

DOES VIDEO ASSISTANT REFEREE (VAR) SYSTEM IMPROVE THE FOOTBALL? EXAMPLE OF TURKISH PREMIER LEAGUE

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What is VAR?

The Video Assistant Referee system or what is popularly known as VAR, is use of video technology assistance in football to support the decision making process of referees to reach more correct decisions.



What does it stand for?

The system is watching all the situations with all the angles available from the match broadcast during a match.

Its duty is to check all the potential match-changing situations following the VAR protocol (Rosetti, 2018).



Its aim

An illustration of two men in a control room. The man in the foreground is wearing a blue shirt with a white stripe and a headset, looking intently at a computer monitor. The man behind him is wearing a light-colored shirt and is also looking at the monitors. There are several computer monitors on a desk, and two larger monitors are mounted on the wall in the background. The scene is lit with a cool, blueish light.

VAR System does not ask the question 'was the decision correct?' but asks 'was the decision clearly wrong?' (IFAB, 2017).

So, its aim is not to achieve 100% accuracy for all decisions in a football game as this would be impossible (IFAB, 2018a).

Its philosophy

➤ So, the philosophy of VAR is 'minimum interference – maximum benefit' which aims to reduce unfairness caused by 'clear and obvious errors' or 'serious missed incidents' in relation to four match-changing situations:

- goals,
- penalty kicks,
- straight red cards and
- cases of mistaken identity (IFAB, 2018b).





Aim of this paper



This paper aims to examine how the VAR system effected Turkish Football Premier League after its use for one season.

As far as we know, no previous investigation was done for the use of VAR in Turkish football yet.



Method


612 matches in last two seasons before and 306 matches in one season after implementation of VAR, totally 918 matches consisted the sample of this study.

Goals, penalties, yellow cards, red cards, winnings of away and home teams variables were used to compare seasons before and after its implementation.

VAR system in Turkish Football



In Turkish Football Super League, VAR began to be used in 2018-2019 season.



Thus, the Turkish Football Super League became one of the first leagues which the VAR system was implemented with some major European leagues like Bundesliga (German first division) and the Serie A (Italian first division).

VAR system in Turkish Football



Totally 18 teams are struggling in Turkish Football Super League. Accordingly, one season lasts 34 weeks and a total of 306 matches are played during one season.



VAR system in Turkish Football

In 153 matches played in the first half of the 2018-2019 season. 93 incidents were reviewed by VAR.

70 critical decisions were changed, including 31 goals, 27 penalties and 12 red cards (TFF, 2018).

VAR system in Turkish Football



153 matches were played in the second half of the 2018-2019 season.

86 critical decisions were corrected by VAR, 35 of which were goals, 32 penalties, 15 red cards, 1 card shown to the wrong player and 3 non-statistical decisions (Çoban, 2019).

VAR system in Turkish Football



Looking at the entire 2018-2019 season, it is seen that

a total of 156 decisions, including 66 goals, 59 penalties, 27 red cards, 1 wrong player card and 3 non-statistical decisions, were corrected thanks to the VAR system.

	Pl	Table with VAR	Pts	Pts	Table without VAR
1	34	GALATASARAY A.Ş.	69	68	GALATASARAY A.Ş.
2	34	MEDİPOL BAŞAKŞEHİR FK	67	65	MEDİPOL BAŞAKŞEHİR FK
3	34	BEŞİKTAŞ A.Ş.	65	62	BEŞİKTAŞ A.Ş.
4	34	TRABZONSPOR A.Ş.	63	61	TRABZONSPOR A.Ş.
5	34	EVKUR YENİ MALATYASPOR	47	46	ÇAYKUR RİZESPOR A.Ş.
6	34	FENERBAHÇE A.Ş.	46	45	ATİKER KONYASPOR
7	34	ANTALYASPOR A.Ş.	45	45	BURSASPOR
8	34	ATİKER KONYASPOR	44	45	ANTALYASPOR A.Ş.
9	34	AYTEMİZ ALANYASPOR	44	44	FENERBAHÇE A.Ş.
10	34	İSTİKBAL M. KAYSERİSPOR	41	43	DEMİR GRUP SİVASSPOR
11	34	ÇAYKUR RİZESPOR A.Ş.	41	43	AYTEMİZ ALANYASPOR
12	34	DEMİR GRUP SİVASSPOR	41	43	KASIMPAŞA A.Ş.
13	34	MKE ANKARAGÜCÜ	40	42	MKE ANKARAGÜCÜ
14	34	KASIMPAŞA A.Ş.	39	42	İSTİKBAL M. KAYSERİSPOR
15	34	GÖZTEPE A.Ş.	38	41	EVKUR YENİ MALATYASPOR
16	34	BURSASPOR	37	40	GÖZTEPE A.Ş.
17	34	B.B. ERZURUMSPOR	35	39	B.B. ERZURUMSPOR
18	34	AKHİSARSPOR	27	25	AKHİSARSPOR

Change between seasons without and with VAR.

Variables	No VAR				With VAR	
	2016-2017 season		2017-2018 season		2018-2019 season	
	N	Mean	N	Mean	N	Mean
Goals	828	2,70	906	2,96	821	2,68
Penalties	114	0,37	108	0,35	121	0,39
Yellow cards	1374	4,49	1375	4,49	1355	4,42
Red cards	73	0,23	88	0,28	79	0,25
Winnings of home teams	138	0,45	153	0,5	137	0,44
Winnings of away teams	101	0,33	84	0,27	80	0,26



THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION...

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