Affective and Emotional: Turkish Women's Engagement with #sendeanlat

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Abstract

This thesis focuses on the affective and emotional dimensions of Turkish women's engagement with #sendeanlat, an online protest against sexism and sexual harassment in Turkey. The thesis sets out to explore the affective and emotional characteristics of the women's engagement and the awareness generated through this engagement. By applying a qualitative approach, 14 semi-structured interviews were conducted with the women who engaged in the online protest. The sample includes 10 women who did not identify with feminism and 4 women who identified themselves as feminists.

Online feminist activism has been growing in the recent years. Many women are using hashtags to protest against sexism and rape culture all around the world as seen in examples such as #everydaysexism, #yesallwomen etc. Due to the focus on textual analysis in the existing literature about feminist online protests, this research differs in methods by using interviews. The thesis also provides a new perspective by focusing on affect and emotions to understand the women's engagement with the online protest. It shows how the women's engagement as well as their disengagement was an emotional kind. It also displays the dimensions of the women's emotional engagement by demonstrating the connection between memory and emotions. This connection highlights how awareness is generated through women's remembering their own stories. The research also identifies three additional kinds of awareness: women's awareness of each other as collective awareness, feminist women's awareness of other women, and the men's awareness of sexual harassment issues. Furthermore the ways that the women can further engage with the issue are displayed. The thesis focuses on non-organized women and unpacks the motivations of non-feminist women's engagement in a protest against sexism and sexual harassment as well as its limitations by focusing on affect and emotions through online spaces in women's everyday life.

"I hate writing, I love having written."
~ Dorothy Parker

Thanks everyone who made this process less painful.

Canim annem ve babam, en cok da size tesekkurler!

Contents

Introduction

"In Turkey, we women are like in a big prison, and the charges against us never end."

- Beyza

Social media has been a great tool for women to surface issues about gender and sexism. All over the world, women have made themselves heard via hashtags such as #Everydaysexism in UK, #YesAllWomen in the States, #aufschrei in Germany, commonly referred to as hashtag feminism as in Dixon (2014) and Knappe and Lang (2014). This thesis focus on another of these online protests: the Turkish hashtag #sendeanlat (you tell your story too).

On 11th of February, 2015 Özgecan Aslan, a 20-year-old university student in Mersin, took a bus to go home at night. She was the only one left on the bus when the bus driver took her to the woods instead. Preceded by a rape attempt, Özgecan was murdered by the driver that night. Following this terrible event, women all around Turkey protested. Social media was used for women's mobilization and as well as a mourning platform where people shared their feelings via the hashtag #Özgeicinsiyahgiy (wear black for Özge). A couple of days after, this single incident became a catalyst for women to share their own stories of sexual harassment with the hashtag #sendeanlat. Within the first hour that the hashtag started, 440.000 tweets were posted (Uras, 2015). The stories women tweeted varied from everyday sexism incidents to sexual harassment stories on the street and in the family.

This thesis will use #sendeanlat as a case to look at how Turkish women experienced their engagement with this online protest, focusing specifically on affect and emotions. There is a number of previous studies about online feminist activism or hashtag feminism surrounding specific hashtags such as #EverydaySexism, #YesAllWomen etc. (Barker-Plummer 2016; Armstrong & Mahone, 2016; Rodino-Colocino, 2014 etc.). However this research looks at a specific one, the Turkish one,

which did not receive any attention in the global literature. The existing literature on online protests is often placed within the framework of social movements studies, focusing on theories of the public sphere. Feminist online movements follow this strand as well. The literature focuses on how hashtag protests and hashtag feminism is executed in public spheres, and regards the produsers as publics and counter-publics and look into these spaces within public sphere theories. However not much attention within these online feminist studies is given to affective and emotional engagement of women, nor to the women who don't identify as feminists. While the existing literature focuses on feminist women's use of these spaces, this thesis focuses on the periphery, the non-feminist women. Through interviews the research aims to investigate the affective and emotional dimensions of women's engagement with online protests against sexism and rape culture. As non-feminist women, the thesis will argue that affect and emotions are what motivates to engage with a protest against rape culture and sexism in Turkey. Looking at affect and emotions, the dimensions of women's engagement and the ways this engagement generated awareness will be explored. Using the case study of the online protest #sendeanlat, the research also highlights the blurry lines between the online and offline spaces of the women's engagement. These blurry lines do not refer to offline mobilization of the women to protest on the street since #sendeanlat was an online protest but refers to how their engagement with the issue of sexual harassment and sexism transgressed into the offline spaces in the ways the women further engaged with the topic.

Aims and Research Questions

This thesis aims to investigate the affective and emotional dimensions of Turkish women's engagement with #sendeanlat. It explores if and how social awareness was initiated through this engagement and the different ways women chose to engage with it. The starting point is that in #sendeanlat, narratives of sexual harassment via tweets work as a catalyst of women's affective and emotional engagement through which social awareness about sexual harassment issues in Turkey was generated. To explore this, a qualitative approach has been employed where participants of #sendeanlat were interviewed. Therefore the following research questions were asked:

In relation to the online protest #sendeanlat, how can we understand the affective and emotional engagement of the Turkish women and the awareness this engagement generated?

- How did #sendeanlat create engagement through affect and emotions?
- In what ways were #sendeanlat able to generate awareness about sexual harassment issues in Turkey?
- What were the ways the women engaged further with #sendeanlat and what were the motivations and limitations of their engagement?

Surveying Spaces, Emotions, And Engagement

This chapter, first, will lay out how political can happen in the everyday life through online spaces, second, it will introduce the public space notion and explain affect and emotions, and how they are used within the media studies. Finally by looking at how online feminist studies are studying anti-sexist protests in online spaces, this research will situate itself within the existing literature.

The Internet has enabled people with a new communicative space for political engagement (Dahlgren 2009). As seen in recent years with the Occupy movements, the Arab Spring, and the Slutwalk movement (Castells 2015, Dahlgren 2014, Papacharissi 2014, Mendes 2015), online platforms such as websites, blogs, and social media platforms are heavily used as a space for mobilization and political engagement. Due to these ways of using the Internet to engage, and mobilize, these spaces are referred as the "public spheres online" (Dahlgren 2009) or "networked public spheres" (Tüfekci 2012). However today, movements like Slutwalk and protests like #sendeanlat take other forms that might need to be investigated outside of this traditional framework of public spheres (Papacharissi 2014). Modeling these online spaces on the notion of public sphere does not provide the necessary means to explore the online protests due to the duality of rationality and emotionality emphasized by the public sphere notions.

Online platforms do not only create a space for mobilization but also a space for people to engage emotionally with others. These platforms help people express their own political ideas by enabling them with a communicative space (Dahlgren, 2009; Papacharissi 2014). Mendes (2015) also acknowledges that political and personal engagement today sometimes happen in these online spaces as well. While some scholars see these developments as clicktivism or slacktivism due to these activities being too easy to participate in without much effort and having no policy outcomes (Morozov, 2009), others recognize the potential of these networks of participation for civic culture (Dahlgren, 2009: 116) as well as for the discursive politics (Madison 2013) and some even argue for real life impacts of online activism (Shaw, 2012). Therefore to understand what form online protests like #sendeanlat take, it will be useful to look further into how political is in the everyday lives of people and how engagement occurs emotionally through online spaces and transgresses to offline spaces.

The Emotional Politics of Everyday In Online Public Spaces

> "Everyday life is that inevitable space from which social, cultural, and political activity begins, 'the unavoidable basis for all other forms of human endeavor' (Rita Felski 1999)" (Cavalcante et al 2017).

Discussing the role of the Internet in today's world, Dahlgren (2013) builds up a three-tiered pyramid-like structure. The top tier refers to the elites of the media, the middle tier refers to the mainstream media and the bottom tier refers to the societal sphere (Dahlgren 2013). As he states "The lowest tier is the societal sphere, seen as a sprawling, amorphous arena which people can readily link up to, where communication can take a vast range of different forms" (ibid: 48). Most importantly for Dahlgren the societal sphere points to the space "where the political can take shape in the proximity of people's everyday lives" (ibid). With this approach, Dahlgren provides a leeway to recognize the political expression that happens on digital platforms such as blogs, website and social media spaces (ibid). Like Dahlgren, Papacharissi also recognizes the political on these digital platforms more

specifically on Twitter. She connects the personal in the everyday life to the political in her chapter "The Personal as Political on Twitter" (2014: 112). Papacharissi defines "political" as "emergent expressions, orientations and environments" (ibid: 137). She shows how Twitter enables people to state personal views thereby impregnating it with the capacity for the political (ibid), claiming that "The act of making a private thought public bears the potential of a political act" (ibid). This view is key to understand especially the social media movements or social media campaigns where the political can take shape in the everyday life. Papacharissi further states that although not each attempt to speak up may result in political impact, "the process of traversing private to public territory affords political potential" (ibid). She continues by drawing attention to the importance of the context where the political occurs: "Impact is derived from context, so a statement that is perceived as ordinary in one context may appear provocative in a different one" (ibid). This point becomes crucial to understand the impacts of #sendeanlat on Turkish women as well as what #sendeanlat mean for Turkish women. While in another context it might not be of importance to express these personal sexual harassment stories online, in the patriarchal Turkish context where sexism prevails, these personal statements become political. To be able to voice these tabooed issues publicly with the goal of refusing what they are experiencing daily carries a symbolic power. As Papacharissi states, "Similarly, the nature of the impact will vary depending on context, so statements that bear political potential may generate actual or symbolic power" (ibid). Furthermore, drawing on Corner (2011) these personal/political statements can be seen as a form of 'soft power' because of "the perceptions they encourage, the information they provide and the feelings they generate" (ibid: 23).

Traditionally though feelings generated by the political statements online in the everyday life have been considered to undermine the political characteristics of people's engagement with online discussions and protests. This is the result of modeling online spaces after public sphere models (Papacharissi 2014). As Dahlgren states these models focus on the rationality and criticize and ignore anything affective, emotional and passionate. Dahlgren however states that "To be engaged in

something signals not just cognitive attention and some normative stance, but also an affective investment" (2009: 83). Therefore it becomes important to recognize the emotional character as well as affectivity within these online movements and protests. Because as Wetherell states the benefit of looking into affect and emotions is that it brings "the everyday back into social analysis" (2012: 11). Considering the political happens in the everyday life through the affective and emotional engagements, it becomes important to regard these aspects as well.

Engagement, affect and emotions are very much connected with each other and they all occur in everyday life, as Dahlgren states "political sentiments in the form of dominant and oppositional discourses are embodied by various modes of cultural expression, often comprising strong affective dimensions" (Dahlgren 2014: 25). Therefore researching women's engagement and participation with online activism or social media campaigns requires researching affectivity and emotions to further understand what attracts the women who participate or not, and what moves them. "Kuntsman notes that such intertwinedness is more an 'affective fabric of digital cultures'. These are 'the lived and deeply felt everyday sociality of connections, ruptures, emotions, worlds, politics and sensory energies, some of which can be pinned down to words and structures; others are intense yet ephemeral' (2012, 3)" (Kuntsman cited in Garde-Hansen and Gorton 2013: 14).

By arguing for the concept of a public space rather than public sphere, Poell and van Dijk (2016) dismiss the duality of rational and emotional in regards to these online spaces where political happens in the everyday lives of people. They distinguish two characteristics of online activist movements: First, they recognize that activism today does happen both in online and offline spaces. However their consideration of the online does not necessarily refer to how these spaces enable mobilization in physical spaces through communication online, but refers mostly to engagement and connectivity in online spaces. Second, they point to the emotional statements posted in various social media platforms and the feelings they generate which results in "emotional connectivity". Therefore they argue that the connectivity that happens on online spaces is through the emotional statements shared. As they state, this is how

public space online is constructed: "It is through the mass sharing of emotions that (temporary) public spaces are constructed" (2016: 228). This is due to the fact that the activism happens in the techno-commercial infrastructure of social media (ibid). The publicness in Poell and van Dijk's concept is not given to the public but more "constructed and conquered" by the public. This happens through the emotional connectivity (2016: 229). This relates to the social media spaces being commercial spaces. That's why the publicness is not given but constructed and conquered by the public through their emotional engagement and connectivity. The emotional connectivity leads to people's engagement with the protests transgressing to offline spaces.

Other scholars such as Clark (2016), Duguay (2016) Gerbaudo (2012) and Papacharissi (2014) have also been focusing on this intermixture of online and offline and the emotionality of these social media movements and protests to better understand these forms of protests that take place online. By researching how "networked platforms support affective processes" (2014: 27) and how they create "networked structures of feeling", Papacharissi for example recognizes the emotional character of activism that blends the online spaces together with offline spaces. This is because the engagement and participation that occur online carry an emotional characteristic that affects the offline. Furthermore she states that the notion of affect enables a way to comprehend "opportunities for voice that networked platforms invite" (ibid: 26). These qualities of her research shares commonalities with the Poell and van Dijk's public space concept. By bringing in affect and emotions to online protests discussions, scholars provide us with a way to comprehend the nuances of the online activism. This focus on affect and emotions of the research shows how affect and emotions can enhance our understanding of online protests today. Therefore the following part will introduce affect and emotions before looking into its relation with the media and online protests.

Affect and Emotions

Affect has come to be defined in different ways by different scholars within the cultural studies and humanities. One predominant understanding of affect is that it is a pre-personal intensity that has to do with a body's capacity to act (Massumi, 1995: xvi) while another definition considers affect as a motivational system in combination with reason and passion (Tomkins in Garde-Hansen and Gorton, 2013: 35). This understanding of affect as what precedes emotion, as bodily intensity as well as capacity to act encompasses bodily reactions: "Intensity is embodied in purely autonomic reactions most directly manifested in the skin" (Massumi, 1995: 85). This also refers to bodily sensations (Sharma and Tygstrup 2015) that are felt on the skin such as goose bumps, a lump in the throat, and feeling sick in the stomach. However affect has also come to refer to a broader understanding that encompasses various concepts such as moods, feelings, and emotions together (Konjin 2008). Raymond Williams' "structures of feelings" is another approach to affect and emotions. According to Williams, this concept is about "meaning and values as they are actively lived and felt" which is connected to "characteristic elements of impulse, restraint, and tone; specifically affective elements of consciousness and relationships" (Williams 1977: 132). By referring to impulse as one of the characteristics he also distinguishes that feeling of urge through the lived experience which can help to understand what moves us as well as what restraints us. However he emphasizes on the concept by stating that it is "not feeling against thought but thought as felt and feeling as thought: practicing consciousness of a present kind, in a living and interrelating continuity" (Williams 1977: 132). Therefore William's structures of feeling don't come from an opposition of affect versus cognition. Rather feeling and the thought are seen as part of each other, as mutually dependent on each other. With the concept of structures of feelings, Williams dissolves the longstanding boundary that has characterized understandings of affect as a complex psychological notion and brings it into the cultural studies sphere. Williams' structures of feeling, according to Papacharissi allows us to investigate different kinds of engagement that can be applicable to both "within and beyond the structured spheres of opinion expression" (Papacharissi 2014: 115). Considering the engagement on the digital platforms

regarding activism online today with its offline and online blend, affect and emotion become important factors to better understand what moves and attracts people in the way they engage with online movements.

It should be noted that unlike affect, emotions are cognitive and can be social. Although affect is sometimes referred to as the "atmosphere" in the room that can be felt by everyone, the difference between affect and emotion is that emotions are also cognitive (Sharma and Tygstrup 2015). Ahmed (2014) treats emotions as neither 'inside' us nor 'outside' us. Instead emotions are the surfaces that indicate individuals and the social (ibid). Emotions may have an object or can be about something as well. This aboutness can be about imaginary objects as well:

> "Emotions are both about objects, which they hence shape, and are also shaped by contact with objects. Neither of these ways of approaching an object presumes that the object has a material existence; objects in which I am 'involved' can also be imagined (Heller 1979: 12)" (ibid: 7).

Since affect is pre-personal and emotions are cognitive, making a distinction between the two helps the research in understanding the women's engagement retrospectively. Sara Ahmed (2014) describes emotions in relation to affect as follows: "Emotions, in other words, involve bodily processes of affecting and being affected, or to use my own terms, emotions are a matter of how we come into contact with objects and others." (ibid: 208) According to Ahmed then emotions are not simply what "we have" but more like how we relate and respond to objects and get into contact with others (ibid: 10). Ahmed's understanding of the objects of emotions refers to imaginary objects too, therefore making a way to understand the connection between a lived experience in the past, its memory, and the feeling it generates. This becomes crucial to understand the women's engagement with #sendeanlat. Such connection between the emotions and memory illuminates that our memory of an experience can also trigger a certain feeling that we know of or vice versa. As she states:

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"For example, I can have a memory of something, and that memory might trigger a feeling (Pugmire, 1998: 7). The memory can be the object of my feeling in both senses: the feeling is shaped by contact with the memory, and also involves an orientation towards what is remembered. So I might feel pain when I remember this or that, and in remembering this or that, I might attribute what is remembered as being painful" (2014: 7).

The relationship between the emotion and what is remembered can explain women's emotional engagement with #sendeanlat even further. Not only because #sendeanlat was a 2 years old campaign when interviews were conducted and therefore the experience itself was a memory, but also because reading other people's tweets, the women might have felt certain emotions which could be related to remembering their own personal experiences. Hence the connection between the personal memories and emotions can shed a light on the women's engagement with #sendeanlat.

Affect and Emotions in Media Studies

In media studies, affect and emotions have come to be understood mainly in relation to the mass media and the emotions and affect it generates (Barlett and Gentile, 2010). This research includes the media reception studies in relation to entertainment and emotions, as well as news and emotions. Grusin's study is one of the studies that examine the relationship between the news of natural disasters and the way they produce affective bonds on the audiences. As Grusin states "Mediashocks shapes or enables particular individual and collective affective formations, which keep people attached to social media, television or the Internet through intensifying the affective bond with their technical media devices" (2015: 34). Recent research extends the study of emotion and affect to new media landscapes such as social media platforms (Garde-Hansen and Gorton, 2013; Benski and Fisher, 2014;, Karatzogianni and Kuntsman 2012) Besides as stated by Garde Hansen and Gorton, "the most recent theoretical intervention casts the net wide in uncovering the everyday and ordinary emotions that are articulated and consumed through technologically enabled networks" (2013: 12). This intervention to uncover the everyday and ordinary

emotions that are articulated and consumed through digital platforms includes research that focuses on affective relations of celebrity Facebook pages and fan communication (Dilling-Hansen, 2015), the aesthetic-affective dimension of YouTube videos (Soelmark, 2015), the role of emotion in digital object memories (Mackley and Karpovich, 2012), as well as the affective fabric of everyday connections through mobile phones (Sirisena, 2012). It is the affect and emotions that are generated in the everyday media consumption that this research will focus on. Thus this turn to affect and emotions in relation to digital platforms helps us understand our relationship with the object of our engagement. The same applies to the research that connects social media activism with emotions and affect.

Affect and Emotions in Social Media Activism

Looking at research that focuses on the affective, emotional relations with social media activism can help us better understand the political engagement in the everyday life through digital platforms. In *Affective Publics* (2014) Papacharissi takes the Arab Spring and the Occupy Movements as case studies and examines Twitter hashtags around these movements and how they are examples of social media bringing affect, emotion and activism together. She shows how participants of the Arab Spring and Occupy Wall Street are using social media to express what she calls "affective statements": A blend of fact with opinion and emotions (2014: 27). Her argument is that by enabling affective statements online spaces facilitate emotions and a sense of belonging among the citizens leading to the creation of networked affective publics. Instead of focusing on the political impacts of the Twitter hashtags, she focuses on how citizens express themselves and situate their political views right in the midst of emotions and opinions in their everyday lives (ibid: 27).

Following Papacharissi's lead, Clark (2016) identifies the emotional involvement of high school students' online and offline protests in Ferguson following the shooting of Michael Brown. She names these tweets, texts, snapchats, photos and videos the students share with each other as "artifacts of engagement" and places this within the emotional involvement of the students as they create their 'affective public' (2016: 243). Clark also emphasizes on the blurring lines of online and offline by stating that

"the concepts of the digital material and, by extension, the specific example of artifacts of engagement signal how difficult it is to separate objects, actions, platforms, and actors in the digital era because the digital material sits at the intersection of technological affordances, user interfaces, and social practices." (2016: 244). These blurry lines between the offline and online engagement need to be acknowledged to understand the nature of the online protests.

Scholars such as Maddison (2013) focus on the discursive aspect of online movements, and direct their concern at "the role of discourse in creating meaning and shared understanding within the women's movement and in women's everyday life" (2013: 38). This becomes relevant considering the online protests that do not aim to have an offline presence. When we look at the rising number of online feminist protests such as #Everydaysexism, #holaback, #yesallwomen we can take Maddison's stance and distinguish the importance of these movements as in meaning creation or raising consciousness through the engagement on online spaces. This will be crucial for the analysis in understanding how #sendeanlat as an online protest generated awareness.

Online Feminist Activism

The literature shows that while there is a number of research focusing on emotions and affect within the online activist movements, the feminist strand of the digital activism studies don't necessarily focus on the affective and emotional dimensions nor the women who don't identify with feminism but engage with feminist movements.

There is a lot of research about feminist activism online focusing on specific hashtags such as #EverydaySexism, #YesAllWomen etc. (Barker-Plummer, 2016; Armstrong & Mahone, 2016; Rodino-Colocino, 2014). These social media campaigns can be considered as online activism that happens in the public space. Reflecting the existing research on the online activism, the studies on feminist online activism also explore how these online spaces are used to mobilize, engage and participate as well.

One of the key studies focusing on public spaces online in a feminist context is "Online feminist protest against sexism: the German-language hashtag #aufschrei" by Drüeke and E. Zobls (2015). This research defines the layers of online publics around the hashtag #aufschrei to understand how feminists on social media discuss sexism and work towards mobilization. This study not only uses Twitter but also looks at different platforms such as feminist blogs to determine the layers of digital public spheres and it contributes to social media's usage for mobilization. While the research shows how these online public spaces can be useful to protest against sexism through textual analysis, it does not explore women's perspectives by conducting interviews nor how these spaces are used by non-feminist women to engage in anti-sexism protests.

Another feminist study that focuses on social media and activism is "Rape culture and social media: young critics and a feminist counterpublic" (2015) by Sills et al. This research looks at the online space as an 'alternative discursive space' and argues that "social media provided safe spaces that served as a buffer against the negative effects of sexism, and allowed participation in a feminist counterpublic that directly contests rape culture" in a New Zealand context. Online spaces that are the focus of this audience study are being used both for participation with the discussions about sexism and rape culture and for engagement in feminist issues within these discursive spaces. Sills et al. illustrates how digital spaces are being used by feminist women as discursive spaces to engage and participate as well as to form a counterpublic. However the research's focus remains on the feminist women. Besides the engagement that is explored in this study does not look into emotional or affective dimensions.

Another study "Rape Culture and the Feminist Politics of Social Media" (2014), Carrie A. Rentschler posits that online spaces can serve as supportive spaces for feminists dealing with rape culture. What's interesting about the examples mentioned above is that they show how the literature's focus is on online spaces being useful for feminist struggles and how these online spaces can work as public spaces or counter

public spaces for feminist women. The usage of online public spaces as a tool for feminist women is very well displayed in the literature. However how women who do not necessarily identify with feminism can use these online spaces to engage in anti-sexism protests is not explored, nor is the affective and emotional dimensions of the women's engagement explored.

The previously mentioned literature on media studies about affect and emotions show us how emotions and affect are articulated and consumed through digital platforms. Therefore for this thesis to understand women's engagement with online protests and how online engagement might transgress to offline spaces through emotions, it becomes crucial to look into how emotions are generated in the everyday life through the engagement on these digital platforms and how they can serve for women's awareness about sexual harassment.

Conclusions

Online spaces are communicative spaces where the political can take place. With social media activism studies however, a number of research focuses on how these spaces are being used for participation, engagement, and mobilization. The recent studies on activism shows that today these movements take place simultaneously both in online and offline spaces. Besides they also point out the emotional quality of the activism online. Due to the emphasis on rationality on the notion of public sphere, the public space term is coined to differentiate the earned publicness of techno-commercial spaces that has come to be appropriated for activism. With the term, the intermixture of online and offline is recognized as well as the emotional characteristics of the digital activism today. This enables an understanding of the political in everyday life where the engagement and participation has affective and emotional qualities. #sendeanlat is one of these social media protests that follows the global trend in online feminist movements. Using initially a hashtag on Twitter to voice issues surrounding rape culture and sexism, #sendeanlat fits with the rest of the global examples. The literature on online feminist activism (Antonakis-Nashif, 2015; Barker-Plummer, 2016; Armstrong & Mahone, 2016; Rodino-Colocino, 2014; Rapp

et al. 2010 and Sills et al. 2016 etc.) reflects the same qualities as digital activism research by looking into how these spaces are used to mobilize, engage and participate, and to create publics and counter-publics by using public sphere theories. However the studies do not focus on the affect and emotions of the women who engage with these issues through online spaces. This seems to be because of these studies' focus on public sphere models. This tendency to frame the feminist women as counter-publics results in ignoring the women who engage in the feminist discussions online without identifying as feminists. Therefore the literature's focus stays on the feminist women and does not extend to the women who are not feminists but still use the spaces to engage and participate. Thus this research, by making use of the notion of public space, will look into emotional and affective dimensions of the women's engagement with #sendeanlat and demonstrate how engagement with an online protest against rape culture and sexism can generate awareness about these issues among non-feminist women.

Methods and Methodology

Interviews

To get a deeper understanding of the women's engagement with #sendeanlat and how they experienced speaking up online in this protest, semi-structured interviews were conducted. As Kvale states we learn about people by talking to them and via these talks we understand "their experiences, feelings and hopes and the world they live in" (2007: 2) For this reason I decided to focus on the women's individual experiences of engaging with this campaign with the method of semi-structured qualitative interviews. Considering the sensitivity of the topic, I decided to have a more 'friendly' approach that feels like a conversation rather than an investigation (Oakley, 1981). Jensen argues that the major challenge for qualitative interviews is to plan how and to what degree to have a pre-structure for the interviews (2012: 272). Oakley's "friendly approach" (1981) helped with this challenge as well since it was more of a conversation. Choosing semi-structured interviews both helped me as a researcher to stay on topic and for the conversation to have room for new topics to emerge.

In total 14 semi-structured interviews were conducted (see Appendix A). The duration of interviews varied from one interviewee to another. The longest interview lasted an hour and a half while the shortest was half an hour. During the interviews I made a use of an interview guide (see Appendix B), which included the main topics to discuss like engagement online and offline, affect and emotions, and awareness based on my hypothesis. In general the questions were about understanding how the interviewees felt engaging with the tweets and participating in the #sendeanlat protest and if their discussions transgressed to offline spaces. However since "the final aim remains to reconstruct people's experiences and interpretations on their own terms" (van Zoonen, 2003: 137), the sequence of the questions varied from one respondent to another leaving the respondents room to explain themselves in their own ways. In some interviews, there was no need for asking many of the questions since the interviewee would bring them up in her own explanation. As a result of this process, additional themes occurred during the probes. These were: memory, women's trivialization of others' harassment stories, and navigating intimacy in different social media platforms. This highlights one of the benefits of semi-structured interviews; having room for new themes to emerge as "there is commitment to openness in following the repondents' lead" (Hesse-Biber and Leavy, 2011: 128).

All the participants were informed about the research in general and agreed to the terms of their participation. 10 out of 14 interviewees signed a written consent form while the 4 interviewees that were on Skype agreed to the terms verbally. Skype interviewees were informed prior to the Skype session via email by sending an informative document about the terms and objectives of the research. Both the informative document and the consent form stated the interviewees' right to stop the record and they were also reminded during the interviews due to the sensitivity of the topic. They were all given anonymity and a right to access to the transcriptions of their own interviews. While none of the interviewees were interested in the transcriptions, most of them showed an interest in the end result of the research. I hence promised to share my thesis with them after it was defended.

Recruiting and Sampling

10 out of the 14 interviews were conducted in person with women living in Istanbul. Half of these women were found on Facebook; the call for interviewees were shared by a friend to a group called "çare" (meaning "remedy" in Turkish) which was a group for people who were looking for something by posting on the group. The things they were looking varied from a rental room to a veterinarian, from a home to baby cats to collectable items. Since the research wants to display how women who do not necessarily identify with feminism engaged with #sendeanlat, using such a group helped reaching out to a more general crowd who may or may not necessarily be interested in women's issues. As a result of this choice of the group, the sample was made up of 10 women who did not identify as feminists and 4 women who identify as feminists.

The rest of the women in Istanbul were found using the snowball technique "where the initial contact generates further informants" (Jensen, 2012: 270). Asking the interviewees if they know anyone else around them who followed #sendeanlat lead me to the rest of the respondents. The remaining 4 interviews were conducted via Skype with interviewees from Ankara. These women were also found via snowball technique after an initial contact in Ankara found through Facebook.

All the interviewees were residents of the metropolitan cities Istanbul and Ankara however most of them were born and raised in different parts of Turkey and moved to the metropolitan areas later in life. For this reason the interviewees demonstrated a variety of backgrounds by being from different geographical locations of Turkey - from the east to the west and from the north to the south. The reason that the sampling focuses on the residents of metropolitans is the fact that 87% of the Twitter users in Turkey are from the three big cities: Istanbul, Ankara and Izmir (Dogramaci and Radcliff, 2015). The interviewees' ages were between 25 to 45 and they were all university graduates, which makes up of 50% of the Twitter users in Turkey (ibid). Their professions varied from law to teaching, from acting to advertisement and from unemployed to academicians and students (See Appendix C).

Conducting Interviews

<u>*Power, Research Subjects, Relations*</u>

Talking about women's engagement with #sendeanlat most of the time meant talking about women's sexual harassment stories. As a woman who herself experienced sexual harassment, I decided it would be better to approach the women as another woman who has experienced these. Mies (1978) refers to this as "double consciousness" since it also permits the researcher to identify with the research subject, "in the sense that they both can recognize ... their position as victims, their outrage, analysis and criticism and motivation for acting" (Mies cited in van Zoonen 2003, 129). Therefore many times when the respondent shared a sexual harassment story of their own, I recognized by acknowledging their feelings and sharing my own experience in return.

Early feminist researchers such as Ann Oakley (1981) follow a 'friendly' interview process in which they share their own identity and thoughts with the respondents. Hesse-Biber reflects on this by stating: "The idea of sharing identities and stories with one another is thought to increase reciprocity and rapport in the interview process, thus breaking down the notions of power and authority invested in the role of the researcher" (2007: 128). Therefore approaching them as a woman who has experienced sexual harassment and sharing my stories with them in return was helpful in a sense to create what Reinharz (1992: 265) defines as "bonds of solidarity and mutuality" (Reinharz cited in van Zoonen, 2003: 129). However, being aware of the inevitability of the power imbalances (Douchet and Mauthner, 2005), I was still mindful of my position as a researcher. While I was still the one asking them questions and asking for a signed consent form, to what degree can we talk about breaking down notions of power and authority? As Cotterill (1992) states that "The final shift of power between the researcher and the respondent is balanced in favor of the researcher, for it is she who eventually walks away" (Cotterill cited in Doucet and Mauthner, 2006: 40). In other words I had the final say. However even though I am the one who walks away with the data, some interviewees stated that they also

benefited from this by pouring their heart out to someone who listened. I feel it is my ethical responsibility to make sure not to misrepresent these women who were willing to share their feelings and in some cases their painful experiences with me.

Presenting Tweets

The interviewees were presented with examples of tweets from #sendeanlat (see Appendix D). These tweets were a set of tweets that was from a screenshot of the live Twitter feed from 2015 found using Google images. The reason for using Google is due to the fact that the hashtag is from 2015, which makes it harder to find the tweets on Twitter in 2017. The tweets on the screenshot were not selected by me one by one and brought together, but instead they represent an extracted sample from the Twitter feed as it existed in 2015 when the hashtag was trending. While picking this screenshot among others, the focus was to find a set of tweets that included a wide variety of sexual harassment narratives and did not include tweets from men trolling the campaign.

The content of tweets varied from everyday sexism encounters of women to what practices the women engage in to deal with these encounters along with sexual harassment and rape stories of women. The tweets on the screenshot were more on the 'soft' side and did not include sexual harassment or rape stories. To explore further into the women's affective relations to the tweets, I included two additional tweets that used sensory language to describe their experiences. These two tweets were among the tweets that were presented at a newspaper article about #sendeanlat.

The rationale behind this technique was first to remind the interviewees the content of #sendeanlat to refresh their memories and secondly to observe their reactions. During the interview, I chose to carefully observe the interviewees' facial expressions and body movements along with their verbal expressions.

While this approach worked for the interviews that were conducted face to face, it was hard to observe the interviewee's reactions over Skype. "Interviews that are not conducted in person often make it more difficult for the interviewer to establish

rapport with the respondent, and the researcher also loses the impact of visual and verbal clues, such as gestures and eye contact" (Hesse-Biber, 2007: 119). What Hesse-Biber states here was hence evident in the interviews conducted via Skype. The Skype interviews, even though through the video feed they supplied very valuable insights, lacked a certain affective environment due to the lack of bodily presence.

On being both an "insider" and an "outsider"

It is argued that sharing the same status characteristics might help the interviewer to cooperate better with the interviewees, to create rapport and also to understand the subject better (Hesse-Biber and Leavey, 2007: 140). I was an insider by being a woman from Turkey and being brought up to the same patriarchal culture and having similar experiences of sexual harassment. But I was also coming from abroad to research. There were couple instances where I was also an outsider. I did not know some of the references the interviewees made to the recent news events about women. I was also an outsider when they talked about how 'it got worse' over the last year since I haven't experienced that process with them as a member of the group. How did this affect the understandings or expectations that the interviewees might have? While I cannot know how this situation affected the interviewees, I know how it affected my approach. The reason behind the choice of a friendly approach was also to be accepted as an insider. By creating an environment where both parties would give something, the aim was to increase the rapport that might have lacked due to my position as a researcher from abroad.

How to treat data: transcribing, translating, analyzing

All the interviews were transcribed partially after the first 10 interviews were done. I did not transcribe the parts that were off topic or the parts where I talked about my harassment experiences. The transcriptions include notes on women's reactions such as laughing, or crying etc. due to this research's focus on affect and emotions. They also note the silences in between the questions and answers. These silences are marked with … which are also kept in the translated statements quoted in the thesis.

Only the parts that are used in the analysis were translated. The translations were done word by word. In many cases, interviewees would refer to some concepts as 'this' or 'that'. These pronouns were kept as they were and to show what they were referring to, brackets were used in the translations. The interview data was treated as mutually constructed knowledge based on how women themselves state their experiences and feelings as an answer to my questions. This is what Kvale and Brinkmann refer to as "knowledge as produced" since the "interview knowledge is socially constructed in the interaction of interviewer and interviewee" (2009: 54). This is also related to how the analysis treats the statements about emotions. Since the interview data was treated as mutually constructed knowledge, what the interviewees stated as their feelings were treated as what they felt. Therefore there was no attempt to investigate what they might have been feeling from what they were saying but their statements of feelings was considered as their feelings: "feelings as thought and thought as feeling" (Williams, 1978).

After transcribing half the interviews, some themes started emerging. Therefore an initial thematic analysis was done simultaneously while still transcribing. The key quotes were marked. Qualitative data analysis is considered to be an iterative process (Hesse-Biber and Leavy, 2011: 123) and mine was no different. The data was read multiple times and highlighted as I went on. My notes from the interviews were consulted while reading the transcriptions. They gave further insight to the written conversations. These highlighted parts were copy-pasted into a digital table that helped me see the bigger picture (see Appendix E). Sometimes I re-listened to the recordings to make sure not to take the quotes out of context. During this process, I kept going back and forth between the notes, transcriptions, the records and the notes that were made while reading the transcriptions. In total 11 themes were identified. Among these 11 themes, only two themes were excluded from the analysis. These were women's own trivialization of sexual harassment, and feminism. The rest of the themes were later organized into two main themes: engagement and awareness.

Exploring The Women's Engagement with #sendeanlat

The affective and emotional dimensions of women's engagement and participation with #sendeanlat are the central focus of this analysis. In this part the following themes will be explored: women's affective and emotional engagement and disengagement, generating awareness through emotional engagement on social media, and ways to engage: sharing and talking. The way the analysis regards #sendeanlat is that talking is the starting point of empowerment and change. The women's engagement with these intimate stories in mediated online spaces shows a connection between reading, feeling, remembering and realizing in the way that reading makes us feel, feeling makes us remember, remembering and realizing are the ways to become aware. Awareness is followed by talking online or offline, which highlights the blurry lines between these two spaces.

Affective and Emotional: Women's engagement and disengagement with #sendeanlat

This part focuses on how the women's engagement with #sendeanlat was of an emotional kind, and how the same emotional engagement was also the reason for disengagement in some cases. The interviewee's engagement with #sendeanlat showed that reading the tweets was very much related to *feeling* the tweets. This was seen both in the way they expressed their feelings in general towards #sendeanlat and also in the way they reacted to the tweets shown during the interviews.

The observations during the interviews showed affective relations with the tweets they were reading. When reading tweets, what is referred to as bodily sensations in the literature review were observable in the women's reactions. For example the women's facial expressions while reading can be referred to as a 'grimace', a mix of pain and disgust. This was observed many times during the interviews. While this same facial expression was the initial reaction to reading the tweets, it later left its place to mostly watery eyes, sometimes to crying and sometimes even to laughter. These different reactions can be considered as affective responses that precede the

emotional reactions. It should be noted that the women were presented with a dozen tweets displaying different kinds of harassment stories and they were asked how they felt asked after reading them all. Below is an interviewee commenting on how she was affected during reading by stating her own bodily reactions:

"This [referring to the sensual tweets] is where that feeling of goose bumps happen. My eyes are filled with tears." (Beyza)

Beyza's reaction above seems to suggest an affective engagement with #sendeanlat. Bodily sensations such as goose bumps and tears are considered as affect since "affect constitutes a dimension of bodily experiences" (Sharma and Tygstrup, 2015: 7). Crying can be included in these bodily experiences too as a part of one's "affectivity" (Sharma and Tygstrup, 2015). Here another interviewee, Melis, comments on her experience of reading the stories online:

"There were stories that were shared in screenshots, like long stories. I remember crying while reading those. They affected me immensely." (Melis)

After reading the tweets and being asked how they felt reading them, the interviewees' responses differed. The emotions they expressed varied from sadness to disgust, from hate to pity, and from anger to pain. Tweets seem to play a triggering role in women's engagement in the way they become the object of the emotions (Ahmed, 2014). Here Beyza is commenting on her experience of reading the tweets. She calls them triggers:

"It's like a trigger. I mean a tweet I read triggers a place in me that hurts me and I can't deal with what comes after that trigger. I feel like I am damaged." (Beyza)

Understanding tweets as "triggers" can help to demonstrate the role of social media in activating emotions by enabling a space 'where affect can emerge'. (Dilling-Hansen, 2015: 222). "Affect refers not to emotion but to a bodily capacity, a bodily readiness,

a trigger to action, including the action of feeling an emotion" (Clough, 2012: 22). Beyza's statement above can be considered as her being affected and displays how affect triggers an emotion that she cannot deal with. This highlights how her engagement with the tweets were affective and emotional.

Women's disengagement with #sendeanlat was also an emotional kind. Below is an interviewee, Nisan, expressing why she chose not to engage with #sendeanlat:

> "One of the reasons I did not look at #sendeanlat is the fact that what has been expressed there would be heavy for me. On the one side, this is a way to escape. On the other side this is a way of protecting yourself, not bringing this heavy topic near me." (Nisan)

This heaviness that she refers to here can be explained as *intensity,* as her feeling a great deal about the topic to the point that she prefers not to engage and to 'escape' from the strong feelings. This can be seen as affective disengagement due to the feeling of *intensity*. Affect and emotions become crucial to understand the women's disengagement with the tweets as well as their engagement. As seen in the quotations above, the women's experiences of reading the tweets under the hashtag #sendeanlat become much more than a cognitive and rational experience due to its affective and emotional dimensions. *Feeling* the tweets plays an important role in the way women engage or disengage with #sendeanlat. Social media as an online space where affect can emerge (Dilling-Hansen, 2015) enables the women's engagement and disengagement with the affective and emotional dimensions that are generated through social media.

The role of Memory In Emotional Engagement
To further understand the women's engagement with #sendeanlat, it is important to look into the relationship between the women's own memories of sexual harassment and their feelings when reading the tweets. As stated in the literature review, the way Ahmed treats the connection between feelings and memory becomes important to understand the relation between the women's engagement or disengagement with

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#sendeanlat and remembering their own memories. By exploring how the women made connections with their own memories while reading these stories online, it can be understood how the women were personalizing these stories. This plays a crucial role both in their emotional engagement and also in their awareness, which will be discussed in the next chapter.

As seen in the previous section the women's reading experiences were both affective and emotional. The connection between reading and feeling also creates space for remembrance. This remembrance is a crucial part of the interviewees' engagement with #sendeanlat. This theme sometimes came up directly, as one of the interviewee Fulya states here: "When I was reading the tweets, I remembered so many things". Other times the theme remembering emerged in the further explanations of their feelings. Below, it is the interviewee Nisan, who was quoted in the previous part, further explaining what feeling heavy means:

> Q: "What do you mean by heavy?"
>
> A: "I mean reading what women have experienced would remind me of my own experiences. Maybe it won't make a direct association to my own but it will directly make me experience the same feelings again."

Here the interviewee states that reading someone else's sexual harassment story made her feel heavy because it triggered her memory and resulted in remembering her own experience of sexual harassment. As stated in the literature review, Ahmed (2014) posits that our relationship between feeling and remembering goes both ways, we can feel a certain way and remember a past instance about this feeling or we can remember a past event and therefore feel a certain way. In the quote above, the interviewee attributes her memory to her feelings after reading the tweets. This connection between the harassment story she engages with online and memories of her own experiences helps us understand her emotional disengagement further.

The quotation below demonstrates another example of how memory emerges when the interviewee started explaining her feelings, but furthermore it shows how she personalized the stories:

> "It is very saddening. I internalized at least half of the tweets. The others caused pain. What should I say… I guess we'll end up talking about the harassment I experienced. They came to my mind." (Sinem)

The interviewee while stating how she felt reading the tweets comments that she personalized the stories that were told on the tweets. This brings her own experiences to the surface. She gets reminded of her own stories through these 'familiar' emotions. This familiarity of pain can be understood in the light of Ahmed's statement here: "For example, the sensation of pain is deeply affected by memories: one can feel pain when reminded of past trauma by an encounter with another" (Ahmed, 2014: 25). Tweets here then work as an encounter with another and might lead one to "search one's memories for whether one has had it before, differentiating the strange from the familiar" (ibid). This shows how tweets also trigger memory in relation to emotions. While this helps us comprehend the dimensions of the women's emotional engagement, most importantly it becomes crucial to understanding how awareness is generated through online spaces. The women through their emotional engagement with #sendeanlat remember their own experiences of sexual harassment and start to self-reflect which generates self-awareness among them.

Generating Awareness Through Online Spaces

Hermida (2010) states that online spaces such as Twitter can afford individuals "an awareness system [which enables] diverse means to collect, communicate, share and display news and information, serving diverse purposes . . . [which also works] on different levels of engagement" (2010: 301). Although Hermida talks about Twitter's affordances as an awareness system in the context of news, this can also be applied to #sendanlat's context. This part will look into different kinds of awareness that was generated through people's engagement with #sendeanlat in online spaces.

As Rapp et al states online spaces like #sendeanlat are "allowing [women] to have an explicit public presence with the opportunity to influence ... while also raising awareness at the local and national level" (2010: 256). Thus the below analysis identifies four different kinds of awareness: the women's self-awareness, the women's awareness of each other as collective awareness, the feminist women's awareness of "other" women, and lastly men's awareness of women's experiences.

The way Twitter affords an awareness system (Hermida 2010) here in relation to the women's self-awareness is related to memory being triggered through the women's emotional engagement. While engaging with tweets the women's memory were triggered emotionally as shown in the previous part and this trigger in some cases turns into self-awareness by naming the act they experienced as sexual harassment. Below is an interviewee explaining her realization:

[while reading tweets] "Wow! You know how many stories there were like this! When I read these, I got so sad. People are telling about everything. For example this tweet is very similar to me. [reads tweet] 'The worst thing is to realize that what happened to you as a kid that you did not understand was harassment'. What I shared was about this topic too but probably you can give billions of examples of this. Because when you look from here, that is what it was. You realize." (Ezgi)

Recognizing what's familiar in the tweets becomes the first step towards awareness. This helps the women consider some vague memory as a sexual harassment act with the help of other women calling similar acts harassment. This shows how the interactions with social media enable these women to realize their own story and become aware. Below are two examples, one is Akasya and one is Ezgi further explaining how during #sendeanlat they became aware that what happened to them was sexual harassment:

"It was my first time understanding that what happened to me was harassment and that is was also the first time I shared. And this was the essence of the

#sendeanlat campaign, this awareness happened to many people I guess."
(Ezgi)

"Because we were not taught like that. While reading I was like, 'This is
harassment too?' Well that happened to me as well…" (Akasya)

#Sendeanlat accomplishes something for women like Ezgi and Akasya, making them
think about their experiences in a new light and further understand what they mean
for them. This happens with the help of the thematic context of the hashtag inviting
them to do so in their everyday lives (Papacharissi, 2014). By encountering the
hashtag #sendeanlat while scrolling on their social media platforms, Ezgi and Akasya
were invited to engage and participate. Through their engagement, they were not only
affected but also reminded of their experiences. This lead to Ezgi realizing for the
first time that her vague memory from her childhood was a case of sexual harassment
and also lead to Akasya naming one of her experiences as harassment. The way social
media activates memory through women's emotional engagement later leads to self-
awareness. This shows how social media enables self-awareness through the
affordances of its "awareness system" (Hermida, 2010).

It is important to note that this awareness was identified among the women who were
not engaging with these discussions about sexual harassment in their personal life.
The women who identified as feminists among the interviewees stated that they were
already engaging with this topic, therefore this self-awareness did not apply to them.
However below is one of the interviewees commenting on the hashtag's affordances
by stating how it creates a shortcut for non-organized, non-feminist women:

"I think there is an advantage of this case. For example I put in so many
hours, spent so much time to think about these issues but *these hashtags make
you spend that time during the process itself*, like it's an exploration. 'Oh look
this is harassment. Oh this is harassment, too!' I saw that revelation. Maybe
this thing that we call becoming aware...like kids for example...why they need
to be aware...so that they would know what is harassment. Exactly! Because I

saw that this awareness was happening to other women. I got hopeful"
(Beyza)

What Beyza states here seems to be accurate for some of the interviewees.
#Sendeanlat saves that time for women who did not spend time engaging with sexual
harassment issues in their personal lives. What sexual harassment is, how to define it,
and their own experiences all become visible with the hashtag. It almost creates a
shortcut to these discussions. "It is the transformation that is necessary to take one's
previously private experiences of something 'designed to isolate and shame us into
silence, into a strategy of consciousness raising' [Penny 2013]" (Mendes, 2015: 94)
Therefore here social media functions as a space where consciousness raising can
happen through this transformation of private experiences becoming public (ibid). By
reading other women's stories online, women start reflecting on their own lives and
naming harassment as harassment. Here is how Deniz is reflecting on her engagement
with #sendeanlat and her own process of accepting harassment:

> "When I was really small although I don't really remember how small I
> was...maybe I was big enough to remember…but there you start blaming
> yourself, 'Why did I let this happen?' I think I was seven years old and this
> (harassment) lasted a while. After #sendeanlat...I mean people talking about it
> and defining it as sexual harassment, I accepted that this happened in my life.
> Yes, I was harassed." (Deniz)

Deniz's engagement with #sendeanlat resulted in her defining her own experience as
harassment. She attributes this acceptance of hers to #sendeanlat and to the fact that
other women called different experiences harassment under this hashtag. Therefore it
can be argued that women's engagement with the hashtag #sendeanlat generates ways
to define what harassment is. The more women read other women calling certain
behaviour harassment, the more women who don't personally engage with these
issues become aware of what it is. This is connected to Mendes' (2015) discussion
quoted above. The way women's private experiences become public in online spaces
enables these silenced and shamed stories to become a tool for other women to get

aware (ibid). Publicness enabled by the online spaces leads to these private stories getting out in the public space and this in turn helps to create awareness among the women.

The second identified awareness was the women's collective awareness. What is meant by collective awareness is that the women who engaged with #sendeanlat became aware that they were not alone in experiencing sexual harassment. As the interviews showed, when asked about how they felt regarding #sendeanlat and the number of tweets, *every* woman commented that they felt like they were not alone. The most common statement that was shared by *every* interviewee about their feelings was this *feeling of not being alone.* This shows "the media's role in constructing experience [and] identity" (Kitzinger, 2001: 1) What Kitzinger states in the context of a television program helping women to construct their experiences and identities about sexual abuse, can be applied to the context of #sendeanlat as well. Through the online spaces, the women re-construct their experiences as not a lonely experience. As the interviewee Sinem puts it, "Like I said, it feels terrible but on the other hand it also feels so so good… like that feeling of 'I am not alone'... that feeling of 'we are not alone'". The transition of private and painful experiences into public stories becomes a way for women to gain awareness about other women's experiences and feel *not alone* (Mendes, 2015). It is interesting to note that this feeling of terrible and good mixture was evident in many women's responses. They felt bad for 'their' common histories but also good for the fact that they were not alone.

Lauren Berlant on what makes intimate publics states "the consumers of its particular stuff already share a worldview and emotional knowledge that they have derived from a broadly common historical experience" (2008: viii). Even though what Berlant states here refers to the consumers of women's literature, films and TV shows in the States, it can be applied to the context of the Turkish women as well. This can help to understand why every interviewee found something familiar among the tweets and stated that #sendeanlat made them feel that they were not alone. When reading tweets, every interviewee found at least a couple of stories -if not all- that had

commonalities with their own personal experiences. Every one of them would point out and say *this is exactly what happened to me*. Considering the previous argument of how women's engagement with #sendeanlat is emotional, this commonality referred to as 'worldview' by Berlant can be interpreted as what Williams (1978) describes as shared *structures of feeling*. Besides it can also be seen as her notion of 'emotional knowledge' that is evolved from common personal histories. Below are two examples of interviewees talking about these common histories:

"I felt anger and this mutual feeling like all the stories we read there were too familiar. Because we do not even tell these to our girlfriends most of the time. Then you start feeling like okay these things are actually experienced by everyone. And I realized this then. There was one thing that affected me a lot. This walking alone at night and being scared. I used to think that was unique to me but I learned that this was something that every women feels. These things made me feel like...how to put it...like all women have a common problem" (Melis)

"In fact we all have these sexual harassment stories. There were some stories that were close to what I experienced. Those make me feel like 'Yes!' This too happened to me! Apparently I am not alone, everybody experiences these. These are the things we rarely talk about." (Nil)

As Rapp et al argue, the above quotes show how the online space becomes a tool that allows public presence (2010). The public presence helps women voice stories that they do not even tell in their private spaces. This transformation into the public of their private stories (Mendes, 2015) makes women aware that their existing individual problems are also common problems. Drawing from Berlant: "A certain circularity structures an intimate public, therefore: its … participants are perceived to be marked by a commonly lived history; its narratives and things are deemed expressive of that history while also shaping its conventions of belonging; and, expressing the sensational, embodied experience of living as a certain kind of being in the world" (2008: viii). What she refers to as the 'commonly lived history' can be

interpreted in relation to the #sendeanlat context as the sexist culture in Turkey that is lived by Turkish women. Thus 'its narratives' can be seen as the sexual harassment stories that were shared by the women which were expressed during #sendeanlat. As Berlant states, these stories can be considered demonstrative of this common history or as Melis puts it as 'our common problem' while also shaping feelings of belonging and generating a collective awareness of this common problem:

> "Actually in a way it made me happy. On the other hand I said I was not surprised [about the number of tweets] but also one feels like she is not alone. This is actually a disgusting feeling but it is not like I am happy everybody experienced this. What I mean is more like there are other people who experienced this so apparently I am not alone. That feeling of not being alone was a good feeling" (Akasya)

What Akasya and every other interviewee states about not being alone also shows that how these women alienated their own experiences from the rape culture itself and saw their harassment incidents as singular events. These reactions of women reflect on the rape culture itself with the help of its shaming and blaming. The fact that these incidents are not talked about leads women to feel like they are alone in experiencing the issues. Besides, the fear of being blamed, as some interviewees had, is deemed by the individualization of these experiences. This individualization leads women not to see the cause as buried in the structures of society (Anderson, 2015) but leads them to alienate these experiences as singular events instead of seeing them as a social phenomenon. That every interviewee states that they felt like they were not alone reveals how #sendeanlat helps portray these stories of women as a social phenomenon by depicting the stories as common histories of women. As scholars like Mendes (2015), Penny (2013) and Rapp et al (2010) argue, this displays how online spaces can be used in women's everyday lives as a feminist tool to resist against the silence induced by sexist culture. Besides the women's engagement with #sendeanlat here through online spaces creates a collective awareness for women by making them aware that they are not alone.

In addition to the above explained awareness, two additional kinds of awareness occurred among the people engaging with #sendeanlat. The third awareness identified is the feminist women's awareness of how other women feel and think. As discussed in the introduction, #sendeanlat does not fit with the feminist online protests in the sense that it was an outcry of everyone, not only feminists, and this everyone-ness appealed to many women therefore making it accessible for women who do not identify with feminism as well:

> "What I saw in #sendeanlat is that it was the people who usually don't really engage with these issues, the people that stay in their own corner. Because these issues are seen as a feminist issue. I mean they are considered as the problem of people who say 'I am a feminist' but the hashtags were shared by women who were not feminists. In that sense #sendeanlat touched to a general thing." (Beyza)

As Beyza states, #sendeanlat appeals to a general crowd rather than a very closed, specific feminist circle. This is the reason that feminist women among the interviewees commented on an awareness of women who are outside of their circles. As Nisan says below this helped them understand what other women feel:

> "My situation is different. I mean sexual violence is something that I have been dealing with for the last three years so for me awareness did not start from here (#sendeanlat) but it showed a different dimension to us. *With this we understood a little more about what other women outside of our world think and feel.*" (Nisan)

Nisan's point above shows what #sendeanlat might have done for women who personally engage with this topic. The awareness system (Hermida 2010) of the online spaces here enables organized women to get a peek into how the women outside of their circles think and feel about the issues. In a way this awareness system helps them gain an awareness of other women's perspective.

The interviews showed that this change in perspective was not limited to only women. The fourth kind of awareness generated through the engagement with #sendeanlat was men becoming aware of this problem in women's lives as well as becoming aware of what constitutes sexual harassment. Even though the data collection only included women interviewees, this theme of men's awareness was something that came up several times during the interviews. Here it is Akasya stating how her male friend experienced awareness:

> "This is actually very strange. I have a friend, male friend from the university, and this guy is the most insensitive guy on earth. We can define him as a douche. He is like one of those people to whom you cannot explain what sexual harassment is. He would ask, 'really that too?' And this guy had the biggest change with #sendeanlat. It is very interesting I know but I was more surprised about his change than my own. One day when we met, he himself opened the discussion and started saying like 'I am reading these and I cannot believe what stories are out there. And we didn't know about any of these'. Because they [men] don't know! Nobody heard about these. Their sisters do not tell them what they experience, just like I didn't. And he had the biggest enlightenment and really changed. I mean reading those stories were a turning point for him. Right now he is more of a person that you can talk to" (Akasya)

Akasya's statement above shows how she personally witnessed a friend of hers change in his perspective. Although some of the interviewees mentioned a change in men's perspective via reading #sendeanlat, Akasya was the only one who actually knew someone going through this change. Drawing from Young (1997), this can be interpreted as the discursive power of the stories. It demonstrates how women's usage of online spaces can open up opportunities for not only women expressing themselves but also men getting some perspective through their engagement online. There might have been some individual perspective changes in men through their encounters with the stories online in their everyday life. This is enabled by both the awareness system (Hermida, 2010) and the thematic context of hashtags (Papacharissi, 2014) inviting

people to engage with a taboo topic in this case. As Sinem states, if we are lucky, they might have thought about it:

> "The most important thing that #sendeanlat did is this feeling of not being alone, second is in the men's -in quotations- 'awareness' however much it is. And third is realizing what is the extent or definition of sexual harassment through these encounters (tweets). A man does not think of that. He goes to a bar and starts eating the woman with his eyes all through the night. He is not sure if this is harassment or not. But if we are lucky, if he read those tweets, he would think about it." (Sinem)

What Sinem describes above is similar to what Penny (2013) describes when she discusses the power of digital feminism. She states that women sharing their stories online might also help men understand women's experiences differently than what they assume or hear growing up (2013: 48). In that sense, this awareness generated through the online space by engaging with #sendeanlat is not limited to women but also might be inclusive of men, as Penny states "who really aren't as ignorant as they'd like to be" (ibid). Therefore women sharing their stories online, transforming their private experiences into public is how these different kinds of awareness happen through online spaces. This transformation of private experience that is 'designed to isolate and shame us into silence' into the public space becomes a 'strategy of consciousness raising' (Penny, 2013). And the above explained awareness is realized with the help of this transformation on online spaces therefore showing us how social media enabled awareness can happen.

Ways to Engage: Different Forms of Further Engagement

This part focuses on what happens after the awareness as the ways of the women's further engagement with #sendeanlat. The analysis has so far shown different ways and spaces of engagement. The women's engagement was not limited to online spaces but also transgressed to offline spaces. The below analysis will display

different ways that the women engaged with the online protest #sendeanlat: sharing their private stories online and talking with friends offline.

The following part will discuss the motivations and the limitations of women's engagement by sharing their stories online. The interviews showed that the most common way the women further engaged with the topic was to participate in the conversation online by sharing their own sexual harassment experiences or as defined in the literature review, by sharing 'affective statements' (Papacharissi, 2014). (Affective statements here refer to women sharing facts about rape culture in Turkey based on their own experiences and combining it with emotional statements.) The data showed that the online platforms women used varied based on the women's motivations as well as the limitations of the online spaces. While most of them chose to participate on Twitter, a couple interviewees preferred Facebook and only one of the interviewees used an email address that were created during #sendeanlat (sendeanlat@gmail.com). This variety of platforms displays the multitude of spaces where women's political engagement can take place in their everyday life through their online participation (Dahlgren, 2009) via the hashtag. The women choosing one platform over another showed that each woman had different motivations to share on the online platforms they chose. Besides it also showed how they negotiated intimacy and publicness online in relation to the limitations of the spaces.

One of the interviewees, Ezgi commented about sharing her own story on Facebook by saying that "There is a different kind of group on Twitter, I wanted it to stay on Facebook". Later she further explained on the 'different kind of group'. She stated that she was friends on Facebook with hundreds of young people between the ages of 17 to 30 that she got to know through a youth program she was involved in as a teacher. She considered sharing it on a platform where young people can see as "meaningful". Her comments below draw from these online spaces' potential to work as "communicative spaces" where the political can take place in the everyday lives of people (Dahlgren, 2009):

"I want them to hear [about #sendeanlat] but also there is a more to this, I wanted it to be seen and known. When it's seen, it occupies a space and it starts coming from different places too. And it reaches to a point where you realize that this case exists. You are like 'Oh I have an experience like this too!' This had the same impact on all of us. It spreads in waves and you feel the need to share. Plus, I had friends [on Facebook] who would feel comfortable with sharing after seeing me share it. I shared it to be seen also below that [the post] it continues with the comments and you start talking there. My aunt for example commented saying something like 'Ah Ezgi, i'm so sorry'. She got upset etc, but she is not the target of that post but she sees it there too." (Ezgi)

Ezgi's example above exemplifies what scholars like Penny (2013) and Mendes (2015) argue: online spaces can be used as a political tool due to their discursive power. Besides her comment about how people comment on her post and start talking there illuminates how these 'communicative spaces' function in sparking discussions (Dahlgren, 2009). This also highlights her motivation since she comments that she wanted to encourage other women to share by making this taboo issue visible on social media. Antonakis-Nashif (2015) argues that hashtags can make the invisible visible. This also shows how "political can take place in the proximity of people's everyday lives" (Dahlgren, 2013: 48).

Furthermore Ezgi's quote above displays how she had a certain group of people in mind or an "imagined audience" (boyd, 2007) when she shared her own intimate story on a networked public (Facebook) to be seen by this certain group. Her comment on her aunt and how she is not the 'target' of that post also gives away who is involved in this audience. The fact that she comments as "I have friends who would feel comfortable with sharing after seeing me share" hints who is a part of her imagined audience. What she states before about having a different kind of group on Facebook who are young and how she finds sharing her experience with them meaningful displays who she considers as her audience. The interviews showed that the "imagined audience" did play an important role in the women's participation

online. This was evident in both selecting what story to share online and also deciding to participate:

> "On Twitter I talked about the doctor's harassment only because how to put it… it is more of a 'public knowledge' getting harassed by a doctor, getting harassed by a teacher, etc. These are the happenings where the society can react more as 'there there'" (Akasya)

Akasya's comment shows that she chose to share an intimate story that was acceptable by her imagined audience. As boyd states: "participants in social network sites imagine their audience and speak according to the norms that they perceive to be generally accepted" (2007: 3). Thus this shows a possible limitation of the social media engagement based on what audience the women imagine.

Another limitation of the social media engagement was the very same aspect what makes this space powerful: the publicness. Below are examples of the women who were careful about the publicness:

> "I read a lot and so many things came to my mind that I wanted to share too or similar stories that I thought that I should share this but I am an actress and I work with TV and my name would be seen there. And it would be like what I did was bad, I did not want it to come out with my name" (Nil)

> "Maybe I did not want to be exposed like that … I mean I did not want to be remembered like the woman who got harassed … it gets attached to your identity" (Sinem)

These quotes show how the women respond differently to the publicness of the platforms. While some women made a use of the publicness by sharing to support each other or to raise consciousness on the matter, other women were more cautious in regards to their intimate story becoming public. What Nil states as "like what I did was bad" can be interpreted that she expected to be blamed by others if she shared.

This highlights the limitation of the digital spaces as public spaces in the way that they reflect the existing structures in the society. Sinem's comment on the other hand shows how these stories when shared become a part of your identity which may or may not lead to shaming and blaming. They imagine an audience who would blame them or who would remember them as a victim. These imagined audiences become about the limitations of this new social and mediated space in which they are sharing their stories. This might be interpreted as though the digital public spaces too are grounded in the traditional social boundaries of existing sexism and rape culture.

However each woman's experience and their motivations differed from each other. Below is another interviewee Derya, commenting on her participation on Facebook:

> "Everybody was sharing, they all had their own stories. I shared to both let it out and also for people to see like they are not the only ones who had these experiences. Like in a way I shared also to relax them" (Derya)

What Derya states above shows two different motivations: to open out as in to pour out or let it go or as to get a release and to support other women by making her own intimate public. The shared intimacy here in Derya's case connects to Lauren Berlant's intimacy: "intimacy also involves an aspiration for a narrative about something shared, a story about both oneself and others that will turn out in a particular way" (1998: 281). Shared stories of #sendeanlat are both about one's own self as well as about others which makes them intimate. They are about one's own self because they are experienced by that self and also because they are shared by oneself to get a release. However they are also about others in the way that it is shared with them by making one's intimate story other's. As Derya states she made her own intimate story public to support others and show them that 'they are not the only ones'. The publicness or the visibility is enabled by the mediated space and in Derya's case used to not only support others but also for herself to get it out.

Another interviewee, Akasya also uses this online space to pour her heart out by emailing sendeanlat@gmail.com. As she puts it while laughing: "I wrote a lot to the

email address. Like almost my life story". Her choice of the space is related to her motivation for participating in #sendeanlat:

> "It [the email] got me more excited because there was a difference. When you shared on Twitter, there were way too many stories that people shared and everybody read one after another. And it is like...when you write in the email...it is like you get it out of your chest...like a journal. And you don't know if somebody reads it or not. But you got to pour your heart out and it is like journaling to the fullest." (Akasya)

Akasya's comment above demonstrates that participating in #sendeanlat via email was a way to 'get things out of her chest'. This is very much related to the fact that this was her *first time* sharing these stories. She commented that she found writing her experience 'therapeutic' which again can be interpreted as her participation in #sendeanlat being a kind of confiding with strangers towards a way to heal from these experiences. Here we see how sharing the intimate stories are both about oneself and others (Berlant, 1998) and the media plays a part in this by enabling communicative spaces (Dahlgren, 2009) that women can use as tools to make the invisible visible.

The above part focused on the women's further engagement with #sendeanlat in the online spaces -the motivations and limitations of their engagement on social media. The following section will continue to look at women's engagement in offline spaces.

The Blurring Lines of Spaces Through Engagement
Baym refers to online spaces as a "myth" and states that online spaces are not juxtaposed with the offline (2010). Although this can be seen as a drastic argument, online and offline spaces can be seen as feeding off each other. As the interviews showed how the online discussion of #sendeanlat transgressed to offline, the lines between online and offline spaces becomes blurry in the way that women's engagement transgresses into offline spaces. Some of the interviewees (Deniz, Nisan, Sinem, Akasya, Nil, Fulya) commented that #sendeanlat became a subject to discuss during their gatherings with friends and coworkers in offline spaces. What Bird

(2003) notes about news stories in general can be applied to personal stories in these online spaces. As she states "people do indeed use news stories to discuss cultural and personal questions" (ibid: 17). In the #sendeanlat case the data showed that people do use hashtags to discuss cultural and personal questions as they commented that their engagement with #sendeanlat transgressed to their offline lives in the form of discussions about sexual harassment.

The topic of their discussions differed from each other. For some their offline discussions were about the number of tweets and how common sexual harassment was for women. For others, the discussions revolved around sharing their own harassment stories with each other. Some women confessed that it was their first time talking about this with other people, others stated that a friend shared a story with them for the first time. Only one person stated that she did not talk about this matter offline. Below is Fulya commenting how a close friend opened up to her during #sendeanlat:

> "We were talking about this [#sendeanlat] and what happened to Özgecan. And a close friend of mine started telling about her own sexual harassment story; how an older family member would love her differently on his lap. She said she realized what it was very late. She still hates that man and said how she never told this story to anyone before. It is good that we started talking about these with each other. These were the things we didn't talk before but yes now at least we talk with each other and we started taking it one step further by writing it on social media. Now we make some noise and it is good." (Fulya)

As argued before, engaging with these tweets emotionally, the women remembered their own experiences and self reflected on the memories. What Fulya states above can be seen as though some women took their awareness one step further and started talking during this spree of opening up. Here is another interviewee commenting on how she was one of the women who opened up and told her story for the first time:

"I didn't share it on Twitter but maybe it helped me talk about my own story. For example I didn't share this with anyone before. And even though I didn't tweet it, I shared it face to face with a friend who I believe will be a lifelong friend. That is gonna stay there always. And when I look back now, yes it did help me talk. Because I did not tell this to anyone until then. Nobody knew about it." (Deniz)

The women's engagement with #sendeanlat shows that their engagement transgressed to the offline spaces as well. That the women talked in offline spaces about #sendeanlat shows how online protests can spark conversations offline. This reflects Poell and Van Dijk's (2015) understanding of public spaces and their emphasis on the blurry lines of online protests between offline and online spaces, which is also observed in this case. The blurry lines occur due to the women's "emotional connectivity" (ibid) that enables the publicness of these online spaces as well as the transgression of their engagement from online to offline. It is through the affective and emotional dimensions of the women's engagement that these online spaces can spark conversation and generate awareness.

Concluding Thoughts

The Turkish women's engagement with #sendeanlat was affective and emotional. This affectivity and emotionality was very much connected to the women's memories. Recollection turned out to be central for the women to understand their own experiences in a new light through their emotional engagement with #sendeanlat. The research showed how the engagement with this online protest generated awareness for the women who did not engage with these issues personally. Most importantly, this thesis laid out how these online spaces can also help the women who do not identify with feminism engage with anti-sexism protests by bringing these matters into the public space. This visibility helped these women gain awareness through their engagement. Their engagement also displayed the blurry lines of online and offline spaces by showing how the women's engagement with #sendeanlat was

not limited to the communicative spaces online (Dahlgren, 2009). The ways to engage with this online protest changed from one woman to another. Some women showed how their discussions about sexual harassment issues transgressed to offline spaces through their engagement in #sendeanlat online. Other women's engagement turned into participation by joining in voicing stories on online spaces. Their motivations in participating online changed from one to another. While some participated to let their heart out, others participated to become a part of the group, or support other women. The limitations of their participation however were due to their imagined audience on their social media platforms. Imagining an audience who would shame and blame them, lead some not to participate online while affecting the choice of platform in others, such as sending an email instead of using Facebook. This showed the complexity of how the women differed from each other in their usage of social media spacees thus also showing differing affordances of different online platforms. While for some the imagined audience motivated them to share, for others the audience they imagined was the reason for not participating.

Their emotional affective engagement transgressed to offline spaces and in some cases changed something in them, either by accepting that what happened to them was harassment, or by remembering their own stories in a new light, or by talking about it out loud. While this brings up the emotional character of online protests emphasized by Poell and van Dijk (2016) in the way online and offline spaces get intermingled due to this emotionality, it also connects to feminist activism's emphasis on discursive politics. Since "much feminist activism concentrates on changing how people think about gender, power, self determination and so on" (Young, 1997: 12), the way #sendeanlat changes women's perspectives about sexual harassment as discussed shows the importance of such protests online. Most of the interviewees stated that they actively use Twitter in their everyday lives. Therefore, with online protests, political takes place in the everyday lives of women on these digital public spaces through emotional engagements. This demonstrated how emotions can be a starting point, a catalyst for the non-feminist, non-organized women's engagement with women's issues and also can path the way towards their awareness about these issues.

Empowered or Disempowered?

The reactions of the women were different from each other regarding the question if #sendeanlat achieved something. Most of the interviewees recognized the impact of #sendeanlat as the "initial step" towards a change or "a step on the way" to change things while also emphasizing "we need many more steps like this". Others referred to personal changes that happened to them or men around them after having experienced #sendeanlat. One of the personal changes they mentioned was that today they feel more inclined to voice and scream when they experience sexual harassment on the street. They connect this change to the fact that after seeing #sendeanlat and the number of tweets, they knew that "even that old lady on the bus got harassed so I know she will back me up" (Fulya). However not everyone was as hopeful and optimistic as the rest of the women about the results. Below is an interviewee, Beyza, commenting on how #sendeanlat didn't achieve anything:

> "When we do something about the violence against a woman who is not a virgin, then we would be making progress. This is not progress! This is just everyone getting a release and going back to their homes. Men got a release saying that we want death penalty, spilled out their hatred. Women put their knowledge of these experiences with the naivety of "this happened to me too" and ran away. It has been two years, what do we have as a result of this campaign? Nothing at all!" (Beyza)

While Beyza is right in stating these since the women in Turkey still face the same violence, this thesis shares the optimism of the rest of the interviewees and believes that individual changes do matter. Questioning what is change and what is collective action, Young (1997) argues that individual acts such as leaving partners that are abusive can be collective in the way they affect the changes in discourses about male violence against women. She concludes that if these individual actions are considered together, they can grow to a collective resistance. Young posits this collectiveness in two ways both in the number of women leaving their abusive partners and in the

discursive and institutional resources that make it possible for women to realize these actions. Although it is hard to argue for a social change in this case, the above arguments show individual changes in women's perspectives of what harassment is as well as women speaking up. Therefore tracing Young's argument, these individual acts of awareness and speaking up might be seen as collective resistance to the prevailing sexism in the patriarchal Turkish society. Considering this, it might be why Tugce calls this protest a victory:

"It is like a victory! Yes we are together, we are talking. And not being alone is one of these feelings too. I felt like I wasn't alone. This is both good and bad. It is scary that there are so many cases but the fact that women are expressing these made me feel good. I remember feeling like: Yes, finally! This is it! Maybe for the first time in this country we made this much noise." (Fulya)

Making noise as Fulya puts it is very crucial in the case of #sendeanlat to understand if/how women are empowered. Papacharissi argues that "The practice of making an affective statement in front of an actual and imagined audience is potentially empowering and it becomes even more so in the context of tags that invite provocative statements" (2014: 110). Drawing from Papacharissi's argument it can be argued that the women of #sendeanlat were empowered in the way they were able to express the affective statements in front of their actual and imagined audience. She posits "these affective statements employed emotion to locate private thoughts in a public setting. The act of publicly or visibly intimating thoughts one has only imagined articulating can be a self empowering act… it is not necessarily the act itself but rather the feeling it is infused with that grants the statements its own unique texture" (2014: 111). Emotion's role in locating private thoughts is demonstrated in reading and remembering, considering Papacharissi's point about expressing these private thoughts publicly is exactly what these women did by participating in #sendeanlat. Their emotional engagement then can be interpreted as a self-empowering act in the way they made intimate public. Some of the interviewees, when asked about what #sendeanlat did, talked about empowerment:

"In any way I think women were empowered. I mean… I don't think anything will go back to how it was before. Because now that the women engage with these issues and openly discuss, men's violence will be condemned. And women won't be silent as much as they did before. I believe in this. I mean every time we move one step further, maybe sometimes we move three steps when something happens, maybe half a step, but every step feeds each other and turns into something empowering." (Nisan)

Using Papacharissi's stance, it can be argued that women were somewhat empowered however these statements can also lead to disempowerment for some women. Below is what Nisan stated earlier which can be seen as disempowering:

"Besides the feeling of not being able to do something is a heavier feeling. I mean you learn at that time that so many women have experienced this but you can't do anything. Your hands are tied. And you go back to your own pain, relive your own feelings and I don't know what good comes out of this and for whom.." (Nisan)

Nisan's feelings in the above quote can be interpreted as her feeling disempowered. And she wasn't the only one who felt this way. Below is Nil, stating how she felt:

"There were some people who wrote some very heavy things. Those diminish one's will to read these stories because you are like 'what if that happens to me too?'. It leads you into this paranoia. I want to be able to walk comfortable with my stockings on, but those stories stay in my head and that leads to auto-censor." (Nil)

When we look at Nil's reactions as having paranoia about what might happen to her or censoring the way she dresses because of this paranoia, is it possible to say she was empowered? To what degree can we talk about empowerment? It seems empowerment and disempowerment are not permanent states. While it is hard to

argue for empowerment considering the above quotes, empowerment can be argued in the way that the women became aware. The women becoming aware of their own stories and naming them as sexual harassment can be considered empowerment, as well as the way engaging with #sendeanlat made them feel supported and understood. Furthermore understanding that their singular event actually was an issue for everyone, helped the women see how their individual cases are actually a collective problem. This can be considered empowering. This mixture of feeling empowered because of the collective noise of the women but also feeling powerless in the way of not feeling able to do something shows how empowerment and disempowerment are floating notions. Nisan's quotations above exemplify both these states: feeling powerless because of the heavy feeling and feeling empowered at the same time. Empowerment and disempowerment then are not permanent states that one can be in constantly. They become temporary states.

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Appendixes

Appendix A: Empirical data, Interviews

"Ezgi" (2017).   Interview with B. Kesen. 27th of February.

"Akasya" (2017).   Interview with B. Kesen. 27th of February

"Fulya" (2017).   Interview with B. Kesen. 28th of February

"Derya" (2017).   Interview with B. Kesen. 28th of February

"Nil" (2017).   Interview with B. Kesen. 1st of March

"Beyza"(2017).   Interview with B. Kesen. 1st of March

"Sinem"(2017).   Interview with B. Kesen. 2nd of March

"Nisan" (2017).   Interview with B. Kesen. 3rd of March

"Deniz"(2017).   Interview with B. Kesen. 3rd of March

"Eylül" (2017).   Interview with B. Kesen. 4th of March

"Melis" (2017).   Interview with B. Kesen. [Skype] 13th of March

"Beren" (2017).   Interview with B. Kesen. [Skype] 14th of March

"Hayat" (2017).   Interview with B. Kesen. [Skype] 15th of March

"Seyda" (2017).   Interview with B. Kesen. [Skype] 1st of April

1.What is feminism for you?

    a. According to your own definition, do you consider yourself a feminist?

    b. Have you participated in any activism regarding feminist issues?

2.Do you recall how you learned about #sendeanlat?

    a. Do you remember the first time you saw it? Where was it?

    b. Did you follow the tweets? How?

    c. Did you use the #? Where? How?

    d. If not, how come?

3.In 2015, when #sendeanlat first started, do you remember how you felt about it?

    a. What were your thoughts about the online protest at that time?

    b. What did you make of the amount of the tweets and the many similar stories? How did it make you feel?

    c. Did you have any friends that followed #sendeanlat? How did they react? Did they talk to you about how they felt?

4.Do you remember discussing this # with anyone outside of the Twitter? If yes,

    a. How? Where?

    b. Did this happen on more than one occasion?

    c. How was the nature of these discussions?

    d. Did anyone share a personal story of their own in these discussions?

5. Looking back, what do you think of this Twitter campaign?

    a. Do you think it was successful/unsuccessful in any way?

    b. If you consider it as successful what do you think it achieved?

    c. If unsuccessful, why?

Appendix C: Profiles of Women

Ezgi	36 years old	Unemployed
Akasya	25 years old	Teacher
Fulya	30 years old	Advertisement
Derya	43 years old	Teacher
Nil	31 years old	Actress
Beyza	32 years old	Translator/Editor
Sinem	32 years old	Pre-school Teacher
Nisan	25 years old	Lawyer
Deniz	35 years old	Logistics Manager
Eylül	25 years old	English Teacher
Melis	27 years old	PHD Student
Beren	28 years old	Research Assistant
Hayat	31 years old	PHD Student
Seyda	23 years old	Student

Appendix D: Presented Tweets During The Interviews

(translated from Turkish)

- While talking to my childhood friend, we just realized years later, that old man who was dear to us, who kept hugging and kissing us were actually harassing us

- I didn't know that all my sisters felt a stranger's mustache on their necks when they were 7 years old, and have been living with that disgust and fear since then.

- The police that we went to press charges about sexual harassment has been harassing me on Whatsapp 24/7

- Throughout my student years, I ran home after getting off the bus, fearing all the way. Do you know how it feels?

- The worst thing is to learn that the thing you did not understand growing up is actually sexual harassment.

- Which one should I tell? What about the old guy getting closer to me on the street only to expose me his erected penis?

- We live in a country where we are afraid to take the bus when there is only men inside.

- "The bus is too crowded, I should not get in, something might happen"
  "The bus is empty, I shouldn't get by myself alone, something might happen"

- I made a complaint to the police twice about my harassment, both times the police said: "but you are a beauty ofcourse you'll get harassed"

- Let's talk about each and every time we got harassed on the bus by men excusing themselves saying "there is no space"

- One in three girls in Turkey have been exposed to harassment before they turn 18 years old.

- I lost my mom when I was 11 years old because of a traffic accident caused by harassment.

Appendix E: Data Coding Example

	A	"I am not alone"	"Awareness"	"Memory"	"Affect"/emotions
1					
2	Int. #1		(while reading tweets) "Wow! You know how many stories there were like this! When i read these, I got so sad. People are telling about everything. For example this tweet is very similar to me. "the worst thing is to realize that what happened to you as a kid that you did not understand was harrassment" What i shared was about this topic too but probably you can give billions of examples of this. Because when you look from here, that is what it was. you realize. Ooo bunun gibi neler vardi biliyor musun? Evet okay. Ben bunlari gordugumde cok uzuldum yani boyle insanlar ifade ediyor iste seyi mesela su bana yakin boyle birsey gordugum icin yazdim en kotusude kucukken anlamlandiramadin buyuyunce taciz ve istismar oldugunu anlamak. Benim de paylasimim bu konudaydi ama zibilyon tane muhtemelen verilebilir. Surdan bakinca yani boyle bisey cunku haaa falan diyorsun."Yes it was my first time understanding that what happened to me (as a kid) was harrasment and that is also the first time i shared. And this was the essence of the sendeanlat campaign, this awareness happened to many people i guess."Evet evet ilk defa o zaman anladim taciz oldugunu ve ilk defa o zaman paylastim zaten bu iste yani sendeanlatin en buyuk esprisi o galiba bi suru	acayip bisey mesela bak zihnimin bir kenarinda durmus bu o seyleri okuyunca baktim aa hani. bu kolay bi de anlatilir bi yerden bisey sunu boyle kooyuyim dedim cunku aslinda bunun gibi neler var. galiba biraz boyle basliyor o yuzden ortulu kapali "this thing is so strange. look for example this (the memory of the sexual harrasment from childhood) apparently had stayed in the corners of my mind. When i read those (tweets), i thought about this thing. and it was easy to talk about too then i posted it because in reality there are so many stories like this, i think that is how it starts. that is why it is veiled."	

1		offline engagement	social media	#sendeanlat - results- impacts - change
4	Int. #2	var bu cok enteresan iste. bi tane erkek arkadasim vardi universitede. ve bu cocuk dunyanin en hanzo diye tanimlayabilecegim insanlarindan biriydi iste gerek ideolojik anlamda gerek iste biseyin taciz olup olmadigini anlatamiycagin insanlar vardir yaa o da mi taciz falan der. o inanilmaz buyuk bir degisim yasadi bundan sonra bu cok ilginc bisey evet, ben en cok ona sasirmistim. kendimden cok ona sasirmistim hani. sey demisti bi gun oturup ve o acti konuyu falan, ben onlari okuyorum ve inanamiyorum ve neler varmis abi hani biz bilmiyormusuz falan cunku bilmiyorlar hic kimse duymamis onlarin da ablasi kardesi onlara anlatmamis benim yasadigim gibi. ondan sonra cok buyuk bir aydinlanma yasamisti ve gercekten degisti yani o suan onun donum noktasiydi onlari okumak. daha konusulabilir bir insan artik (guluyor, guluyorum) tacize ugradim diyince hee falan diye dinleyebiliyor en azindan artik.we have talked about it and this is actually very strange. i have a friend from collage and this guy is one of the most unsensitive douchey guy like one of those men who won't get what is harrasment what is not, who would tease you ~~and be like oh come. That guy had a big change~~	Probably this is because how i feel about the fact that people are reading my stories. _It's like the difference between facebook and Twitter. You don't share it on facebook because your relatives are there but you share it on Twitter because maybe your Twitter account is not under your real name. or maybe your close circle is not on Twitter then you can easily write . But when you gather with your friends. it is again the daily life, ya muhtemelen aslinda o benim hissettigim seylerle alakali insanlarin belki okuyo olmasi yani sole, facebook twitter farki gibi. facebookta paylasmiyorsun cunku akrabalarin var ama iste twitterda paylasiyorsun belki kendi adin degil baska bir hesapla girdin. ya da yakin cevren yok gonul rahatligiyla yazabilcegin bi yer. ama arkadaslarinla bi araya geldigin zaman yine o gunluk hayat yine goygoy belki onlarin anlamiycagini dusunuyorlar sanirim boyle bisey yani ama bi gizemli hali var evet.	I think most importantly it changed men perspectives in a big way. Like i said my friend that you would expect the least changed his perception after reading tweets because they did not know. Forget about telling men, we don't even tell women what we have experiences. This not telling situation has isolated men so much from what happens in the real life that they think what they see in the news only happens in the news. They watch harrasment and rape from TV. They think this didnot happen to their sisters. They don't think that it is possible. If his sister is covering her head then okay, nobody touched her. This changed the perception a lot. Ofcourse there are men whose perception did not change but i believe majority has changed on this matter. And i think women's perceptions have changed too- bence en onemlisi erkeklerin bais acilarini baya buyuk bi oranda degistir diyorum ya en beklemiycegin arkadasimin bile yai onlari okuduktan sonra bakis acisi degisti cunku bilmiyorlardi erkeklere anlatmaya birak kadinlara bile anlatmiyoruz yasadigimiz seyleri yani o anlatamayis hali onlari o kadar soyutlamis ki gercek yasanilandan o haberlerde izledigi seyi sadece haberlerde oluyor zannediyor. taciz ve tecavuzu sadece ordan izliyor. benim bacimin