU	0.243	0.226	0.073	3.091	0.002***	Supported

β1*: Std. MLE, β2**: MLE, ***p<0.005

In TAM studies, PEOU, which is expressed as a predictor of users' beliefs about the effortlessness of a particular technology, has been shown to have a significant impact on all dimensions. According to the results, PEOU had the greatest impact on EN (r=0.389) and PASST (r=0.380). Among the motivation dimensions, ESC (r= 0.235) was the least influential. Therefore, all H1 sub hypotheses were accepted as correct. According to the results, PEOU had a significant impact on PU (r=0.392), which represents whether users consider a technology to be useful for what they aim to do, and on ATU (r=0.212), which measures people's beliefs regarding the use of a technology. Therefore, H2 and H3 hypotheses were accepted as correct.

The effects of listening motivations on PU and ATU varied. PASST had a significant impact on PU (r=0.350) and ATU (r=0.210), while INF had a significant impact on ATU (r=0.262). However, other motivations did not have a significant impact on PU and ATU. Therefore, among the hypotheses focusing on the impacts of motivation factors, H4c, H5a, and H5c were accepted as correct.

PEOU also had a significant impact on ATU. Therefore, hypothesis H6 was accepted as correct.

6. Conclusion

This study suggests that although podcasts have been offered for a long time in Turkey, the increased interest in them in recent years is related to the new form of distribution. The presentation of podcasts, originally offered through an RSS distribution format, via music streaming services, have contributed to popularizing podcasts. *Spotify* in particular has been the most preferred streaming service for music and podcast listening in Turkey. Therefore, in this study, a questionnaire was administered to test a series of hypotheses predicting university students' intention to use the podcast services offered through *Spotify*.

Previous studies defined podcasts as subscription-based content that can be downloaded through file-based systems (**Lee** *et al.*, 2009) and identified RSS as being the most distinctive feature of podcasts (**Bottomley**, 2015; **Hoyt** *et al.*, 2021). However, in recent years, as the dominance of cloud services has strengthened, RSS has fell into disuse. Although RSS feeds are still active on many websites, one study indicated that users were not aware that they were using this
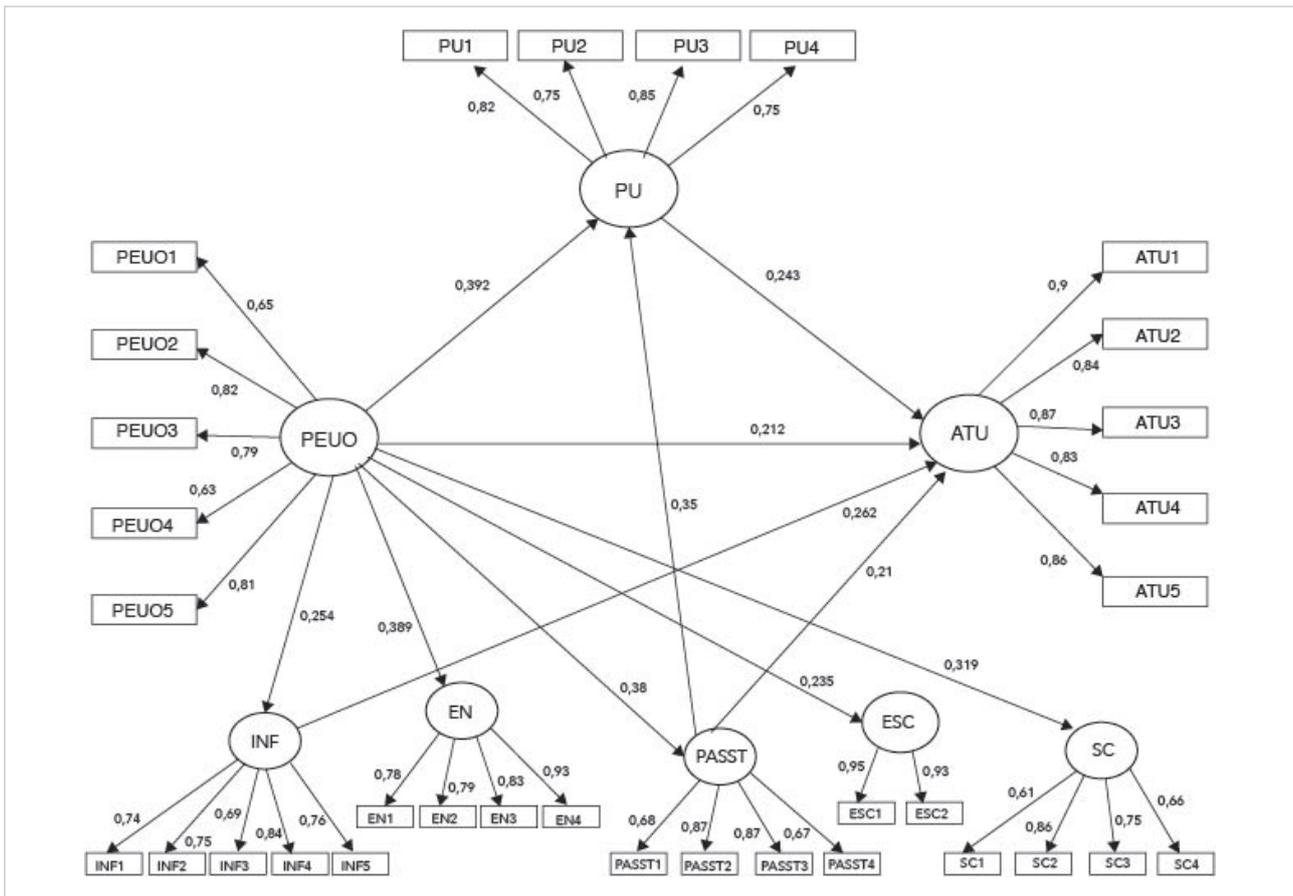
Figure 3. Structural model obtained from the analysis

technology or that they found it complex and thus did not prefer to use it (**Lee** *et al.*, 2009; **Ma**, 2015). Although RSS was developed as an open-source software to help internet users define their own preferences, the increased dominance of social networks and increased interest in cloud services have led users to prefer these systems. Therefore, companies that manage these networks and cloud services have come to wield greater control over the internet. As a result, the decentralized structure of the internet in the early days began to centralize with the emergence of web 2.0 technology and social networks (**Bonini**, 2015). Since podcasts function like a symbol of the emancipatory production and "do-it-yourself" culture, they are considered a profitable investment by companies aiming to offer new services to their users. The increased interest in podcasts in Turkey can be associated with these developments. According to the data obtained in this study, awareness of podcasts has foremost been generated by *Spotify* and social networks, as compared to other variables. In addition, the majority of the participants were not knowledgeable about RSS, and those who knew about podcasts did not prefer using RSS. *Spotify* is the most preferred service for listening to podcasts regularly.

In this study, PEOU was predicted to be a major factor in the popularization of podcast services –which transformed from an RSS-based distribution format to platform-based access– in Turkey, where there was only limited awareness about these services. Although ordinarily in TAM studies, PEOU has been shown to have rather indirect effects on intentions to adopt a particular technology, and it has been argued that its effects are more direct and central when it comes to adopting a technology that requires more time and effort (**Järveläinen**, 2007). PEOU has been claimed to play a key role in the use of entertainment-oriented technologies (**Bassiouni** *et al.*, 2019; **Van-der-Heijden**, 2004). The fact that podcast listening experiences were offered as a "new service" by *Spotify* contributed to the users perceiving podcasts as activities that do not require much effort and that are easily accessible and understandable. Hedonic information systems are strongly linked to self-actualization purposes and home and leisure activities rather than instrumental values, and they focus on the entertaining aspect of use and promote long-term use rather than productivity (**Van-der-Heijden**, 2004). This approach is supported by statistical results indicating the significant impact of PEOU on U&G motivations and other TAM dimensions added to the model. EN and PSST, which were defined as listening motivations, were among the motivations most affected by PEOU.

Listening motivations were expected to have separate effects on PU and ATU. However, based on the results, only PSST motivation had an impact on PU. Moreover, INF and PSST motivation had a significant impact on ATU. In studies on the personal use of the internet, it has been reported that the internet is generally used for passing time, but entertainment and socialization also appear as key motivations of use. It is not surprising that these motives, defined as ritual purposes in traditional media use, play an active role in the use of the new media for hedonic purposes. Traditional U&G studies

note that users can use the media instrumentally or ritually, depending on their personality, lifestyle, moods, or the time of day (**Rubin**, 1984). However, given the unique diversity of content available through new media, there is a relatively equal level of instrumental and ritualized use (**Metzger**; **Flanagin**, 2002). In the light of the data obtained in the present study, it can be said that both instrumental and ritual motivations are effective, albeit limited.

> Since podcasts function like a symbol of the emancipatory production and "do-it-yourself" culture, they are considered a profitable investment by companies aiming to offer new services to their users

In research conducted in countries where podcasts are more in demand, motives pointing to the instrumental use (library creation, time shifting, asynchronous listening, mobility) as well as ritual use (entertainment and socialization) have been discovered. However, these studies have primarily examined the uses related to the RSS-based distribution format. Given the limited impact of predicted motivation factors on PU and ATU that was found in this study within the scope of a different distribution format like *Spotify*, further studies are required to better understand users' trends.

The growing interest in podcasts on a global scale due to mobile consumption has increased the value of podcast hosting and resulted in subscription-based *Netflix*-like business models and more centralization. It is clear that the real leap for podcast services, where there has been a shift from "download and listen" to "click and listen", has been achieved with the investments made by platforms like *Spotify*. As a result, the amount of effort spent in developing hedonic informational systems and improving ease of use are among the significant factors responsible for the spread of the service. Therefore, despite the idea that the popularization of podcasts in new markets seems to be associated with the original content they offer, the ability podcast services offer users, who today are faced with such a profusion of stimuli, to access their content of choice anytime and anywhere in a clear and understandable manner is a decisive factor in this growth of popularity. Entrepreneurs need to consider these factors in the markets where podcasts have just begun to be popular.

This study was conducted with a small group selected through convenience sampling. The data collected from this sample set, which consisted of educated young adults, does not represent the population at large. Yet with that said, motives emphasized the most in the U&G theory were used. Different results could therefore be achieved with different motivation factors. The data collected from the early users of a new market can serve as a guide for future studies. However, more studies that examine markets where podcasts are just developing should be performed.

7. Notes

1. Daniel Ek, the CEO of *Spotify*, made a statement about the future of the company on a blog and underlined that *Spotify* would be more than just a music streaming service and focus on broadcasting podcasts.
https://newsroom.spotify.com/2019-02-06/audio-first

2. The concept of 'podcasting' is claimed to have been mentioned first by Hammersley in an article published in *The Guardian* in 2004; this concept involves the combination of personal mp3 player, *Apple iPod*, and broadcasting (**Markman**, 2012, p. 562). Furthermore, **Bottomley** (2015, p. 166) noted that Hammersley used this concept to refer to any "downloadable radio" distributed on the internet and that Hammersley did not limit the scope of "podcasting" to the audio content offered through RSS.

3. According to a questionnaire conducted by *MIDiA* in the USA, Canada, Australia, England, Germany, and France, *Spotify* has a higher number of podcast listeners than *Apple*.
https://www.midiaresearch.com/blog/podcasts-q2-2020-spotify-takes-an-early-lead

4. The GFI and AGFI values are not calculated in the *Amos* version used
http://amosdevelopment.com/support/faq/no_gfi.htm

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