LEARNING AND DEVELOPING CRITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS THROUGH ACTIVISM EXPERIENCES: A COMPARATIVE STUDY

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Learning and Developing Critical Consciousness Through Activism Experiences:

A Comparative Study

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DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

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ABSTRACT

Learning and Developing Critical Consciousness Through Activism Practices: A Comparative Study

The aim of this study is to examine the learning and development of Freire's (1974) critical consciousness through activism practices by focusing on LGBTQ+ activism in Turkey. Learning experiences and critical consciousness development were revealed comparatively by analyzing LGBTIQ+ activists, who stand up against social injustice and discrimination, and non-activist, who are LGBTIQ+ individuals. In this qualitative study, biographical interviews were conducted with six participants, their narratives were analyzed through the Documentary Method to reveal their orientation frameworks. The orientations of activists were clearly distinguished from non-activist participants through accessing information sources, joining a community to learn by joining a community and developing motivation for learning. The components of critical consciousness, which are critical reflection, critical motivation, and critical action, varied between activist and non-activist participants. Unlike non-activists, the components of critical consciousness were encountered in the orientations of activist participants. The presence of all these components together demonstrated that activists were in the process of developing critical consciousness.

ÖZET

Aktivizm Deneyimleriyle Öğrenme ve Eleştirel Bilinç Geliştirme: Karşılaştırmalı Bir Çalışma

Bu çalışma, Türkiye'deki LGBTİQ+ aktivistleri örneğinde aktivizm deneyimleriyle öğrenme ve Freire'in (1974) eleştirel bilinç geliştirme deneyimlerini incelemeyi amaçlamıştır. Toplumsal adaletsizliklere ve ayrımcılığa karşı mücadele eden LGBTİQ+ aktivistler ve kendini aktivist olarak tanımlamayan LGBTİQ+ bireyler karşılaştırmalı olarak incelenerek öğrenme deneyimleri ve eleştirel bilinç geliştirme durumları açığa çıkarılmaya çalışılmıştır. Bu çalışmada nitel araştırma yöntemi olan Belgesel Yöntem kullanılmıştır, altı katılımcıyla biyografik görüşmeler gerçekleştirilmiştir, katılımcıların anlatıları Belgesel Yöntem ile analiz edilerek yönelim çerçeveleri ortaya çıkarılmıştır. Aktivistlerin yönelimleri, aktivist olmayan katılımcılardan bilgi kaynaklarına erişme, bir topluluğa katılıp toplulukla öğrenme ve öğrenme üzerine motivasyon geliştirme üzerinden açıkça farklılaşmıştır. Eleştirel bilincin bileşenleri olan eleştirel yansıtma, eleştirel motivasyon ve eleştirel aksiyon aktivist ve aktivist olmayan katılımcılarda çeşitlilik göstermiştir. Aktivist olmayanların aksine, aktivist katılımcıların yönelimlerinde eleştirel bilincin bileşenlerine rastlanmıştır ve bütün bu bileşenlerin bir arada olması aktivistlerin eleştirel bilinç geliştirme sürecinde olduğunu göstermiştir.

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To my beloved friend, activist Suna Sözer, who passed away

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Activism is the practice of transforming the world by pursuing innovative and creative solutions for social justice. Even if the concept of activism had emerged in the twentieth century, it became more prominent within new social movements in the twenty-first century. It is a mission for activists to struggle against what they regard as politically wrong or unfair and to strive for social change by displaying resistance to authorities and the status quo (Couch, 2004). To specify, it struggles against the violation of rights, such as oppression, discrimination, and marginalization, by emphasizing rights and equality. By definition, activism is manifested through collective or individual struggles, taking action, and seeking a solution for social issues (Choudry, 2015).

Here, I choose to study learning through activism in the example of LGBTIQ+ activists in Turkey since I find it worthwhile to explore the contribution of activism, which has been under threat. The challenges and threats faced by LGBTIQ+ activists in Turkey make their learning experiences particularly relevant and valuable to study. LGBTIQ+ activists are among the 21st Century activists who take action against discrimination and oppression based on their gender identity and sexual orientation, which they understand and experience as one of the primary human rights violations (see chapter 2, section 2.4). In Turkey, there are no laws or policies specifically targeting and punishing LGBTIQ+ individuals, yet the existing laws do not provide adequate protection and support for equity, inclusivity, and justice against oppression and various forms of LGBTIQ+ phobia, such as homophobia, transphobia, and biphobia (İnce Yenilmez, 2020). The heteronormative

and discriminative environment has been built with the help of the normalization of heterosexism and disguising LGBTIQ+ visibility as well as Islamic populism (Çetin, 2015). Thus, LGBTIQ+ individuals have become one of the most fragile groups in Turkey, suffering from human rights violations and hate speech. In one of the recent instances, the Turkish government has decided to withdraw the Istanbul Convention, among others, because the government finds the Convention promotive to being "homosexual". Currently, the government proposes a change in the constitution which redefines family. The government statements on the proposal picture LGBTIQ+s as a threat to 'the morality of family order' (Dikmen, 2023).

Today, LGBTIQ+ activism in Turkey stands for challenging the oppression of the heterosexist society to build gender equality in every aspect of life, such as education, healthcare services, workplaces, and public places. The LGBTIQ+ movement in Turkey, even with a long-standing history, has gained acceleration, social acknowledgment, and visibility after the Gezi protests in 2013 (Çetin, 2015). Concerning this, I have observed in my own activism experience that LGBTIQ+ activists also addressed oppression, privileges, and power asymmetries in the areas beyond gender identity and sexual orientation and questioned the status quo, which can imply a broadening in perspective and can indicate a "conscientization" process (Freire, 1970, p. 35). However, it is difficult to suggest an explanation for this since there is a lack of systemic evidence. Thus, I aimed to reveal the contribution of activism practices in raising consciousness as well as in learning. With this aim, I conducted biographical interviews (Schütze, 1983) with six LGBTIQ+ participants (activists and non-activists). I analyzed the participants' narrations using Documentary Method (Bohnsack, 2014) to explore whether activism experiences trigger learning and help develop critical consciousness.

The scholars (Bobel, 2007; Duncan, 1999; Lowe, 2018; Omoto et al., 2010) have examined activists and their activism practices to understand their roles in social movements, their orientations, and their motivations to take action; however, there are a few numbers of studies that looked into learning through activism and activists' learning experiences(e.g., De Angelo et al., 2016; Drew, 2014; Forenza et al., 2017; Kornbluh et al., 2019; Kovan & Dirkx, 2003; Ollis, 2008, 2011; Seçkin, 2008), which have focused on diverse activism practices in various fields, such as the civil rights movement, ecology, feminism, etc.

When considering what and how activism contributes to raising critical consciousness, a comparative perspective is crucial to be able to specify the activism-related learning from others. Therefore, I compare LGBTIQ+ activists with LGBTIQ+ individuals who do not identify themselves as an activist and take part in activism practices. I categorized participants as activists and non-activists (see chapter 3, section 3.2). Even if there are few studies comparing activists with non-activists to develop an activist framework (Klein, 2021; Kutlaca et al., 2020; Pozzi et al., 2022), comparative studies are much scarce in adult education literature (Forenza et al., 2017; Kornbluh et al., 2019). Those studies compared the individuals actively participating in different struggles and having different social backgrounds and identities (e.g., ethnicity, culture, religion, class, sexual orientation, and gender identity). I have not found any study comparing activists with non-activists in adult education literature to identify activism's contribution to learning processes.

In the literature, although the relationship between activism and learning is mainly studied under informal learning and transformative learning approaches (See Kovan & Dirkx, 2003; Ollis, 2011, 2021), I particularly find Freire's (1974) critical consciousness concept instrumental in understanding activism and its role in

learning. Critical consciousness refers to the mastery of stepping into societal issues to transform and change (Freire, 1974). With the help of Freire's (1974) framework, I aim to explore whether and how LGBTIQ+ activists develop critical consciousness through their activism practices and experiences. I adopt a comparative perspective to distinguish the effect of activism practices by comparing activists with non-activists.

1.1 Significance of the study

This study is expected to contribute to activism and critical consciousness literature. Learning through activism is an emergent subject in the international literature, even if only a few studies are conducted on activism as a learning process (Drew, 2014; Forenza et al., 2017; Kovan & Dirkx, 2003; Ollis, 2008, 2011, 2021). The majority of these studies (e.g., Forenza et al., 2017; Kovan & Dirkx, 2003; Lowe, 2018) focuses on activists' perceptions, attitudes, and motivations, but to my knowledge, there is no study dealing with activism experiences to explore the practical knowledge which they base their activism and which they have learned through their activism practices. Thus, embracing a comparative perspective is helpful to understand whether activism practices play a role in learning and raising critical consciousness and to what extent and how activism practices contribute to critical consciousness process.

Activism is accepted as a dynamic movement embracing action for social change and contributes to the equality and non-discrimination struggles. I am also curious whether LGBTIQ+ activism contributes to the efforts concerning other social issues in addition to queer issues. This question is closely related to Freire's concept of critical consciousness (1974), which means a general understanding of how power

structures work in a society. Since activism and critical consciousness are common in considering social issues such as inequality, discrimination, and oppression and taking action for these issues. In addition, critical consciousness is more than action; it also involves critical reflection and critical motivation (Jemal, 2017). I find it essential to examine activism from the conceptual framework of critical consciousness because it could broaden our understanding of activism. Examining activism using the concept of critical consciousness may be a contribution to activism literature, as well.

1.2 Research questions

This study addresses the following research questions:

I. Do activists learn from their activism-related experiences? If so,
    i. What and how do activists learn?
    ii. Do those activism-related learnings lead to developing a “critical consciousness”?

II. Do activists’ learning experiences differ from non-activists, and are there differences in terms of learning from experiences between activists and non-activists?
    i. How do activists and non-activists differ in learning through their experiences?
    ii. Do activists and non-activists differ in developing critical consciousness through their experiences?

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter, the related literature is presented by focusing on the topics “learning through experiences”, “critical consciousness”, “activism”, and “LGBTIQ+ movement and queer activism”. By doing so, I aim to situate my study and Turkish case in the broader adult education literature on activism.

2.1 Learning through experiences: an overview of informal learning and transformative learning

Understanding how people learn and what they learn is a controversial topic in the literature, and there are many approaches to examining how learning happens. Since my focus is on adults’ activism experiences, I considered approaches to how adults learn through their experiences. Although learning is a continuous process throughout the whole life, scholars consider the learning processes of adults as a distinguished step (Knowles et al., 2005; Lindeman, 1926).

Lindeman (1926) suggested that experience is the most prosperous spring of the learning journey of adults, so analyzing experiences is the essential way to understand this journey. Knowles (1978) supported this argument by stating that learners' experience is the most valuable resource in adult learning because experience is the relatable reference of adult learners. In fact, the life of human beings is in a vicious cycle in which they gain new experiences that are also a resource of learning, and this learning is to gain new life experiences again (Merriam & Bierema, 2014). This cycle generates a relationship between learning and

experiences and makes the people reflect upon and get the meaning of their experiences, which is specifically salient in adulthood (Merriam & Bierema, 2014).

At the same time, Dewey (1986) stated that “not all experiences are genuinely or equally educative” and “some experiences can be miseducative” (p. 247) to restrain learning and growth for future experiences. Dewey explained this situation as experience can lead to indifference and insensitivity, causing the restriction of having richer experiences. Knowles, Holton, and Swanson (2005) also supported Dewey’s argument by stating that experiences can become a barrier to new and potential learning experiences since people are likely to embrace mental habits, prejudices, and assumptions so that they become cross to gain new experiences, develop new ideas and alternative manner of thinking. In my view, this argument cannot be disregarded. It can lead us to understand the obstacles behind learning through experiences or “unlearning” moments, so we should accept that experiences can guide or hinder us from learning new things.

In the literature, there are numerous approaches regarding experiences as learning opportunities (e.g., informal learning, incidental learning, experiential learning, transformative learning, and self-directed learning); informal learning and transformative learning could be helpful to explore the consciousness-raising processes of activists. Informal learning is any activity, including apprehension, acknowledgment, or talent, that happens outside any educational environment and curricula (Livingstone, 1999, 2006). Informal learning is also conceptualized as learning outside formal and non-formal education (Schugurensky, 2000). Informal learning is considered an umbrella term for self-directed and incidental learning, but some researchers also defended that informal learning should be considered separately since it also includes external motivations to learn (Seçkin, 2008).

Scholars criticized informal learning as it is tended to be individualistic, dominant class (white, cis-gender[1] heterosexual male) centered, and biased to questioning, so informal learning lacks in handling learning as a collective process, addressing intentionality and diversities (e.g., gender identity, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, etc.) (Livingstone, 2006). In addition, informal learning alone is not enough to explore transformations and consciousness-raising processes in individuals by itself (Schugurensky, 2000).

According to the transformative learning approaches, experience is something to make meaning with different aspects of apprehension and awareness in our lives (Mezirow, 1978). The first scholar, Mezirow (1978, 1997), who developed the transformative learning concept, explained it as a continuum of engendering change in the frame of reference, which is the structure of presumptions in which we make meaning our experiences. The focus in transformative learning is a "change" in meaning perspectives[2], a habit of mind, and our assumptions and expectations (Mezirow, 2003, p. 58). It is modeled as ten phases, from disorienting dilemma to reintegration into one's life based on conditions dictated by one's new perspective (Nohl, 2015).

Building on the work of previous work, transformative learning was grounded by conscientization, which was developed by the Brazilian scholar Paulo Freire (1970), Habermas's (1971, 1984) learning domains, and Kuhn's (1962) conception of paradigm to understand the change in individuals through critical perspectives (Erden & Yıldız, 2020). Especially, Freire's (1970) concept of

[1] Cis-gender" (also known as "cis") refers to the individuals who do not have trans experience in their lives and the situation that individuals' gender identities are suitable with their assigned gender at birth.

[2] "Meaning perspective" refers to spacious sets of tendencies deriving from psychocultural presumptions which designates the horizons of our anticipations (Mezirow, 1991).

conscientization shares some similarities with transformative learning, such as the focus on change and meaning perspectives. However, conscientization did not directly contribute to the transformative learning theory; instead, it evolved into a critical consciousness approach (Calleja, 2014).

Before the transformative learning approach, I found no learning theory trying to understand how individuals transform their world through their learning experiences. This approach has become one of the most important learning theories (Erden & Yıldız, 2020). However, transformative learning has a tendency to misunderstand the relationship between the individual and the social/political, which has resulted from its instrumental relationship with critical theory (Fleming, 2022). Still, Freire discussed that transformative learning does not automatically contribute to critical transformation; for example, according to the transformative learning approach, teachers have not been involved in students' learning processes since transformative learning concerns the change in individuals rather than collective learning processes (Freire, 1974).

2.2 Critical consciousness process

In order to understand how activism serves for and how activists raise their consciousness, I embraced critical consciousness to consider their social and political practices as learning experiences. Critical consciousness has some intersecting points with activism, such as gaining awareness and acting on societal problems (Erden & Yıldız, 2020; Ollis, 2015). Critical consciousness focuses on learning collectively rather than individually. In addition, transformative learning is not explicitly concerned with understanding learning to comprehend social, political, and economic issues and oppressions as critical consciousness does (Calleja, 2014).

Critical consciousness is a concept of Freire and refers to an awareness of economic, cultural, political, social, and psychological factors in which the lives of people are resolved (Freire, 1974; Turner-Essel, 2013). Freire (1974) described critical consciousness as "the practice of freedom" that individuals handle situations in critical and creative ways to take action in the transformation of their world (cited in Jemal, 2017, p. 603). Freire thought about conscientization for the first time while he was working on the peasants' literacy education (Ollis, 2015), because Freire realized that literacy not only made peasants "read the word" but also had the power to make peasants "read the world" (Darder, 2002, p. 179; Freire, 1970, p. 26). Critical consciousness, in this way, has been developed to set individuals free from systemic inequality and break their chains and awaken to the dynamics of inequality for liberation and resistance to oppression (Jemal, 2017).

Naturally, scholars have been seeking to clarify the concept and to find practical ways to develop a conceptual model of critical consciousness and make it practical for investigation. Regarding this, there have been several attempts to develop a "theoretical formulation" (Watts et al., 2011, p. 45) of critical consciousness (Jemal, 2017). Some scholars modeled CC with stages (Mustakova-Possardt, 1998; Watts et al., 1999). Mustakova-Possardt (1998) proposed three stages of the critical consciousness development process. The first stage is "pre-critical consciousness" (Mustakova-Possardt, 1998, p. 21), which refers to developing moral motivation and a journey from childhood to adulthood that does not include critical consciousness. The second stage of Mustakova-Possardt's model (1998) is "transitional critical consciousness" (p. 22), which means the identification of patterns in social reality, examination of role and responsibilities within the social reality, and internal conflicts with thoughts and emotions. The third stage is "critical

consciousness" (Mustakova-Possardt, 1998, p. 22), which refers to a social awareness that allows for a thorough analysis and criticism of their social context and the ability to engage in a moral discussion about the historical and social factors that have shaped it. However, Mustakova-Possardt (1998) did not investigate how individuals get in and get out critical consciousness process and how the participants experienced the different stages or their comprehension of the process of development (Turner-Essel, 2013).

Additionally, Watts, Griffith and Abdul-Adil (1999) developed a five-stage critical consciousness model. The first stage is "acritical" in this model, which refers to unawareness of power disparities and a belief that the world exists just as it is (Watts et al., 1999, p. 263). The second stage is "adaptive", which means that disparities can be recognized, but it is believed that social order cannot be altered, so there should be adaptive strategies to the system (Watts et al., 1999, p. 263). The third stage is "pre-critical", suggesting that power disparities are experienced and now questioned (Watts et al., 1999, p. 263). Following these stages, the fourth stage is "critical", which refers to an eagerness to acquire more excellent knowledge and understanding of disparities, oppression, and liberation (Watts et al., 1999, p. 263). The final stage is "liberation", meaning that oppression is easily recognizable and there is an involvement in political and social actions to create change (Watts et al., 1999, p. 263). However, it is suggested that critical consciousness is unsuitable for exploring with stages because the stages restrict and disregard it as a continuous and nonlinear process (Jemal, 2017; Turner-Essel, 2013). Thus, critical consciousness was then conceptualized as defining specific dimensions, and there are various approaches to researching the concept in practice (Jemal, 2017).

The first one is the unidimensional approach, which has only one component considering critical consciousness as a cognitive process of analyzing cultural and political environment (Diemer & Li, 2011; Jemal, 2017). The unidimensional approach is criticized due to its blurred lines that critical reflections and critical actions are all balled up; as Freire (1970) stated, “critical reflection is also action” (cited in Jemal, 2017, p. 607). Additionally, the second approach is the two-dimensional approach, which is composed of critical reflection and critical action, which gives us a deeper understanding of the reflection and action relationship (Diemer & Li, 2011; Jemal, 2017). Scholars have been trying to find new interpretations for how critical action can become the center of the critical consciousness (Diemer et al., 2021). They argued about how critical action and critical reflection affect and yield each other (Watts et al., 2011).

The third one is the three-dimensional approach, which is consisted of critical reflection, critical action, and critical motivation dimensions (Watts et al., 2011, p. 46). This approach further considers the contribution of empowerment and people’s capacity for a change besides reflection and action (Jemal, 2017; Watts et al., 2003), and the three-dimensional approach has a different aspect indicating a commitment to examining societal issues and will to change (Jemal, 2017). I feel closer to the third-dimensional approach because it can give the deepest understanding of how individuals develop critical consciousness in practice.

Jemal (2017) described critical reflection as “sociopolitical analysis” (p. 607) as an intellectual questioning of daily lives to examine the relationships between individual contexts and the broader social forces of societal, economic, and political oppression that seize occasions and properties and, in this way, reenact injustice and inequity that constrains individuals’ entity. The scholars (Diemer et al., 2017; Jemal,

2017; Watts et al., 2011) stated that the individuals developed critical reflection have characteristics such as identifying societal issues and injustices, being able to criticize the status quo and analyzing social dynamics, as well as being able to criticize and revise their own practices.

Critical action is defined as "sociopolitical action" (Watts & Hipolito-Delgado, 2015, p. 847), which refers to the practice of acting out structural constrictions (Diemer et al., 2017; Jemal, 2017; Watts et al., 2011). The characteristics of people who develop critical action are characterized as participating in social movements (e.g., protests, strikes, etc.) and taking action individually or collectively to seek solutions to societal problems (Diemer et al., 2017; Jemal, 2017; Watts et al., 2011). Watts and Hipolito-Delgado (2015) explained sociopolitical action as a spectrum that ranges from personal to collective action and from internal (related to the issues concerning individuals and their surroundings) to external (related to the policies and practices of the broader systemic issues that are beyond their immediate lives) scope of the struggle. In this sense, the scope of activism and the breadth of the action differentiate the range of impact in developing critical consciousness. However, the crucial point is to advance toward achieving social impact in the sociopolitical action (Watts & Hipolito-Delgado, 2015).

When it comes to critical motivation, this dimension is newly emergent in adult learning literature but in critical consciousness studies (Diemer et al., 2017; Forenza et al., 2017; Jemal, 2017; Watts et al., 2011). Jemal (2017) highlighted the significance of critical motivation being included as a component of critical consciousness since critical motivation acts as a bridge between reflection and action. Critical motivation, also known as "political efficacy", is explained as a dedicated commitment and drive and a "perceived capacity" to tackle inequities and

act for social change (Diemer & Li, 2011, p. 1815; Jemal, 2017, p. 609; Watts et al., 2011, p. 50) In addition, Watts et al. (2011) linked critical motivation with the development of Kieffer's (1984) "participatory competence" (p. 12), which proposes the process of going from "powerlessness" (p. 11) to taking action to become committed and empowered and gaining self-confidence and "personal efficacy" (Watts et al., 2011, p. 50). Thus, critical motivation is also defined as an eagerness to learn and seek information to become "competent" in searching for solutions that concern them at an individual and societal level (Kieffer, 1984, p. 18).

In this study, I presented the characteristics of people who developed critical motivation as having the desire to learn to make sense of their social processes and developing motivation to act and find solutions to societal issues, as Watts, Griffith, and Abdul-Adil (1999) described as "a desire to learn more about asymmetry, injustice, oppression, and liberation" (p. 263). However, the studies in the adult learning literature focusing on motivation to learn to act against oppression and societal issues are limited; therefore, I believe that people's motivation to learn in the process of critical consciousness needs to be explored; I included this component in this study to develop a better understanding to it.

Many scholars criticized how three components are contributed to critical consciousness process (Diemer et al., 2016, 2017; Jemal, 2017; Watts et al., 2003, 2011). It is essential to highlight that there is a complex and reciprocal relationship among these components; however, critical reflection is generally ante cursor to critical action (Watts et al., 2011). This process is described as "cyclical" (Watts et al., 2011, p. 47). As critical reflection is developed, individuals start to act against oppression and develop critical reflection; in this way, they develop critical reflection more, and vice versa (Watts et al., 2011). Similarly, critical motivation is usually an

ante cursor to critical action; as individuals perceive their capacity and competence to participate in social change, they become more motivated to act critically (Kieffer, 1984; Watts et al., 2011).

It is also crucial to understand how people tend to develop critical consciousness, which scholars have defined as “tools” (Jemal, 2017; Watts et al., 2011). Fundamentally, Freire (1970, 1974) stated that dialogue and praxis are the gestures of developing critical consciousness and acknowledging societal conjunctures, and dialogue and praxis are not components of critical consciousness (Jemal, 2017; Watts et al., 2011). In further studies, scholars (Diemer & Li, 2011; Garcia, Kosutic, McDowell & Anderson, 2009) distinguished the tools of critical consciousness and considered them distinctively.

Freire (1974) stated that “in an active, dialogical, critical and criticism-stimulating method” (p. 40), building people’s “horizontal relationships”, which provides an opportunity to identify and make individuals aware of individual, historical and societal situations (Freire, 1970). Dialogue is presented with “empathy” in communication between two “poles”, which can encourage criticism (Freire, 1974, p.40). Jemal (2017) proposed dialogue as a support of critical reflection through “reflective questioning” (Garcia et al., 2009, p. 32). Through dialogue, individuals can improve their comprehension of how relationships are shaped by power and privilege (Garcia et al., 2009).

Furthermore, Freire (1970) defined praxis as “reflection and action upon the world in order to transform it” (p. 51). Praxis is a continuous process involving reflecting and acting interchangeably, which leads to “liberation” (Freire, 1970, p. 65, p. 79; Hatcher et al., 2011; Jemal, 2017). Jemal (2017) highlighted that praxis is nourished from analysis and dialogue as well as critical action to create a basis for

revolution. Ritchie (2013) also stated that praxis emphasizes the dynamism of consciousness and the significance of human actions in shaping social interactions' structures. In praxis, action cannot be thought without reflection and vice versa. When praxis becomes "revolutionary", it turns into the resistant reflection and action against oppression, which leads activists to unity (Freire, 1970, p. 126). Additionally, Watts et al. (2003) explained that praxis leads to empowerment against oppressors since it is linked with liberation through "self-confidence" and "self-acceptance" (Zimmerman & Rappaport, 1988, p. 726).

To explore the critical consciousness processes of activists, it is necessary to examine how activists learn about and experience their world. In the next section, I give details of the definition and related studies on activism, as well as the investigations about the role of activism in adult learning and critical consciousness and activism relationship.

2.3 Defining activism

In the past, activism was largely seen as the domain of left-wing political activities, often associated with demonstrations, boycotts, and strikes(Levine & Wilson, 1979; Schwedler & Harris, 2016). However, with the rise of new social movements that focus on issues such as identity, culture, and the environment, the definition of activism has expanded to encompass a wider range of endeavors, including civic engagement, volunteering, community service, and even artistic processes. The shift between new social movements and the twentieth century movements moves towards more creative and collaborative forms of social change (De Angelo et al., 2016; Furuncu, 2014).

When we look into recent definitions of activism, Ollis (2008) defines it as a procedure of critical action to influence significant social changes, which brings about resistance to the status quo and state apparatus addressing oppression and inequalities. Svirsky (2010) describes activism as an open-ended process changing within social movements and circumstances, and activism practices expand the boundaries of the societal zones so that they can have new potentialities and openness. To Roth (2010), activism is conceptualized within the "activity" (p. 278) concretely to change the world, and these activities constitute learning itself. That is, activism is practiced by concrete actions that are target-oriented (Roth, 2010). To Bobel (2007), activism is dedication and a sustainable effort to build a change against inequalities and social issues, and activists are the individuals who 'live the issue' they face.

Even if several studies examine activism performed by children (Grzegorczyk & Mendlesohn, 2021; Nissen et al., 2020; Torres-Harding et al., 2017), when I look at the activist organizations they are primarily composed of adults. Therefore, it can be mainly a subject of adult learning. Since this study focuses on activists' learning processes through their activism experiences, I hope to contribute to establishing a relationship between adult learning discipline and activism. Besides, activism is a dynamic, formed, and attached practice in which we can understand adult learning processes as well (Ollis, 2015).

To form a frame of activism, the scholars (Klein, 2021; Kutlaca et al., 2020; Pozzi et al., 2022) examined activists' and non-activists' experiences and perspectives comparatively. Kutlaca, van Zomeren, and Epstude (2020) defined "non-activists" as "those who do not participate in collective action or are not members of political movements" (p. 2), and they matched non-activists' social

backgrounds with activists to draw a difference between them. It is also investigated why activists participate in a community and perform activism, whereas non-activists (from a similar milieu as activists) do not. Many social-psychological factors affecting the activists to join a community become highlighted, such as “group identification” (people’s psychological bonds with the community) and “collective efficacy” (people's assessments of their capacity to cope with social change) (Kutlaca et al., 2020, p. 2; Pozzi et al., 2022, p. 831).

Pozzi and others (2022) suggest that social identification is crucial for motivating the intention to take collective action, and moral outrage contributes to collective efficacy beliefs and provides a psychological foundation for eagerness to take collective action. Kutlaca, van Zomeren, and Epstude (2020) also propose that activists and non-activists perceive each other differently and tend to have a distant attitude toward each other. In the adult education literature, I could not encounter any study comparing activists with non-activists.

Since the dynamic and open nature of activism is prone to promote awareness and action by politicizing communities, changing individuals, and linking people with each other (Whittier et al., 2001), in my opinion, it is needed to be considered as a learning practice, and needed to be studied more thoroughly. There are a couple of examples related to what and how activists learn through their activism experiences around the world (De Angelo et al., 2016; Donahue & Wise, 2020; Drew, 2014; Kovan & Dirkx, 2003; Ollis, 2008, 2011, 2021; Seçkin, 2008). These studies are not only standard in examining learning processes but also focusing on activism and activists. They determined that activism practices contribute to the learning processes; for example, Ollis (2011) studied the learning experiences of seventeen human rights activists in Australia and stated that activism practices could bring

about fruitful learning since activism provides an environment for social interactions and discussions when seeking a solution to a particular issue. However, few studies are conducting the role of activism in the critical consciousness (Forenza et al., 2017; Kornbluh et al., 2019), which constitutes the conceptual framework of this study.

Ollis (2008, 2011, 2021) has several studies examining activism experiences and learning in activism practices. For instance, in the first study of Ollis (2008), he examined the learning practices of adults activists in their workplaces and their embodiment journeys to become an “activist” by embracing a comparative method between lifelong activists who have long-term commitment and dedication to activism, and circumstantial activists who perform activism due to a series of life circumstances such as a crisis and a complication that have motivated them to take action. Ollis (2008) also stated that critical thinking and critical reflection are integrated with learning in activism and developing knowledge. Activists’ learning processes are embodied because their emotions, bodies, and minds create a holistic competence (Ollis, 2008). In his most recent study, Ollis (2021), conducted a study on non-formal adult learning processes of environmental activists participating in Coal Seam Gas Protests. Ollis (2021) grouped activists as “circumstantial” and “lifelong” (p. 3) according to the level of their activism experiences. Ollis (2021) pointed out that circumstantial activists learn activism through activities and the community context, particularly by witnessing lifelong activists' actions. In contrast, lifelong activists are the ones who combine their experiences and prior knowledge in the activism field simultaneously (Ollis, 2021).

Drew (2014) investigated the learning and activism relationship in the case of animal rights activists. She explored understanding the role of emotions and the mind-body relationship in activist learning. This study enables to understand learning

processes regarding sensations, bodily and emotional reactions, and making meaning through mind-body-emotion relationships in activism rather than transformative learning processes. In another study on environmental activists, Kovan and Dirkx (2003), investigated what they experienced working in non-profit organizations, how their commitment and passion were brought into their work and practices over time, and what they learned when sustaining their long-term commitment and love from the frame of transformative learning. This qualitative study gives me a clear understanding of the role of environmental activists' learning by sustaining a commitment to their works through transformative education and individuation (Kovan & Dirkx, 2003). However, this study focused on the intensity of the dedication and passion to the participants' activism practices rather than their collective transformations.

To understand activists' transformative learning journeys more, DeAngelo, Schuster, and Stebleton (2016) examined the empowerment and identity development of undocumented students through transformative learning. In this study, I can recognize the steps of transformative learning through identity construction. Still, the focus is identity, which narrows the scope of the study, and there is a lack of understanding of experiences.

Seçkin (2008) investigated why environmental activists participated in Kaz Mountains Social Movement and explored the learning experiences and transformational processes of the environmental activists and villagers in this movement. This study focused on the role of social activities in learning processes rather than the role of activism (Seçkin, 2008). It is stated that social movements enable acquiring knowledge and awareness of environmental and social issues (Seçkin, 2008).

Donahue and Wise (2020) studied queer student activists' international service-learning processes and their insights on learning and activism when involved in international community service programs. It was highlighted that the activists tended to learn from others rather than teach others, and they defined themselves as "learner" to develop new skills to construct community relations in international contexts, which serves to have a positive impact in the service-learning (Donahue & Wise, 2020, p. 23).

The studies focusing on the critical consciousness of activists and the role of activism in developing critical consciousness are recently developing and paving the way for new study areas. The definitions of activism and critical consciousness intersect in reacting to oppression and inequalities. Activism practice can be involved in one of three dimensions of critical consciousness named critical action, which is explained as an action to transform unjust policies, practices, and structural inequities (Kornbluh et al., 2019; Watts et al., 2011). Foster-Fishman, Law, Lichty, and Aoun (2010) stated that participation in critical actions could foster critical consciousness thanks to its nature of emerging through reflection and dialogue, and critical consciousness leads to involvement in critical action (Erden & Yıldız, 2020; Freire, 1974; Kornbluh et al., 2019). The scholars examined the critical consciousness processes of several activist groups (Forenza et al., 2017; Kornbluh et al., 2019; Mosley et al., 2021; Mwangi et al., 2019; Osajima, 2007; Turner-Essel, 2013; Watts & Hipolito-Delgado, 2015) to understand the relationship between activism and critical consciousness.

When I look at the empirical studies related to critical consciousness and activism, I found a relation to my research with Forenza, Rogers, and Lardier's study (2017) examining political activism processes of undocumented students in the USA

and their allies struggling with oppression, stigmatization, and inferiority through the lens of three-dimensional critical consciousness. They investigated how undocumented students engaged in critical reflection, critical motivation, and critical action, but they focused on critical motivation more (Forenza et al., 2017). Within this study, they investigated the role of activism in consciousness-raising and paved the way for understanding critical consciousness and the activism (Forenza et al., 2017). The scholars revealed the motivations of undocumented students (who have limited access to social resources in the universities due to their non-immigrant status and ethnic background) and their allies (who are supporters and act for undocumented students' rights). They highlighted that political involvement could make gain insight into personal development and critical consciousness, and critical action can lead activists to engage in activism sustainably (Forenza et al., 2017).

Going beyond the obvious, Kornbluh, Collins, and Kohfeldt (2019) investigated the critical consciousness of scholar-activists in the USA who had diverse and intersecting dimensions (i.e., race, gender, orientation, religion, etc.) and social justice identity formation. They embraced a comparative approach to understand the difference in conscious raising among the individuals who have more privileged positions (i.e., white, cis-gender, and heterosexual, preferably male) and those who are marginalized. They found that their activism spaces might be also opened to reproduce power inequalities and oppressions as well as allow the development of critical consciousness. The researchers highlighted that engaging in activism or social action is facilitative for scholar-activists to develop more critical studies addressing injustices better (Kornbluh et al., 2019).

Osajima (2007) investigated Asian American activists' critical consciousness development over time and explored key factors that support it. It was indicated that

collecting information enables them to acknowledge how their lives are influenced by historical and societal determinants in their consciousness-raising process, and keeping company with each other and solidarity contribute to their critical consciousness development (Osajima, 2007). Additionally, Osajima (2007) suggested that their conscientization processes are yielded from various resources and then transformed into the action.

Turner-Essel (2013) examined Black women activists' learning processes through experiences, and she aimed to highlight internal and external factors in developing critical consciousness, such as social changes, personal issues, previous oppression experiences, education level, personal relationships, life orientation, and spirituality (Turner-Essel, 2013). In this case, it becomes clear to suggest that there would be more factors contributing to developing critical consciousness than performing activism and being in the collective environment. Personal and demographical factors should be included when exploring critical consciousness processes (Turner-Essel, 2013).

Since there is an emergent trend of handling critical consciousness and activism together and suggesting activism can raise critical consciousness (Forenza et al., 2017), the role of activism in developing critical consciousness as well as broadening the struggle perspective needs to be explored more. I acknowledged that activism starts with an action in a specific and more internal field, but afterward does activism evolve to take action in the other struggle areas, or does it stuck in the specific subjects and become blind towards the other issues? I find these questions critical to understanding the inner dynamics of activism in raising critical consciousness. Therefore, I feel the need to explore recent research especially focusing on intersectionality. In one of the instances related to intersectional

perspectives, Adams (1990) stated that there is a connection between meat consumption and patriarchy in terms of sexual violence, exploitation, and sexualization of women's bodies and non-human animals, and claimed that the problem of non-human exploitation is not considered separately from heteronormative and male-dominant society. Additionally, Reece (2021) stated that skin tone also promotes gender hierarchy and that gender differences create a hierarchy in skin tone discrimination; thus, they claimed that colorism and sexism studies are needed to be explored in intersectional ways.

Additionally, the power relations within the activist groups are one of the recent discussion topics in the literature. Even if activists have become organized with the specific common goal against oppression and inequality, is it possible for them to reproduce inequality, discrimination, and oppression amongst themselves? There are some arguments in which privilege and oppression dynamics within activist groups are discussed (Diemer et al., 2021; Jemal, 2017; Watts et al., 2011). Diemer (et al., 2021) questioned the position of privileged people in activism, and they claimed that critical reflection is the vital prerequisite of critical action in allyship since without critical reflection, activism can reproduce hierarchies of privilege due to a lack of understanding of power and privilege (Diemer & Rapa, 2016). To understand the power relations in group dynamics, Apfelbaum (1999) examined asymmetric power relations among the groups in social movements, and claimed that dominance coming from privilege might lead to oppression, especially toward the under-represented groups. In this sense, it is also important to explore the group dynamics within the activism practices to explore whether these practices reproduce inequalities and power asymmetries alongside the resistance against them.

In the following section, I give details about LGBTIQ+ activism (also known as queer activism), which constitutes the focus of this study. I provide a brief history of the queer movement and its practices. Since my focus is on queer activism in Turkey, I also look at the history of the queer movement in Turkey.

2.4 The LGBTIQ+ movement and queer activism in Turkey

The authority, hegemony, and truth have always been reproduced with the control and dominance of sexuality throughout history by inspecting daily pleasure practices and imposing moral principles and traditions (Foucault, 1978). The queer movement is against this hegemony and patriarchy that has control over society. Being LGBTIQ+ was seen as 'abnormal' and an 'illness', and the first movement arose to show this was not true. The early period of LGBTIQ+ movements was known as the 'gay' movement in the 1950s and 1960s U.S.A.; the actors of the gay movement in the 1950s aimed to gain gay visibility by suiting up the US society's standard in these years, which is called as assimilationist strategies, and they tried to conceive the people that being gay not something criminal (Barker & Scheele, 2016).

Before elaborating the history of the LGBTIQ+ movement, it is important to reveal the concept of coming out. This concept derives from "coming out of the closet" (Seidman, 2002, p. 3), which enables an LGBTIQ+ individual to enter into a process of self-disclosure and self-acceptance (Çelebi, 2018). A coming out process has no definite end, and a person can continue to come out in various ways throughout their life (Barker & Scheele, 2016). Çelebi (2018) also stated that there is no requirement for LGBTIQ+ individuals to come their identity out to their surroundings. Individuals have the right to keep their identity to themselves if they prefer to live their identity openly. There are also individuals who choose to come

out as a political stance (Seidman, 2002). The coming out experience of a person can be influenced by their own milieu, family structure, their environment, and potential external threats.

"Out of the closet" has been turned into a slogan in the new gay liberation movement (Seidman, 2002, p. 58). Especially the Stonewall Riot[3] in 1969 was accepted as the moment that the gay movement started to embrace liberation, dignity, and pride as well as the LGBTIQ+ activism movement emerged against oppressions and discriminations (Armstrong & Crage, 2006). After that, the activists performed many LGBTIQ+ demonstrations in various districts of the US, and Stonewall Riot became "an international commemoration ritual, an annual gay pride" (Armstrong & Crage, 2006, p. 725). However, the first years of the 'gay' movement were centered on sexual orientation in eccentric ways, and it was accepted as an individualistic movement that the other identities and class struggles were excluded since the movement was dominated by white and privileged cis-gay men (Barker & Scheele, 2016).

To Butler (2005), the movements handling a single identity or issue often lead to the focus on the agendas of the most privileged ones and to the exclusion of others; moreover, the movements based on stable and essential identities are risky to undermine the struggles since there is a potential of reproduction to binary authority relations as categories (e.g., straight vs. gay, women vs. men). Thus, the LGBTIQ+ movement has evolved to be more inclusive for the whole identities that are accepted as 'other' than being white, abled, heterosexual and cis-gender, etc., without

[3] It is accepted as the first "pride parade" in the World where the police busted a gay bar named "Stonewall" in New York in 1969, within this incursion the "gay" people reacted against the polices despite the possibility of getting arrested (Armstrong & Crage, 2006).

categorization and the force of the placement in the line spectrum (Barker & Scheele, 2016).

In the Turkish context, LGBTIQ+ individuals and the queer movements gained visibility in the 1970s for the first time, and there was no place for LGBTIQ+ people in the public sphere before this, even if being LGBTIQ+ was not criminal in Turkey (Çetin, 2015). The LGBTIQ+ movement gained the first political voice within the Radical Democrat Green Party in the 1980s, which held a wide range of political activism such as feminism, LGBTIQ+ issues, environment, anti-militarism, and atheism despite the harsh conditions of the 1980 military coup, and this party was accepted as important for LGBTIQ+ visibility in Turkish politics even if it abided marginal and small (Çetin, 2015; İlaslaner, 2015).

Yet LGBTIQ+ individuals have always existed in public spaces; however, they have increasingly engaged in visibility and rights demonstrations more than the activism practices performed before the 1990s (Çetin, 2015). LGBTIQ+ individuals started to claim their rights in civil society in the 1990s through the establishment of LambdaIstanbul, and they established the first queer media organ through Kaos GL, in which they gained more acceleration to struggle and raise their voice (Çetin, 2015). Eventually, the other queer identities, such as trans and lesbian individuals, debated for their visibility and representations in the LGBTIQ+ movement since cis-gay men-centered communities dominated the LGBTIQ+ organizations and diverse identities under the queer umbrella (Çetin, 2015). Besides, this decade was also full of violence, oppression, and discrimination against the LGBTIQ+ community, the authorities followed ‘cleansing operations’ against the marginalized groups such as trans sex workers, who were the ones affected by these operations. One example of

such operations against it was the Ulker Sokak Resistance[4] in 1996 (Çetin, 2015; İlaslaner, 2015).

Within the 2000s, the LGBTIQ+ movement has gained more diversity through participation in other political groups, such as feminists and socialists, and become more active with regard to demonstrations, gatherings, organizations, and performing activism; for instance, LGBTIQ+ activists involved in the May 1 Labor Day demonstrations in 2001 and lesbian activists attended March 8 Women's Day demonstrations to claim their representation in the feminist movement (İlaslaner, 2015; İnce Yenilmez, 2020). Since Turkey sought strengthen its ties with the European Union in the 2000s, legislative efforts to protect the rights of the LGBTIQ+ community were initiated. As a result, LGBTIQ+ organizations gained greater independence to sustain their activities, leading to a more robust movement with increased power and support; for example, the number of participants in Istanbul Pride Parade grew from 30 in 2003 to 5000 in 2007.(İnce Yenilmez, 2020).

Following the Gezi protests and heightened political tensions, LGBTIQ+ individuals placed themselves in the political movements and built collaborations with various movements such as left-wing, feminist, ecological, anti-militarist, and ethnic movements (Çetin, 2015). In 2013, approximately 50000 people, including LGBTIQ+s and allies, joined Istanbul Pride Parade, which was the most crowded pride event in Turkey (İlaslaner, 2015). The expansion of the pride parade to cities such as İzmir, Mersin, and Antalya indicates the dissemination of the queer movement (İnce Yenilmez, 2020). The existence of organizations such as LambdaIstanbul and Social Policies Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation

[4] Ulker Sokak was in Taksim and the place where trans women and sex workers resided. The police busted there for "cleansing operations" to displace and drive out their homes, the trans women and sex workers were exposed to harassment and violence of the public forces and polices, and protested against the oppressions (İlaslaner, 2015).

Association (SPoD) in Istanbul, Kaos GL Association, Pembe Hayat Association, and Unikuir Association in Ankara, Genç LGBTI+ in Izmir, Özgur Renkler in Bursa, and Muamma LGBTI+ in Mersin indicates the spread of LGBTIQ+ organizations to various regions of Turkey. However, the political tensions targeting LGBTIQ+ individuals and hate crimes have gained acceleration through this kind of conservative politics. For instance, the police attacked LGBTIQ+ individuals during the pride parade for the first time in 2015 due to the conservative political attitudes and Islamic populism of the authorities (İnce Yenilmez, 2020).

In recent years, although there are no explicit laws or policies targeting LGBTIQ+ individuals for punishment, these laws and policies have not been effective in providing protection and support for gender equality and addressing discrimination and hate crimes against LGBTIQ+s (İnce Yenilmez, 2020). Thus, Turkey has a more heteronormative and discriminative environment as a result of the normalization of heterosexism and the concealment of LGBTIQ+ visibility after the spreading of Islamic populism (Çetin, 2015). According to ILGA Europe 2022 Rainbow Index, Turkey has no laws and policies ensuring LGBTIQ+ equality and non-discrimination, such as their access to education, healthcare, goods, and services. There is no equality action plan or equality body mandate policies (ILGA Europe, 2022).

Since the laws and policies are not protective for LGBTIQ+ equality and non-discrimination, hate speech and hate crime cases are very common in Turkey. ILGA Europe Annual Review (2021) indicated that LGBTIQ+ people are targeted as “immoralist”, “evil” and “sinful”, especially the social media platform Twitter has become the environment for the commitment of hate speech and hate crime campaigns. For instance, the religious affairs directorate of Turkey targeted

LGBTIQ+ people as bringing illness by stating that “the homosexual relationships [...] should be banned in order to prevent the contagion of COVID-19. These are also banned by God.” and his hate speech was supported by some public figures representing government (ILGA Europe, 2021, p.113). According to Kaos GL’s Human Rights of LGBTI+ People in Turkey 2022 Report (Dikmen, 2023), 1602 individuals have experienced violations of their human rights, and 2550 violation cases were reported according to the type of freedom violated (e.g., freedom of expression, the right to freedom of assembly and association, the right to liberty and security, right to work, etc.).

Specifically, in the last three years, human rights violations against LGBTIQ+ individuals are increasing in another way as well, and the area of rights for LGBTI+ individuals is gradually shrinking (Dikmen, 2023). For example, in 2020, the right to personal liberty of 43 LGBTIQ+ individuals was violated, while in 2022, this number increased by more than ten times, reaching 571 (Dikmen, 2023). Especially with the widespread of anti-LGBTIQ+ discourse by mass media and public figures, anti-LGBTIQ+ hate demonstrations were organized in various cities in 2022, and it has been claimed that LGBTIQ+ individuals pose a threat to the Turkish family ‘structure’ (Dikmen, 2023).

To claim LGBTIQ+ equality and non-discrimination, today’s activists perform activism in several ways, such as organizing in civil society, engaging in performative and visual arts, and sustaining protests and demonstrations to act against the cis-heterosexist laws, policies, norms, and customs. LGBTIQ+ activism in Turkey seeks equal rights to exist in society in liberatory ways more than freedom of ‘love’ (Öz, 2019). Nowadays, the LGBTIQ+ movement and the feminist movement are still standing up to prohibitions of the states and struggling on the

streets to defend constitutional rights in various demonstrations such as the pride parade despite the systematical threats, discrimination, and oppression; thus, the LGBTIQ+ movement can be considered as an indispensable element of civil society (Dikmen, 2023). Since the LGBTIQ+ activism spread out, the dynamics of the activism should be investigated to see their contribution; therefore, I also aim to understand the contribution of activism to learning processes by examining activists.

In the next chapter, I present the methodology of this study and discuss how I can investigate the topic, learning, and developing critical consciousness through activism practices.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, I present the methodological design, participants, data collection, and analysis processes of this study. I conducted qualitative research using the narrative biographical interview (Schütze, 1983) for the data collection and Documentary Method (Bohnsack, 2014) for comparative analysis.

3.1 Research design

The purpose of the study is to explore the learning processes of activists through their activism practices and to investigate the possible effects of activism practices and experiences of the activists on developing "critical consciousness". For this reason, I carried out a qualitative study, which gives a deeper understanding of how individuals interpret their experiences and build their world and what meaning they give to their experiences (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). I selected a case study design since the researcher focuses on defining the characteristics of a real-life situation in case studies. This enables the researcher to examine in-depth the participants' experiences and their interpretation in specific conditions (Crawford, 2016; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). LGBTIQ+ movement and LGBTIQ+ activists are selected as the "case" of this study.

I held a comparative approach to explore the contribution of activism to learning processes and critical consciousness. A comparative perspective is important to explore a variety of experiences in the social spheres and to understand individual practices through their differences from other practices rather than normative, social, or theoretical assumptions of the researcher (Somel, 2019). I

determined two comparison categories: LGBTIQ+ activists and LGBTIQ+ adults who do not define themselves as an activist.

3.2 Participants

In this study, the participants were selected from two categories to be able to gain a comparative perspective: LGBTIQ+ activists and LGBTIQ+ adults who do not define themselves as activists, which I defined as "non-activists". These criteria were identified based on the declaration of the participants during the interviews, whether they were activists or not. Additionally, to select activists, participants' activism practices were taken into account.

Table 1. Pseudonyms with Their Declared Pronouns[5], and Demographic Information of the Participants

Pseudonyms	Age	Gender Identity	Sexual Orientation	Do they define themselves as activist?
Magnolia (they/them)	22	Nonbinary	Pansexual	Yes
Rose (he/him)	50	Cis-gender male	Gay	Yes
Lotus (they/them)	28	Queer male	Gay	Yes
Spruce (he/him)	32	Cis-gender male	Gay	No
Olive (he/him)	25	Cis-gender/queer male	Gay	No
Maple (he/him)	24	Cis-gender male	Gay	No

The ethical permission (APPENDIX A) was taken from Boğaziçi University Ethics Committee for Master's and Ph.D. Theses in Social Sciences and Humanities (INAREK) before selecting the participants. Between 23 November 2021 and 18 January 2022, I conducted narrative biographical interviews with eight participants, the first four participants were LGBTIQ+ activists, and the second four were non-

[5] Pronoun use have been encouraged worldwide to highlight the significance of trans inclusivity, since the statement of sexual identity is fundamental (Norris & Welch, 2020).

activists LGBTIQ+ individuals. In the data analysis process, one activist and one non-activist participant were excluded from the study for data saturation reasons. The participants' profiles and demographic information of the participants are illustrated in Table 1, above. I anonymized the participants by eliminating or changing any indicative personal information from the data, including the name of cities, neighbors, and associations.

I used theoretical sampling to select the participants for this study, in which the researcher "jointly collects, codes, and analyzes their data and decide what data to collect next and where to find them, in order to develop their theory as it emerges" (Glaser & Strauss, 1967 p.45). I also determined the participants' suitability to involve in the interview processes and try to understand whether they were compatible with being a part of my participant categories by explaining the study to them shortly and having initial conversations. Thus, theoretical sampling was helpful when trying to reveal a concept, create an opportunity to collect information-rich data and explore in-depth in order to gather rich information for analysis (Güvercin, 2014).

In addition, the participants were reached through organizations (e.g., NGOs and activist communities), gatekeepers, and a social media announcement. I contacted participants and arranged interview meetings via e-mail. Trust building was crucial to have in-depth interviews; therefore, I explained the aim of the research without leading participants to build any concept in their minds. The participants had seen the informed consent form (See APPENDIX B, and APPENDIX C as Turkish version) before the interview. I briefed participants on the content of this study in the informed consent.

3.3 Data collection

The data was collected through unstructured in-depth interviews, which were called narrative interviews in general. The narrative interview is a way to collect the narratives of individual actors' practices and experiences as formulated using their own words (Schütze, 1983). In the narrative interview, the participants extemporize the things they experienced and heard from others and explain their actions and practices (Nohl, 2010). Narrations follow particular patterns in conversations, and these patterns include details to understand how the conversation is started, sustained and finished, in which real situations are linked with the narrated event (Somel, 2019). Within narrations, they are different elements that can be categorized under three categories: narration, description, and argumentation (Nohl, 2010). In the narration, a participant explains a specific event by telling it from beginning to end, following a chronological order (e.g., the first day in the school); in description, the participant explains repeated actions to confirm the recurring events (e.g., tells how usually a day goes in the school); and in the argumentation, participant summarizes their motivations and justifications based on common-sense theories (Nohl, 2010; Somel, 2019).

I specifically used the biographical narrative interview, which is an interview type to explore the participants' life stories from the beginning to that day, or the particular biographies that concern the researcher (Somel, 2019). Schütze (1983) developed biographical narrative inquiry as a model for explicit narratives of interviewing and a process for analysis of narrations within the field of sociolinguistic theory by embracing this method. The aim of the biographical narrative interview is to rebuild objective meanings of the knowledge and experiences of the participants and to examine social structures in the narrations of

the participants through interpretation since it is accepted that social structures are constructed by the individuals, and there is a dialectical relationship between the social structures and experiences.

In biographical interviews, participants are asked to tell their life stories, may it be their whole life or a specific period of it (see APPENDIX D, and APPENDIX E as Turkish version). This is called the introduction part, which is totally unstructured, during which the participant can tell anything using their own words. Afterward, if needed, there are follow-up questions to specify their narrations by asking them about the specific periods of their lives (e.g., “Please tell me a bit more about the first year in activism you talked about.”). By doing so, it is possible to deepen the narrative about the practices which are interesy of the study. In general, in biographical narrative interviews, participants tell their life stories as they would like to, and the researcher keeps specific moments in their minds or take notes to ask the participant to tell more about those in detail (Güvercin, 2015). Instead of making interventions during the narration and leading the participants toward specific topics, the researcher waits until the end of the narration and, if needed, asks follow-up questions about their experiences which can be related to the study topic (Somel, 2019).

There is no time limit in biographical narrative interviews. In this case, the participants were informed beforehand that the interview took at least one hour, to be able to make them reserve some time for the interview. After receiving participants’ informed consent (See APPENDIX B and C), I conducted interviews with participants on the online meeting platform, Zoom, due to COVID-19 pandemic restrictions.

3.4 Data analysis

Collected data was analyzed using Documentary Method, which focuses on the practices and experiences of the participants to uncover the orientation frames and implicit meanings of the experiences (Güvercin, 2014; Nohl, 2010). The researcher aims to access practical knowledge to understand the patterns, ideas, and beliefs behind their daily routines and experiences since the Documentary Method targets "to reflect the complexity of the subject matter in the interpretation and to reveal underlying regularities through abstraction, rather than through simplification of the data" (Somel, 2019, p. 95).

Documentary Method intends to explore how social reality is built through the documentary meaning by following the steps of formulative interpretation, reflective interpretation, and typification (Güvercin, 2014; Nohl, 2010). First, a content table for each interview is prepared, where the topics are listed, and interview segments are identified for transcription. In formulative interpretation, the researcher transcribes the data, creates a table of topics in chronological order, selects topical segments of the interview and transcribes these segments, and interprets the topical content of the interview by preparing detailed formulating interpretation (Güvercin, 2014; Nohl, 2010). Besides, interpretation and differentiation of text genres are done through semantic interpretation, and comparative sequential analysis in reflective interpretation; lastly comes trying to relate individual cases with each other and trying to define the social genesis of determined orientations using comparative analysis, which the Documentary Method names the typification (Güvercin, 2014; Nohl, 2010).

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

In this chapter, I present my empirical findings based on the documentary analysis (see section 3.4). of biographical interviews conducted with activists and non-activists (see section 3.3). First, I present activists' learning experiences and will claim that they developed critical consciousness, especially through their activism experiences. To be able to claim that I compared activists' with non-activists' learning experiences and critical consciousness development processes.

The biographical interviews with the participants started with a question to initiate narrating their lives from birth to that day, without interruption. After that, I asked follow-up questions based on their introductory narration (e.g., "What happened when you engaged in X Association for the first time?") (For details see section 3.3).

I discuss activism practices as learning experiences that lead to critical consciousness, which is a practice of freedom for individuals to critically analyze and reflect the socially constructed issues and take action to find solutions (Freire, 1974; Watts et al., 2011). Many scholars (Diemer et al., 2017; Jemal, 2017; Watts & Hipolito-Delgado, 2015) investigated "critical consciousness" and developed a conceptual model to understand better and to examine this concept. Here, I considered three components of critical consciousness developed by Watts et. al. (2003): critical reflection, critical action, and critical motivation (see section 2.2).

Before presenting the cases, I would like to briefly remind the components of critical consciousness (Freire, 1974). Critical reflection refers to recognizing and criticizing the status quo and daily life practices that reproduce social norms,

inequalities, and oppression (Jemal, 2017, p. 608). Critical motivation explores the individuals' drive for sociopolitical change and perceived capacity to take action (Jemal, 2017, p. 610) or learn and develop skills. Lastly, critical action describes taking the initiative and acting out for perceived social situations and dilemmas (Diemer et al., 2017, p. 462).

The first section of this chapter consists of three LGBTIQ+ activists' learning processes. The biographies of activists provide insights into their activism experiences and shared orientation frames. Then, I present three cases of non-activists' learning processes and the differences in their orientation frames from activists. My investigation is about whether they develop critical consciousness.

4.1 Activists: the learner to take action

In this section, I present three cases based on their biographical narrations and the orientation frames of the activists: Rose, Magnolia, and Lotus. The flow of the content is almost chronological: narrations on their social background, the trigger points driving them into activism (e.g., coming out), their first interaction with communities or organizations, and their activism practices.

Here, I first introduce and discuss each case individually. At the end of each case, I provide a summary of the case, concentrating on the central findings of the analysis and a comparison to other cases to clarify the homologous experiences and orientation frame of activists.

4.1.1 Rose: activism for a lifetime

Rose is a 51-year-old LGBTIQ+ and occupational activist who identifies himself as a cis-gender gay man. He has been active for 24 years in Cicek Association, a non-

governmental organization specified in the LGBTIQ+ in Istanbul. He has also participated in workplace activism in a professional society for editors in Turkey. Stating that he comes from a middle-class family, Rose defined him and his family's background as “white” and “Kemalist”. He is a university graduate working as a freelance publication editor. Rose has been living in Istanbul since he was born.

Rose started his narration with the experience of coming out. He was twelve years old when he first realized his sexual orientation; he rejected and suppressed his orientation until the age of twenty-four. He explained that he had been supported for his coming out process by getting expert support (“by getting therapy”) and collecting information about being LGBTIQ+ on the internet. Then, he narrated his coming out experience as follows (lines 20-30):

> I got internet access at my workplace. In 1997, err (.) at that time, (.) there were resources mostly in English, and of course, there was not much in Turkish. There was very little on the internet anyway, so I started reading things in English. (.) I started learning information. But err (.) of course, I still did not know anyone who was LGBTI in real life. Well, (.) there was a little bit theoretical (.) information and stuff like that, (.) errr (2) somehow- (2) well, meanwhile, I started to come out to a few of my friends. Well, (.) one of them mentioned something, Cicek. At that time, Cicek Association had a page in errr the Express Magazine. Well (.) they said they saw there. But then, that page no longer existed in Express at that time. Well, one day, I found Cicek's website on the internet. Well, (.) and there was Cicek’s magazine, and the last issue of the magazine was on there. I read the articles and the experiences from Turkey and (.) I felt very different. I felt closer. I felt good too. (Rose, activist, Appendix G, 1)

In the passage above, it is documented that Rose started his journey as a queer person by seeking knowledge, and he pointed out that his quest was beyond “theoretical” knowledge. Rose’s eagerness to learn and to better understand his sexual orientation indicates critical motivation. Besides, calling the information on the internet "theoretical" indicates that he put a distance between himself and knowledge on the Internet. And it is documented that he looked for “real-life”

knowledge through the human touch ("I still did not know anyone who was LGBTI in real life"). When Rose reached the internet website of an LGBTIQ+ organization in Turkey, which was Cicek Association, the information went beyond theoretical for him and became an experience he had never encountered before ("I felt different") and had become touched ("I felt closer, I felt good").

After getting information their internet website, Rose decided to participate to a meeting of Cicek Association, and he explained this experience as follows (lines 32-42):

> After that, there were Sunday meetings at Cicek in Altınkoy, so I went there faintheartedly, tentatively. I climbed up the stairs with my legs trembling. Well (.) I went in, so my first experience was, well, my first thought, or rather, everyone looked like a physical freak to me. How (.) err (.) my perception was distorted, made distor:ted: which made everything (.) seem so strange. However, after the conversations started, it gave way to many things (.), like a feeling of finding my family that (.) I had been looking for years. After that, err (.) I met my friends there. I immediately said that I wanted to do something, I want to volunteer. Of course, on the one hand, I was still in the process of coming out (.) and understanding myself. (.) Well, seeing the real people there and witnessing that they freely expressed their (.) identities-lived in peace with their identities had a very different effect on me. I came out very quickly. (Rose, activist, Appendix G, 2)

In the passage above, Rose stated that he went to the meeting of the association with hesitation ("faintheartedly, tentatively") and criticized his first "perception". This way of narrating document that Rose finds his initial perspective wrong ("how (.) eee (.) my perception is distor:ted") and distances himself from it, which indicates that he critically reflects on the past. Rose also states that his perspective changed from perceiving the people in Cicek Association as "freaks" to "finding his family" when he engaged in a dialogue and could connect with people emotionally. He could experience a sense of belonging within the dialogue, as Freire (1974) highlighted that it enables individuals to question the status quo and critically reflect on their environments (for details see chapter 5, section 5.1). He considered

the sense of belonging as a trigger for him to act (“I immediately said that I want to do something, I want to volunteer”) which could be interpreted as a critical motivation. Encountering openly LGBTIQ+ people in Cicek was also shown as a step for Rose to be more at peace with his identity (“coming out”) and to start performing activism.

Rose recalled several occasions when he reacted to specific situations and critically reflected on his actions. For example, below, he narrated an incident when he spent time with gay guests from abroad when he first started engaging in Cicek Association (lines 167-174):

> After that, we hung out with them in Istanbul. And (.) one of them said something, well, he said "Ata was also gay", I was shocked(.) and I said, 'no, there is no such thing, it cannot be'. On the other hand, I have the information that being gay is not wrong; it is not a shame; but (.) I cannot accept that Atam was gay @(.)@. So, err (.) homosexuality did not come through in my head, so when I looked back afterwards, I understood it. Actually, I had asked myself, I questioned, I mean, I had a question like 'homosexuality was not a bad thing, why could not you attribute it to Ata’. (Rose, activist, Appendix G, 5)

As documented above, Rose had internalized homophobia (“I cannot accept that Atam was gay”), and even if he had started engaging in activism practices, he still had uncertainties in his perceptions ("homosexuality did not come through in my head"). He was critically approaching this process in his narration by keeping a distance to his initial response, criticizing his past behavior, and reflecting on "afterwards". Thus, it is indicated that Rose critically reflected on his previous perceptions. It is also documented that critical reflection is not a one-time phenomenon, and Rose’s critical reflection has been a continuous process sustained through activism practices.

In his interview, Rose also narrated on different occasions where the activism experiences made him encounter new social milieus and think about novel ideas as follows (lines 174-192):

> Well, apart from that, yes (.) opinions were slightly different. Well (5), for example, when I met my Kurdish friends, you know (.) I guess I started to see some things from their perspective. I do not remember it clearly right now. I do not even remember who they were. But (.) errr well (.), I think it happened gradually, even if it was not sudden. Gradually, I started to see something from different perspectives, I got to know different lives, because I guess (.) my life had been somewhat sheltered, by being in the middle class, such a white, Sunni, Muslim, Turkish. Religion was not so important in our house, but more as a tradition or something. I do not know, I did not know anyone I knew was an Alevi, I did not know anyone I knew was Kurdish, I was not very familiar with these concepts. I knew of them as names, of course, but I did not know (.) 'how do those people live'. I guess I learned a bit by seeing them. Well (2) I learned different ideas. (3) (Rose, activist, Appendix G, 6)

As documented in the passage above, Rose had not questioned his privileged ("white") position and status quo until he became involved with Cicek (“I did not know how those people live”). Rose linked his involvement in Cicek with getting out of the milieu he was in (“my life was a bit sheltered, I guess”). Encountering diverse milieus (“for example, when I met my Kurdish friends”) contributed to his critical reflection, which his activism practices have initiated. Considering his milieu as “sheltered” and arguing that his social background cannot provide a suitable environment for questioning the status quo and embracing criticism indicate that he has gained critical reflection since he had a chance to gain learning experience by encountering the lives of the people from other milieus than himself (“I learned a bit by seeing them”).

Furthermore, Rose himself interprets his encountering various milieus as contributions to his “transformation” and “development”, and he narrated his dedication to volunteering and performing activism in Cicek Association as follows (lines 46-50):

> Therefore, there was a process of inquiry and improvement in my err (.) political views, err (.) there was a change. (2) This is why Cicek is very important in my life. Well (.) from that moment on, I always felt like (.) I belonged so much (.). This is why I cannot quit, it has been 24 years. Well (.) so I am happy with that too, because it is good for me to contribute (.) to the experience of others (.) that I experienced there. (Rose, activist, Appendix G, 3)

It is documented that Rose's learning experience and "change" with involvement in Cicek have become a source for continuing to volunteer at the association, and activism have become a long-lasting orientation ("It has been 24 years"). His uninterrupted activism indicates developing critical motivation and therewithal critical action.

In time, Rose explained that he engaged in different activist communities than LGBTIQ+ activism, indicating that his perspective was widened. He describes his engagement in workplace activism as an editor as follows (lines 98-111):

> Apart from that, errr (.) as an editor, I am also in an organization. Editors Association. I have been doing these jobs for a long time, err (.) I have been working as a content editor and err (.) I have been working on an organization with my friends who are editors there like me, err (.) from the very beginning, Well (.) now, it continues under the name 'Editors Community'. Things have accelerated a little. Well, we are establishing a (.) cooperative err, we are in the process of establishing, which will be officially established in January. Well, (.) as a group of people, we are establishing this cooperative (.) to set an example, but not for profit, because the editors' conditions are not very (.) good (.) in the sector. Err (.) the fees (.) are very low and err (.) brokerage companies take most of these fees, especially well, the content agencies. Well, (.)for example, I would say 100 liras (.), if a company gives 100 liras to agencies, the editors only earn 5 liras. Well (.) we embarked on this (.) to change that, to show that 'it can be done differently'. Well (.) this is one of the things I have been interested in recently (.). But of course, Cicek holds a very important space in my life and err (.) errr (.), it takes up a lot of my time. (Rose, activist, Appendix G, 4)

It is documented that Rose's activism praxis has become expanded to different fields. His criticism of his occupation's working conditions indicates an expansion in his critical reflection because he questioned systematical inequalities in

the workplace rather than gender-based inequalities. It is also documented that Rose did not only criticized this issue, he also took steps to find a solution for it, which indicates that he became critically active.

To sum up, Rose has been an LGBTIQ+ activist for 24 years and has been performing workplace activism for a while. After coming out when 24 years old, he began to collect knowledge on being homosexual on the internet; then he heard about Cicek Association and his orientation of trying to make meaning of his experience and looking for real-life experiences led him to participate in Cicek. He also made a distinction between theoretical knowledge on the internet and the knowledge that came from his experience in Cicek. Additionally, his criticisms of his past perceptions and behaviors related to LGBTIQ+ individuals when he joined Cicek in the beginning stages of his involvement demonstrates that he critically reflected. Likewise, encountering various milieus within his activism experience led him to interrogate and critically reflect on the status quo. Through his experiences, he became interested in taking action for social change, which led him to develop critical motivation. It is also documented that he questioned and tried to find a solution for not only LGBTIQ+s but also his occupation's working conditions, which led him to develop critical action, which indicates that his activism scope has been widened. In this case, these three components are significant for the consciousness-raising process, and these are intertwined and support each other.

In the following case, I examine Magnolia, who has also been an LGBTIQ+ activist for four years, coming from a different milieu and engaging in different activism practices. The case Magnolia enables me to investigate further learning through activism and its components, and whether there are commonalities despite social background differences.

4.1.2 Magnolia: activism as a stance of rebellion

Magnolia is a 22-year-old LGBTIQ+ and human rights activist who identifies themselves as a non-binary and pansexual person. They have been performing activism for approximately four years in several communities. They stated that they came from a conservative and low-middle-class family. Magnolia is a university dropout and works as a freelance queer performance artist in Berlin, Germany.

Magnolia started their narration with the childhood memories and their coming out experience in childhood. They stated that they had a difficult childhood; experienced bullying and discrimination because of the behaviors Magnolia associated with their sexual orientation. Thus, they did not declare their sexual orientation openly, they explained this situation as follows (lines 81-99):

> Errr (2) I never (.) came out with my identity until college. But (.) the thing is that I was not even aware that I had an identity. Thus, everything was very normal for me. For me, I was a human being, just a child and (.) living my life normally. I mean, for example, you know (.) when I started to recognize that I had a sexual attraction to men (.) especially when watching them in the locker rooms (.) and gym classes or outside the classroom. (.) When I realized that I was not attracted to my girlfriends (.), I got shocked (.) how it could be. Errr (.) Of course, there was no acceptance (.) even in this context. I did not even think of such a thing. (.) There was always a refusal of it and the idea 'this is impossible'. (.) Nowadays, I attribute this to an I thought (.) this is a bad thing to be feminine and kind (.) because people (.) see it as something humiliating and constantly humiliate me, and I was constantly exposed to pressure at gym classes and classroom. Whatever, I did not even know what I was doing back then, what caught their eye. (.) I learned from them that this is bad or looks bad. Because (.) err ((cough)) nobody says "Oh, I am holding my hand like this; why am I holding it like that". This is my hand, and this is how I hold it, or this is my nose, and you say it is crooked or something when you saw yourself and started learning. Likewise, (.) I think that sexual identity and sexual orientation are the same. (Magnolia, activist, Appendix G, 7)

In their narration, Magnolia's feelings about their characteristic (i.e., being LGBTIQ+) were shaped by social stigmas (“There was always a refusal of it and the idea 'this is impossible'.”) in the past, which made them feel guilty and restless about

their sexual orientation in their coming out process. Although they perceived their sexual orientation and gender identity as innate traits in their childhood, they realized that their environment shaped their guilt and perception. Thus, they eventually distinguished their innate sexual orientation from social norms and public pressure, demonstrating that they performed critical reflection.

To cope with this pressure, Magnolia stated that they studied hard, engaged in extracurricular activities, and were involved in the school representative board to fit in the society. They explained that they were motivated to do something to give a solution to the school's problems. They narrated the time they became a candidate for school presidency elections as follows (lines 114-127):

> But (.) the right (.) defender in my soul was always there, I guess. I do not know where it came from, how I met it, I guess (.) I never thought about it. Why (.) I could not find it. However, even if there is injustice among (.) students in the classroom in primary school and secondary school, when someone (.) played with an eraser or stole a pencil, I remember that I fought for it or was able to fight for it, you know, (.) "this is not true",(.) "you are usurping their rights now". This is because of equality, I guess. (.) Perhaps, this is because of constant internalization. Then, since this was the case when I was in middle school errr (.) with my popularity, (.) or maybe I wanted that popular position (2) to get that attention and love of people, I guess (.). At the same time my intentions were like 'no, I want to do something, there were no nettings on the football goal pots and basketball hoops, so everyone was upset about this. Everyone begged the principal like 'Please, put the net (.) in any way, it is very very problematic; we want to play.' Because we throwed, the ball ran away and did not enter, and something like that. (.) Then, I put my candidacy for this. (Magnolia, activist, Appendix G, 8)

In this passage, it is documented that Magnolia's pursuit of finding solutions to the issues around them began in childhood, and they were sensitive to broader social issues. This orientation is not shared with activist Rose, whose interest in broader issues only emerged after participating in activism groups. Moreover, Magnolia's instinctive ("this is because of constant internalization") pursuit of

“equality” against “injustices” demonstrates that they began developing critical reflection and critical motivation at an early age.

Magnolia was nominated for school student presidency with a rival candidate, and they explained their experience of teasing their rival and making her upset as follows (lines 179-191):

> When I think about it now, it sounds very cru(.)el to my ears, and I mean (.) I am not in such a place right now. I made peace with a much more non-violent life, I learned how to communicate in a (.) more healthy way. But I thought a lot about it. (.) And I realized that it was completely for self-defense (.) and (.) with a thought like 'You made me feel that I can do the same to you, (.) you are not the only one who possesses this power' (.) I understand. I do not think I am justifying it. I wish there were still (.) times when I could have grown up without this kind of (.) errr social environment, and I could have learned that there was no need to do it at all. Because I think (.) it would be much better for my mental health (.), because I mean, I think these are socially constructed things, @(.)@ in a much clearer way. (.) I think a child does not come up with an idea, 'Oh okay, I am better than you, I should show off (.) someone’ or 'Let me show my superiority'. (.) Anyway, it also felt like I was trying to justify myself a little bit; in this case, I still feel bad. (.) (Magnolia, activist, Appendix G, 9)

In the passage above, just like Rose, Magnolia made a self-criticism of their own bullying (“cru(.)el”) behavior during the school presidential election process, which indicates they distanced themselves from the bullying behavior in the past. They also considered their behavior a struggle for rights against their perceived inequality of power (“you are not the only one who possesses this power”). It is indicated that they struggled for their rights against bullying in a way they do not prefer today, and they pointed out that it was because of the environment they were raised, and their society reproduced the bullying and violence. They acknowledged that their behavior was derived from social forces, and they criticized this, which indicates that they developed critical reflection.

Although Magnolia stated that they met activism at university, they explained that their involvement experience in social responsibility projects through

participating in the student representative board during their high school years contributed to their activism practices. They said that with this experience, they learned how to deal with the social problems of that period of their life, how to find solutions to these, and how to take steps. They described the time they started college when they subsequently became acquainted with activism as follows (lines 322-341):

> Errr the results are announced while I (.) was working. And I learned that I had accepted to Deniz by checking on the computer in my workplace. (.) And I ran out into the street and started shouting, I announced to my manager. I called my mother directly. I had my ear pierced either the same day or a few days later. I really wanted to get my ear pierced, and my errr (.) family would not allow it. That is their attitudes on tattoos and ear piercings. Yet I did (.) as a stance of rebellion. They did not talk much, but then they got used to it. I started college (.) and (2) met the activist community many times more at university than when I was in high school. My engagement with activism in high school was errr (.)videos on the internet. (.) There were protests in Istanbul such as Gezi Park and the pride parades in these years. However, I also avoided them (.) because I had difficulties accepting my identity (.). For me, it consisted of watching such videos and thinking like "This person really exists (.), why do I feel bad about this?" (.). But these have always been something that empowered me. So (3) there have been things that really made me hold on to life. The things that made me believe that I would continue (.) and one day I would get to that point. after I turn 18, I would go to university and I would survive (.), I could live openly, I would not care where I put my hands, what I wear, how I behave (.). (.) This really happened with the university process, anyway, that was the reason why I gave up engineering, I wanted to enter the safe zone of Deniz University. There was the LGBTI+ Community. When I saw it (.) I said (.) "Oh, that was great (.) (Magnolia, activist, Appendix G, 10)

It is documented that Magnolia rebelled ("as a stance of rebellion") against their milieu and wished to get out of the 'oppressive' environment and uncover their own appearance in harmony with their queer identity. Unlike Rose, Magnolia met activism by only watching as a spectator in the digital environment without establishing a dialogue until their university life. Even when they took their observation as an example, activism was something that they wanted to do, and it "empowered" them. For Magnolia, activism meant getting rid of social pressure and rebelling against the status quo, and they thought that the way to get rid of this

pressure was to express themselves in their own way. Their desire to rebel against the status quo indicates they have developed critical motivation. It is also documented that Magnolia was eager to feel free ("I could live openly") and "safe" ("I wanted to enter the safe zone"), which they have felt empowered and not alone in the activist community.

Furthermore, Magnolia stated that they engaged in their university's LGBTIQ+ Community. They described their process of starting to take the initiative in this community below (lines 512-528):

> When I first encountered LGBTIQ+ Community at university, I was very shy because I did not want to be targeted at school. Well, (.) I was sure I would be targeted if I went to an introductory meeting or something. (.) And I mean, I thought that, oh, I should not have taken even a photo with them. But then I started to talk to them, and (.) I saw (.) a lot of feminine men, I saw the people who were assigned male at birth in there or, well, (.) I saw a lot of masculine assigned women at birth in front of me. I saw the existence of many people who have been told that they were not allowed to exist until now in front of me. So, it (.) meant like this (.) for me, (.) 'Whatever they say, we are here!' or something like that. When you say I do not exist, well then, how-let us say I do not exist. If I am mistaken, then, are the other 50 people here or the 30 people in this room also mistaken? There is no possibility! There is no possibili:ty, so it gave such a thing, great power. Afterward, I directly said that I wanted to take responsibility in the community, that I wanted to attend meetings, etc. Well, (.) it was very difficult at first because I continued participating in theater club, after quitting theater in the second year, I started to be more active (.), especially in 2018-19 or something. Well, then err (.) I met queer friends at school, err (.) I am so grateful that my path crossed with theirs. I started to get into it more, and peer bullying has become (.) peer solidarity (.) in this safe environment within my family (.), I would like to call them my family because I chose them. (3) And I was experiencing this for the first time, it started to give me a lot more (.) strength since it was my first time. And now that I got that power, I started to say something (.), "You know, now I want to do something too." I am going to go in now, I mean, you know (.) at first, when I said, "I am okay, I can make a poster." (.) or "I can go over there and do that." etc. It started to evolve to the things like *"When are we walking on pride?"*, "Are we going to shoot a video (.), I can shoot it, it is okay my face can be visible." or something. Because (.) with the support of my environment, I realized that (.) I will always continue to be harmed or oppressed by people (.) because of my identity, but I can also create a space where I feel safe and happy (.) because I (.) can choose the environment I would like to be in and my peers in this field (.), and activism provides me this. What makes me experience this (.) is our being together, solidarity. This is why I said (.), I do not give up on this (.), and I want to

> continue as if carrying the torch by getting involved in the thing (.) that saved me (.) in high school (.) and helped me in high school. (.) I am very happy, very happy-I am really happy when I think about it. (Magnolia, activist, Appendix G, 11)

Above it is documented that, the cruciality of being visible come to the fore in Magnolia's activism. It is documented that their visibility concern began to disappear as they established a dialogue with people from the university's LGBTIQ+ Community. It is documented that Magnolia encountered a different milieu in the university. However, they did not consider this experience as getting out of their own milieu (as Rose did) and meeting the new one. Magnolia's conservative milieu's phobic speeches ("mistaken") directed against LGBTIQ+ individuals have become a means of struggle, existence, and support for Magnolia. Their desire to struggle against their milieu's social norms demonstrates that Magnolia performed critical motivation. Besides, Magnolia felt empowered ("it gave such a thing, a great power") to see open LGBTIQ+ people, just like Rose. It is also documented that Magnolia transformed in their peer environment; the bullying was replaced with "solidarity" and being "family" in their life, and they developed critical action with the support of "peer solidarity". In addition, Magnolia associated their activism with being "visible" and creating a safer space for themselves. As they performed activism, they became more visible and brought themselves to the fore; thus, they became critically active.

Magnolia explained the process of involvement in Marti Community, which was a different and broader LGBTIQ+ community after their participation in the university's LGBTIQ+ Community as follows (lines 528-539):

> I remember the thing, I also remember my first time going to the Marti Community, I felt so inferior. Errr (.) because I did not know the terms used, I could not understand many things that were spoken errr (.) and so on. For example, when a term was used, I had no information about that term. Well,

> let me say that the term (.) was one of the most used terms in the LGBTI+ (.) terminology (.). And as I started to learn these (.) as I asked and learned what it meant, I saw people (.) did not insult me because of the fact that I did not know anything; but rather, they built an environment to teach me, and sharing this information was valuable (.). I started to think like "How so, Where have you been until now? Was this even possible? I always tried and made an effort for this." In high school, I tried to share any knowledge with my friends (.) as much as I could, this or that. As I gained that power, I did not stray from that path and wanted (.) that power to keep growing and multiplying. (Magnolia, activist, Appendix G, 12)

When Magnolia first joined Marti Community, the fact that they perceived themselves as "inferior" indicated that they were driven to learn and develop themselves just as Rose, but in the later stages of their activism practices. Stating that activism was solidaristic and supportive of their own learning experience indicates that this supportive environment provided a learning environment for themselves. It is demonstrated that this supportive environment with openness to sharing and transferring knowledge has been critical to Magnolia since high school, and they sought this before activism. Thus, this supportive environment enabled them to develop critical motivation.

To sum up, Magnolia started to develop critical reflection and critical motivation in the early stages of their life by questioning the violence, bullying, and discrimination they experienced, even if they did not define their practices as activism. It is documented that Magnolia had made meaning of activism as an empowering and supportive apparatus until starting university and engaging in activism. Just like Rose's experience in Cicek Association, the university environment was crucial for Magnolia to start activism and gain interest in taking the initiative for the LGBTIQ+ movement within their coming out processes and encountering a different milieu (LGBTIQ+s), which indicates developing critical motivation. However, unlike Rose, Magnolia did not consider the experience of

encountering LGBTIQ+s as getting out of their own milieu. Nevertheless, this experience has become a chance to criticize the status quo, which led them to develop critical reflection. It is also demonstrated that Magnolia developed critical action by taking support and solidarity in their community. They exhibited their expansion of critical action by participating in a broader community, Marti. Finally, Magnolia has developed three components of critical consciousness in an intertwined and unfinished way, like Rose.

In the following, I present the case Lotus for comparison, who has been a queer HIV activist for five years, with different activism areas and different social background.

4.1.3 Lotus: activism as a passion for development

Lotus is a 28-year-old HIV and LGBTIQ+ activist who identifies themselves as a gay man. They have been performing activism for five years, independently collaborating with non-governmental organizations and academia. They explained that they came from a “white”, high-middle class, multicultural Balkan-immigrant family. They had graduated from the department of international relations. Currently, Lotus is a health sciences master's student specializing in HIV studies in Paris, France. They work as a freelance queer HIV rights trainer and advocate.

Lotus started their narration with their childhood memories. They stated that they had a happy childhood but faced bullying from their peers in school. To cope with this, they dedicated themselves to their courses to be a successful student. They started the coming out process at high school, which they defined as an “identity depression”.

Lotus describes the time they started college in Istanbul and encountered activism for the first time as follows (lines 5-24):

> Well, during the Gezi protests (.), I was not very organized until that time. But (2) err (.) I came to Istanbul when I was in secondary school and while I was walking in Sultanli, we came to Istanbul. While I was walking in Buyuksultanli, I remember telling my parents I am going to go to the bookstore for two minutes and going back to my family. When I first came to Istanbul, I went directly to the associations, there was Cicek Association's office, it was very active, I entered the office as if to say 'I came, where are you, my dear' @(.)@, but I was not such a (.) overly attached (.) volunteer. I used to join meetings, go to events, try to meet people, but (.) I could not meet people (.) because I had very big social anxiety, I used to act strange when I met. When someone flirted with me, I did not know how to deal with it. (.) It was very difficult, so I could not organize. When the Gezi protests started (.), something happened, suddenly I came to Gezi Park, I was in there, I was at the association's office, we were organized, and (.) even though my organizational experience was very limited (.) compared to the non-trans (.), I mean, the inexperience of cis-genders and non-trans heterosexual individuals (.), my ability to organize, protest, or confront the police - along with my survival experience in Gezi under such conditions - was higher than that of the non-trans and cis-gender individuals there. Thus, suddenly, I got organized in Gezi with LGBTIQ+s (.) and we had a moment helping the heteros and non-trans heterosexuals around us. Something happened suddenly, I became organized, I became more organized than the people around and (.) I started to realize the benefits of this organization and so on. (.) Weeks passed like this. (Lotus, activist, Appendix G, 13)

As documented above, Lotus "suddenly" encountered activism in challenging protest movements. Although they had no activism experience until the Gezi protests, they took an interest in LGBTIQ+ associations. They stated that they went to see Cicek from afar once in his childhood but had it as a more secret experience. After they moved to Istanbul and separated from their family, Lotus started attending non-governmental organizations' meetings more freely, which refers to Lotus's need for human connection. However, their position in activism and motivation for involvement seem ambiguous since Lotus did not participate in organizations regularly and did not feel committed ("but I was not such a (.) overly attached (.) volunteer"), in which Lotus associated with a personal reason ("I had a very big

social anxiety"). On the other hand, their participation in the Gezi protests with LGBTIQ+ associations indicates that they had an interest in the struggle, but they were unaware of or did not explain why. Although they did not see their own organizational experience as sufficient, they considered themselves more resistant than the privileged milieus ("cis-gender heterosexuals"), which indicates that they used to be unaware their own social position but understand the difference between privileges.

Next, Lotus narrated their experience of encountering various milieus than themselves in the Gezi protests as follows (lines 151-161):

> My first engagement with the Kurdish movement was in Gezi as well. Because I was a very white Balkan immigrant (.) in Antalya (.), that is, I had grown up in Antalya. Therefore, there was a great anti-Kurdish hatred, fear, and phobia of Kurds, especially in the neighborhoods in Antalya where I grew up. People were targeted because they were Kurds, and the Kurds did not accept that they were Kurds, they would deny it. Or I remember the dialogue 'a doctor but Kurd' or something like that. I grew up in this kind of neighborhood. And my prejudice, here I was in a place where prejudices were broken in the Gezi resistance. I organized with Kurdish (.) people, we were helping each other, they were picking me up from the ground, I was picking them up, we were running away from the police together. Well, it had such an effect, I resolved this within myself in the following processes. (Lotus, activist, Appendix G, 17)

It is documented that Lotus had a chance to get out of their milieu and see other milieus with the help of activism, just like Rose. Thus, they associated their encountering diverse milieus with involving activism. The fact that they acted shoulder-to-shoulder with Kurdish people indicates that Lotus started to get in touch with the people he had previously judged, which led him to widen their perspective and understand that it was prejudice ("I was in a place where prejudices were broken"). It is demonstrated that they developed critical reflection by making the meaning of this situation in the later stages of their life ("I resolved this within myself in the following processes").

Lotus stated that they had not had a persistent commitment to activism even after the Gezi protests until he took an HIV diagnosis, in which they described the process they sought knowledge related to their situation as follows (lines 30-36):

> Err, then (.) months started to pass like this. I started HIV treatment. When I said that this happened (.), I realized that I needed information. I was hungry, I was really hungry for information. It was supposed I would die, but I did not; I used to take medications; they said I would not die. I used to ask why (.) or something. I joined an association's sexual health training, which was at college. Then someone from there told me about an association in Europe, and that association had a one-year training period. I applied (.) to it and attended this one-year training. (Lotus, activist, Appendix G, 14)

When Lotus was diagnosed with HIV, they went into a process where they could not make meaning of their own situation, and they sought knowledge, which became a very survival thing ("I was hungry, I was really hungry for information.") for him. Their desire to learn to understand their situation indicates the trigger of their critical motivation; thus, Lotus tries to satisfy the need for learning by participating in a training program.

They said that they took courses on human rights as well as sexual health in this training, and the curriculum was comprehensive, including topics such as HIV's history, its clinical treatment, its epidemiology, its social implications, and HIV activism. They explained that they attended this training as an inexperienced queer person who was diagnosed with HIV only three months ago, and they described their experiences as follows (lines 183-191):

> Anyway, there are a lot of (.) activists. There are lawyers, doctors, and activists organized in the movement for a long time, and I am in shock, I can only watch and observe people. I cannot talk, I cannot ask questions. (.) I know nothing because I know absolutely nothing. You know (.) I did not go as an activist organized in a different movement because I was diagnosed 3 months ago, and I went as a non-organized LGBTIQ+(.) in Turkey. We can say that I learned everything there. And with the gathering of people, activists, and experts from many different countries (.) I learned what human rights advocacy in Europe means or what it means, or how this activism works in that country in there. (Lotus, activist, Appendix G, 18)

Like Rose and Magnolia, Lotus pointed out their need for learning since they felt uneducated ("because I know absolutely nothing") at the beginning of the training. Their feeling of incognizance drove Lotus to seek knowledge and develop themselves, which led to critical motivation, just like Rose and Magnolia. Additionally, Lotus's feeling of inferiority seized them to take action ("I cannot talk, I cannot ask questions"), which indicates they prioritized learning first to perform activism and they needed to learn to have a voice.

Lotus also described the impact of the queer people around them during this training on their coming out process as follows (lines 49-56):

> Getting together with people who openly express their gender (.) identity or sexual orientation, generally, their identities (.) as they wish, makes me extremely empowered. Here (.) walking on the street with my close friends who wear make-up and the fact that there was a Belgian street (.) was something I could not experience in Istanbul until then. Or doing these things while knowing that we were so safe (.) and it is truly secure felt very foreign to me. My period of discovering both my identity and my life opened up a little more during that training period, and it got a little deeper to experience other things (.). I started seeing other things, blah (.), and it went on like this for a year. (Lotus, activist, Appendix G, 15)

It is documented that encountering open LGBTIQ+ people in the training program was an "empowering" step for Lotus to be more at peace with their own identity and to start performing activism, just like Rose and Magnolia's first activism experiences. This situation led Lotus to be "transformed", just like Rose and Magnolia. They also engaged in a learning process to become competent in activism ("I started seeing other things"), which indicates that they developed critical motivation.

Lotus narrated about their "transformation" during the training as follows (lines 199-211):

> During that education period, my identity changed, I gained self-confidence, (.) started to live more like myself during that one year, even though I fought

> to do this at a very early age (.), which suddenly strengthened me. It was the thing, it was 'skills to empower patients'. The name of the training was something like training to empower those living with HIV and working in the field. And that's really how it happened for me. I still have close friends from education. And they say, 'we worked so hard with you to get rid of your shyness, social anxiety or fear of speaking.' I turned into a person (.) who started to question, 'why is it like this, can it be like this or not?'. You know, I entered the program as a shy quiet (.) queer who grew up in Turkey. I came out of this program as an activist who had academic or political discussions with European activists and did not accept them, put forward their own arguments, and started to express their ideas better (.). (Lotus, activist, Appendix G, 19)

Lotus considered this training as an essential step for engaging in activism. It is documented that although Lotus had always wished to “empower” themselves and liberate themselves to live as they wanted, it came true for them after participating in this training program. They “transformed” from a “quiet” and “shy” person at the beginning of the training to a person who could participate in discussions and defend their arguments, which indicates critical action.

After this one-year training program, Lotus moved to France for the Erasmus program and started performing activism and participating in volunteering activities for HIV studies in various cities of Europe. After this experience, Lotus said that they wanted to perform activism in Turkey and narrate as follows (lines 219-232):

> I said before that when I was in France, I started to feel guilty because I worked too long, I did not do anything beneficial for my country. (.) I did not do anything in my own country. I was saying, 'I am not doing my country any good' (.). Because I could not earn money in the country, so I always worked abroad in this field. I said (.) 'So I have to go back to the country to write my thesis, be organized, have a position for the movement in Turkey, do something, (.) have a voice'. This is how I got organized with ABC. When we attended the volunteer training for the first time, (.) I behaved like I was biphobic, transphobic. I was talking nonsense, so you see, I was 25 years old, but I was still unorganized, and when I got organized (.), I was making a blunder. You know, as much as I educated people (.) in the field of HIV, about HIV, the volunteers in the team also educated me about their identity, about our integrated struggle. In this process (.), something happened as I worked in ABC, I realized that I could not perform activism in Turkish (.) and I started reading publications published in Turkish. By discussing many things with the people in the team, I prepared myself to work in the field of

> HIV in Turkey, in fact, I improved my skills or myself in some (.) points. (Lotus, activist, Appendix G, 20)

Lotus felt discomfort because they did not engage in activism in Turkey; thus, they became involved in ABC Association as a volunteer and queer HIV activist. It is documented that Lotus identified and criticized their own mistakes ("I behaved like I was biphobic, transphobic") in the volunteer training. Just like Rose and Magnolia, Lotus made self-criticism towards their behaviors, which refers to their critical reflection. Besides, although they attended the long-term activism training program, they did not find their own activism experience sufficient; therefore, they joined a new association and continued pursuing their learning process, indicating that they continued to develop critical reflection. Also, the fact that they tried to improve their skills to perform activism in Turkey indicates critical motivation to widen the scope and depth of their activism.

Additionally, Lotus said that they gained interest in the health science master's program and wanted to perform activism academically. Lotus stated that several doctors and experts tried to suppress and shut them up by asserting they could not talk about HIV treatment and its process due to their bachelor's degree in international relations. Then, they decided to apply for master's programs as a "reaction" to them, and they described their process of involvement in academia as follows (lines 97-115):

> You know, it was not supposed to be like this, so I struggled with it internally at that time. Was I doing this because it was expected of me, was I reverting back to that (.) behavior in my childhood, or was I (.) truly interested in being in this field and being able to move forward faster (.) or to be able to surpass these people (.)? I said it really made sense for me to do this to get on top of it somewhere (.) or to gain more acceptance in these discussions. I (.) applied, and I was accepted. Then here I am, studying master, even my final semester will start in a few weeks. I am doing a master's degree in health sciences; my master's has become more quantitative and more clinical than I anticipated. I wanted it to be social and qualitative, but right now, it's going pretty clinical

> and quantitative. (.) I am re-experiencing some of the same things I did as a kid, I am doing very complicated things right now (.) because I did not want to study hard, and I knew I could do it, but I did not do it. The reason I pursued this degree was for activism, but my activism was never so clinical (.) and quantitative. My idea of advocacy (.) was different, but my educational path has turned into such a place, which (.) is difficult, but I am satisfied. I said I did not want to learn so much math, physics, and biology, and I gave up the quantitative field (.). But now I am learning all of them again. And this time, I do it willingly (.), I am more successful than I have ever before in my education because (.) I am doing it voluntarily. (Lotus, activist, Appendix G, 16)

Lotus's drive to become an expert in their activism indicates that they wanted to develop their activism practices, which also refers to developing critical motivation. Lotus compared this decision to be in academia with their past behaviors and pointed out that their motivation to start a master's program was to sustain their activism. It is also documented that Lotus saw the challenge of the other expert's quarrel as an opportunity to struggle against discrimination and pressure and gained interest in academia, which refers to their development of critical action. They have returned to the quantitative field they left in high school to perform academic activism, demonstrating that they developed critical motivation and critical action. It is also indicated that they questioned their position of being specialized in the "quantitative" field, but they found motivation for performing activism and widened their learning scope into the new fields.

In a nutshell, unlike Magnolia and Rose, Lotus's trigger point for starting activism was not the process of coming out but the diagnosis of HIV. Even if they encountered activism at the beginning of their college and the Gezi protests, they did not engage in activism until their HIV diagnosis and involvement in the HIV activism training program. It is indicated that Lotus started to develop the components of critical consciousness within this training program and after regular engagement in activism. First, Lotus developed critical motivation over their issues

and sought knowledge. Then they began to develop critical reflection by making their arguments and critical action by defending them during the training program. It is also indicated that they never stopped themselves from learning more; they also participated in the LGBTIQ+ movement in Turkey through ABC Association, which refers to expanding their scope to the broader field than HIV activism. During their association with ABC, they became aware of the deficiencies related to their activism practices; thus, they sustained developing their critical reflection and critical action.

4.1.4 Interim summary: the type the learner to take action

The type the learner to take action is the activists who are aware of the social situations, especially those that they are subject to, look at the situations from a critical perspective, and take action against these to seek a solution. Questioning the status quo, the power inequalities and oppressions indicate that the type the learner to take action has raised critical reflection. Additionally, becoming motivated to seek solutions and to learn and develop their skills to get ready for performing activism are indications of the learner to take action's developing critical motivation. Eventually, this type's actions and common struggles against oppression indicate that the learner to take action develops critical action. Eventually, this type presents the components of critical consciousness simultaneously.

In the next section, I present my empirical findings of LGBTIQ+ non-activists' learning experiences. I also examine whether they develop three components of critical consciousness in the absence of activism practices.

4.2 Non-activists: the not taking a stand

In this section, I present three biographical interviews conducted with the nonactivists to elaborate on their learning experiences and whether they have developed critical consciousness. Non-activists" term in this study refers to the LGBTIQ+ participants who do not declare themselves as activists. In my effort to understand the learning experiences of activists, I chose to include non-activists as a comparison horizon to be able to understand the impact of activism on learning more clearly. Here, I will try to construct non-activist orientation in comparison to the activist type I presented previously (see section 4.1).

The presentation of the cases is similar to activists: I first provide information on their social background. Then, I highlight their coming out experiences and, finally, their current lives, including their daily practices and future plans. Here, I examine each case separately: Olive, Maple, and Spruce. At the end of each case, I provide a case summary, focusing on the significant findings of the analysis and on the comparison to others.

4.2.1 Olive: challenging but not perceiving it as an activism

Olive is a 26-year-old non-activist participant who defines himself as a cis-gender gay man. He comes from a low-middle-class, religious family. He is a university graduate of a management department and did not declare his current occupation. He has been living in Istanbul since he was born.

Olive started by stating that this interview reminded him of a "psychotherapy session". Then, he began to share his insights gained in his therapy process related to his childhood. He described the environment he grew up in as conservative, asserting that experiencing sexuality was "sinful". He stated that he had lived in the jamaat

dormitory at secondary school, and his hodjas made “sinner” statements about inciting sexuality and masturbation, which led him to “suppress” his sexual identity. He also mentioned that he used to try to “fit in with heterosexuality” but could not get along with it. He stated that he "denied" his sexual identity, which led him to “alienate” himself, and he fell into a "dilemma". ". Then, he accepted himself with his gay identity during psychotherapy at university. He narrated on this as follows (lines 92-110):

> Errr, there have already been so many transferences, you know, I put myself in my parent’s position, I put myself in my own position, I talk about the opposite sex, my own sex, and so on. After about a year, I think I could finally come out of my identity to her. In this process, I always wonder if she understands or knows or something like that, and I try to shape the story in that direction. I mean, for instance, I talk about liking a girl even though there is nothing like that going on, and I throw in artificial details in therapy that will not make her suspect anything else. After a while, the wisdom of therapy takes over, and these things eventually give way to reality. This is something that I cannot control, nor can anyone else. It is not something that can be hidden forever (.). Errrr, I actually realize this identity, and I embrace it in therapy. Within. Errrr, until then, I felt homophobia within myself, both before and during the therapy (.). So, I used to people like Güzcan Kılmaz and other mediatic individuals. I was getting very angry because I thought that these were the things that marginalized people so much. They did not have to be like that, they did not have to behave femininely so much, and they did not have to scream that much, I said that I used to hate them. I am a fan now, so he is so funny that I enjoy watching him. Well, over time, I saw that this internalized homophobia leaves one of my (.) identities outside the door, and I welcome it in. And I became much more peaceful. I am not bothered by Güzcan, myself, or any femininity I see around me. (Olive, non-activist, Appendix G, 21)

In this narration, it is highlighted that Olive has accepted his sexual identity and transformed his internalized homophobia (“I felt a homophobia within myself”) with the help of psychotherapy. Olive associated his homophobia that projected outward with his denial of his sexual identity and despising “Güzcan Kılmaz” for his open sexual identity. He criticized his internalized homophobia, which indicates that he went through a critical reflection. Olive also underwent a transformation through

his feelings for “Güzcan Kılmaz” and started to like him (“I am a fan now”) after he accepted his own sexual identity, which indicates that he also transformed his internalized homophobia. Conversely, he considered this transformation as an individual transformation and emotional experience (“I became much more peaceful”), which he sorted out in his individual (“psychotherapy”) processes rather than in a community setting. Therefore, it is documented that he focused on the individual aspects of his LGBTIQ+-related issues and his internalized homophobia, and he did not specify anything about LGBTIQ+-related issues from the societal aspects.

He tells further on his psychotherapy experiences and opinions on activism as follows: (lines 173-191)

> Researcher: Thank you. What happened when you started therapy at university? Is it possible for you to retell that period and open it with the details that come to your mind?
>
> Olive: Let me think. (.) At first, that homophobia seems very striking to me. Errr, it comes to mind (.). What can I say about it? (.) Well, I have processed it more, what it is, where it comes from, how challenging it is to hold onto this homophobia, just as challenging as blaming yourself for being thirsty. But I never felt brave enough about it and I still do not feel that way (.) about openly err *living* with it as a social identity. I think I can give the following example about this, in my first or second year of the university, I watched a documentary called "Worlds", I saw what happens to the chicks there. Here I decided to go vegan. Well, I have been vegan for a long time, and well (2) I have never been able to experience this through activism, so if I should call it a plant-based diet instead of saying I am vegan, I never have the desire to take on a social role and perform as an activist for it. So I am experiencing this, so I am talking to the person who asks. But I never feel like saying something, because I do not see it that way, on the one hand, this is not a moral superiority, I talk to those who want to talk about it, but I never talk to those who do not want to say, "Hello, wake up! There is a corpse on your plate", I never wanted to take on that activism. Just like here, you know. Well, (5) being an LGBTI individual (.) is very different from being an activist. I have never been on the activism side (.). (Olive, non-activist, Appendix G, 22)

It is documented that Olive struggled with his internalized homophobia (“that homophobia”) but did not consider this situation from the societal aspect since he did not want to live as an open LGBTIQ+ person (“living with it as a social identity”). He distinguished between individual and social action by exemplifying his veganism experience, stating that he only performed veganism individually, not as an "activist" of it. Here, Olive considered activism as a “social role” in which activists warn and try to change people's perspectives. He contemplated that his ethical practices (“veganism”) were individual and outside of it. Thus, it is demonstrated that he did not develop critical motivation. In the meantime, critical action since he did not take action to influence and explain his veganism practices to others. Meanwhile, he considered himself as he has already known the unethical behaviors (“Hello, wake up! There is a corpse on your plate”), and he did not think that influencing others could contribute to his own learning. Thus, it is indicated that, a fundamental difference from activists, he is not open for further learning and transformation.

In the course of the interview, Olive elaborated on LGBTIQ+ activism as follows: (lines 191-209)

> I was witnessing the interventions in the pride parade. It is totally stream of consciousness, by the way, I was supposed to say something about therapy, but I will not cut it off // no no // without self-censorship, errr well, I was seeing the interventions during that pride parade, on the one hand, there is still an effort to suppress it. I mean, it is very interesting, on a micro and macro level, whatever I am experiencing personally (.) on the micro level, it has an incredible symbolic significance to it in society, in the eyes of the government, even if I do not suppress it. There is suppression too. Well, (4) did I take what I saw outside and bring it inside, or did people bring it out and turn it into a political element? Err, I think about this from time to time. Well, as I saw these interventions and saw that it was terrorized, and partly because of my own nature, I could never feel the activism of this, I could not experience, I do not experience. Well, on the one hand, my stance on this issue is also clear. I mean, when I see a homophobic person, errrrr or (.) the thing comes to mind, for example, when I hear a statement like ‘Ok, I understand the problems of these people, okay they should express it, but (.) errr, for example, in some marches, trans people show their tits, that’s very outrageous.’, I mentioned that it is the result of a struggle, this is a success

> and victory, and errr it is like showing off a medal, this is why it is visible because this information is not known so much in my friend circle, you know. I make all the explanations I know to be understood. But frankly, I cannot include it in activism. (Olive, non-activist, Appendix G, 23)

Olive associated his internalized suppression with social pressure through the term “suppressing”. He took into account activism only as acting against public oppression, clashing with cops, taking risks, and struggling against threats. At this point, he regarded himself as he has already ‘known’ the societal issues and put himself in a privileged position since he knew these. He also made a difference between knowing the situations and explaining these to others, and he did not consider making what he knew into a public agenda and solving these issues. From this point of view, he did not show any interest in performing activism (“I could never feel the activism of this”), because he perceived activism as social impact in contrast to his own actions, which indicates that he did not develop critical motivation and hereupon critical action. On the other hand, he showed an interest in taking an attitude against “homophobia” (“when I see a homophobic person”) of the people in his environment, and he saw himself in a privileged and powerful position to explain this issue (“because this information is not known so much in my friend circle”).

To sum up, Olive narrates the acceptance process of his sexual identity as an individual experience, and he considered LGBTIQ+-related issues as an individual as well. He criticized his own homophobic attitudes reproducing the status quo and discrimination against LGBTIQ+s, which indicates that he has developed critical reflection. Still, this reflection does not conclude with critical motivation, which is documented in his approach to activism. To explore his own situation, but it remains an intimate process related to his own self rather than his queer identity, which refers

to not developing critical motivation. Additionally, Olive has not regarded his daily and ethical practices as activism; he saw himself as an ‘already knower’, which indicates that he is not open to learning. Additionally, he said his actions were not meant for activism when he faced oppression In his environment, documenting that he did not develop critical action.

In the following section, I investigate Maple, who also does not declare himself as an activist. Maple can allow me to further explore non-activists’ orientation frame.

4.2.2 Maple: seeing the situations and preferring to avoid

Maple is a 24-year-old non-activist who declares himself a cis-gender gay man. He was born and raised in Çanakkale, and he comes from a middle-class and secular family. He graduated from the agricultural engineering department in İzmir, and currently, he is studying for a master’s in environmental sciences. He has been living in Ankara for 2 years.

Maple started his narration by telling his childhood memories and coming-out experience. He stated that he grew up in a small city. When he started recognizing his sexual orientation at secondary school, he “found it strange” and “tried to change”. Meanwhile, he got bullied by his classmates for his “feminine” behavior. He stated that he began to accept his sexual orientation but had difficulty coming out of his closed environment. After starting university, he had a chance to live more “comfortably” and “as he was”.

Maple narrates his daily life after moving from a small city to a big city, İzmir, as follows: (lines 14-27)

> As my social circle began to form while I was the second grade onwards (.), I adapted to İzmir as well and started to love İzmir very much. And in Izmir (.) I have begun to express my (.) identity comfortably. (.) But, (.) well, my close friends there did not even know about me for a while, until (.) third grade.

> After I met the love of my life (.) when in the third (.) grade, ((smiles)) (.) and I decided to come out the confidence I gained from my partner. And I took my friends in front of me and came out to them. Of course, they were all shocked at first. After that (.) so of course they accepted. Of course, since they did not know much either, I was exposed to strange (.) questions at first, such as, "How is it (.) with two men, so how can it be, how does sexual intercourse take place?" (.) It was also difficult to deal with those questions, frankly, to explain myself to my closest people (.) even though they (.) accepted me (.) because they did not know at all (.) in their lives (.) they had never had any communication with someone like me (.), whom we call queer. It was a little difficult (.) to explain them (2) because they (.) put all (.) queers into the same mold (.) only based on the two Güzcan Kılmaz videos (.) they watched on social media (.). So, explaining to them about (2) myself and how things work was a bit difficult. But over time, they also got used to it (.) and adapted. (Maple, non-activist, Appendix G, 24)

In this passage above, Maple took support only from his private source to come out, such as his partner ("with taking an encouragement from my partner"), rather than seeking information to explore his queer identity or trying to contact other LGBTIQ+ people experiencing similar struggles, which indicates that Maple did not develop critical motivation. It is documented that it became enough for Maple to come out and make himself accepted in his close environment. He also had "difficulty" facing with gender prejudices of his friends ("I was exposed to strange (.) questions at first"); in fact, he endeavored heteronormative attitudes ("they had no communication with them"), and his reactions to these attitudes resulted from protecting himself, rather than explaining injustices in the heteronormative society.

Maple narrates his current life and future plans as follows: (lines 40-49)

> We still have a long (.) way to go, of course, we still have a lot of things planned for the future. He is currently working; he is not very satisfied with his job; I still do not know what to do after I finish my master's degree (.). Whether I do a Ph.D. (2) or find a new job. I find a good job; I may not pursue a Ph.D. (.). I am indecisive about these things. Plus, especially in the last 4-5 years (.) due to the political events in the country, the state of the country has scared us (.) err. The government's hate speech towards LGBT individuals (.) increasing day by day (.) started to create question marks in our minds about whether we should live in this country or not. And for this reason, after I finished my master's degree (.), I started to think about looking for a doctorate and a job abroad. So is my darling. If there are good

> opportunities, we can go abroad by 2023 (.). (Maple, non-activist, Appendix G, 25)

Maple identified the political situation of the country he has lived in and the status quo's "hate speech" to LGBTIQ+ individuals and worried about this situation. He was aware of oppression at the societal level ("due to the political events in the country"), but he did not question the situation unlike Olive criticizing homophobia, which indicates that he did not raise critical reflection. To give a solution to this issue, he got a protective plan for himself ("I started to think about looking for a doctorate and a job abroad.") to relieve his worries. It is documented that Maple thought about this LGBTIQ+-related issue and tried to find individual solutions ("I started to think about looking for a doctorate and a job abroad."), and he was not willing to take action, which demonstrates that Maple did not attach to critical motivation and critical action.

In short, Maple perceives his coming out processes as an individual experience, considers LGBTIQ+-related issues as things happening to him, and therefore considers individual solutions that can protect him. Just like Olive reflecting on LGBTIQ+-related issues but seeking solutions from the individual aspect, Maple also recognizes homophobic violence and threats at the societal level, which refers to developing critical reflection, and his preference is being away from the challenges individually. In comparison to the activists, he does not look for a community to be able to tackle the common problems. He does not present any need to learn about the issues he has been dealing with, which is similar to Olive's orientation. These indicate a lack of critical motivation and critical action for Maple.

In the following, I present another non-activist case, Spruce, to discuss non-activists' shared orientations.

4.2.3 Spruce: not experiencing the pressure

Spruce is a 32-year-old who defines himself as a cis-gender gay man and a non-activist. He was born and brought up in Mersin. He described his family as high-middle-class and secular. He graduated from the dentistry department in İzmir. Presently, he is a Ph.D. student in health sciences, and working as a registrar dentist. He has been living in Istanbul for five years.

Spruce stated that beginning at a very early age (when he was in preschool), he had become aware of his sexual orientation and had taken it naturally. Then he realized that his sexual orientation was outside of existing norms the first time he encountered the heteronormative norms at school. He also stated that this situation did not change his acceptance of his sexual orientation as not being something to hide, and he did not feel "guilty" for this reason.

Spruce narrates his interaction with his environment as a child as follows: (lines 2-12)

> Secondary school (.) errr (.) was a little more errr (.) was turbulent, due to adolescence. (3) Well, (.) so (2) I am thinking about what I remember from middle school. (2) Well, I have never had (.) so much (.) attitudes that are so masculine or (.) such (.) tastes that conform the society's *male* prototype. This is why I was one of those (.) sitting in the classroom, reading a book, (.) well, (.) such (.) nerdy type, @well@ it is so called. Well (.) this is why (.) I can say that at that time, errr little (.) bullying started. But it was not something that would make me uncomfortable (.) errrr (.) or (2) would prevent me from going to school or would make me cry for days or make me think. Sometimes there were such little (.) nicknames, sometimes there (.) were(.) such (.) errrr (.) interesting comments (.) about why I do not play with them or hang out with them at school—(.) Or (.)there were comments on why my close friends at school are more female-girls. But (.) I do not remember anything so major (.) that (.) would bother me (.). (Spruce, non-activist, Appendix G, 26)

In this passage, it is documented that Spruce considered his behaviors as not "masculine", such as "sitting in the class", "reading a book", "being a nerd", and "not playing with" boys. He reflected on his younger self and accepted himself as out

of the norms (“that are so masculine or (.) such (.) tastes that conform the society’s male prototype”), and he evaluated “reading a book” and “sitting in the classroom” as non-masculine. Although Spruce began to be criticized for his behaviors (“little (.) bullying started”) at school as a teenager, he was not concerned about it (“But it was not something that would make me uncomfortable”) for this situation, by explaining that he did not far behind from “going to the school” and he was not negatively affected (“that would make me cry for days or make me think”). In this case, his regard was related to participating in school, and his high-achieving school performance could contribute to coping with these issues.

After narrating his childhood, he mentioned his high school and university years. He stated that he has always been a hardworking student and started studying dentistry at İzmir. He explained these years as funny, comfortable, and full of good experiences with traveling and socializing. He also stated that he did not prefer to come out to his friends at that time. Then, he describes the time he started to come out after moving to Istanbul as follows: (lines 48-63)

> Errr (.) I met new people (.) whom I love very much, so I remember that after almost a year, I mean 2017 or 2018 (.) I was able to come out more easily to the people I have just met or old friends, in terms of my orientation. So, now, I, (.) what can I say? (.) I even remember that I did not feel the need to come out, I do not know. Errrrr, for example, someone errrr (.), for example, when we go out with three or five common people and err, when I know some of them and not some, I stop for a conversation about me, for example, when they ask me if I have a girlfriend, I mean, I answer like 'Why do you assume I have a girlfriend, maybe a guy? I have a boyfriend; how do you know my orientation?’ I could give answers (.) like errr (.) or talk more comfortably (.) even with people I do not know (.). Errr, but it was harder to come out backwards. Well, (.) at least for me, because errr (.) on the one hand @(.)@ something comes to mind, I always thought that my friends would get a reaction like errrr (.) 'why did not you tell me until now' ((smiled)), while coming out backwards. So, (.) I thought that I would encounter friend's reaction like (.) "Do not you see me too close to say this" rather than "How could something like this happen" (.) while coming out to my old friends(.). Errrr, some of them still (.) do not know my orientation. (Maple, non-activist, Appendix G, 27)

Spruce began to come out more comfortably after moving to Istanbul. He did not even feel the “necessity” of coming out, indicating that he had seen his sexual orientation as something to explain to others. On the other hand, it is documented that moving to the new city affected him to come out since he had not preferred to come out until that time. It is also indicated that Spruce was aware of the heteronormative attitudes of the people (“when they ask me if I have a girlfriend”) around him, and he reacted against it by bringing people into question (“Why do you think I have a girlfriend, maybe a guy”). On the other hand, just like Olive, he did not aim to change and influence people with his questions, which refers to not developing critical action. Instead, he only acted against the people’s questions that could make them interrogated since he considered the people’s heteronormativity from the individual aspect, just like Olive and Maple. Furthermore, he was not afraid of being subject (“that I would encounter friend's reaction like (.) "Don't you see me too close to say this" rather than "How could something like this happen”) to reactions by his old friends from İzmir, indicating that he did not feel under pressure by his friends. However, it remains unclear in his narrations that he hid his sexual orientation even if he did not feel uncomfortable. This indicates that he took his identity so private and intimate that he did not prefer to share it.

Summarily, Spruce considered his life to be ordinary, despite being outside the norms, and described his coming out experience as somehow less challenging than Olive’s and Maple’s. Even if he becomes aware of the oppression he faced, it is not enough to indicate that he developed critical reflection since he did not critically reflect at the societal level in the societal level in contrast to Olive and Maple. In addition, he did not gain any interest in exploring his queerness through learning and getting in touch with other LGBTIQ+s after coming out, just as Olive and Maple did.

Thus, it is indicated that Spruce did not develop critical motivation. He did not consider any LGBTIQ+-related issues specifically; therefore, he did not make any statements about finding a solution to these issues in his life, even individually, which refers to not developing critical action. On the contrary, Maple and Olive tried to find individual solutions to these issues. He also considered his experiences as an LGBTIQ+ person from the individual aspect; he only regarded LGBTIQ+-related issues personally, just like Olive's and Maple's experiences.

4.2.4 Interim summary: the not taking a stand

The type the not taking a stand is aware of the social situations around it, but this type does not show an interest in finding solutions for these. It mostly considers the situations from the individual perspective, and it does not take action on social issues. This type does not enter the process of investigating the LGBTIQ+ identity either individually or collectively, so it does not engage in the learning process related to its queer identity. In terms of the critical consciousness components, the type the not taking a stand does not mostly question the status quo and determine oppression at the societal level, which indicates that it does not develop critical reflection. Additionally, the not taking a stand does not develop critical motivation because it does not show a willingness to do something for social situations or to learn and develop the skills to take action. Eventually, since it does not attempt to take action, there is no development of critical action.

In the following section, I present the summary of my findings of two types' learning experiences comparatively and reveal their orientation frames.

4.3 Differences between activists and non-activists in their orientation to learning and action

In this section, I exhibit the activists' and non-activists' learning experiences and developing critical consciousness through their biographical narrations. First, I compared activists with each other and sought their similarities to highlight the shared orientation frame; then, I compared non-activists with each other to highlight their differences from the activist orientation frame. The commonalities, despite the social background differences, and differences between the activists and non-activists enabled me to define two types: *the learner to take action* and *the not taking a stand*.

First, both, the type the learner to take action and the type the not taking a stand have a triggering event to change their lives, such as coming out as an LGBTIQ+ person or getting an HIV diagnosis. The type the learner to take action embraces this trigger as an opportunity to understand and explore its own situation, leading to learning individually (e.g., through an internet search, reading articles, and watching informative videos). In contrast, the type the not taking a stand may not see it as something important or a turning point in its own lives. Through its own efforts to learn, the type the learner to take action recognizes the importance of real-life experiences and human connection, which motivates to become more involved in their communities. (e.g., a student club meeting, an organization event, and a training program) for emotional support; on the contrary, the type the not taking a stand does not need participation and showed any motivation.

When participating in a community for the first time, the type the learner to take action has felt incompetent and inferior around other people there. Besides, this type has sustained participation. The feeling of inferiority still leads to learning and

developing skills. This type starts to benefit from more diverse resources for learning (e.g., transfer of experience, dialogue, experiences of other people, etc.) and collectively engage in a learning process rather than its own individual resources. For example, the type the learner to take action encounters more diverse milieus than its own in the activism environment, which leads to questioning the status quo in other social dimensions. On the other hand, the type the not taking a stand does not gain an interest in encountering diverse milieus and learning from others.

Furthermore, both the type the learner to take action and the type the not taking a stand reflect on societal issues from the queer perspective and question the status quo by addressing oppression and queerphobia (i.e., homophobia, biphobia, transphobia, etc.) somehow. The type the learner to take action also mostly questions and criticizes its past behaviors that would have reproduced oppression. The type the learner to take action develops critical reflection, whereas the type the not taking a stand mostly has not developed it (only Olive showed).

On the other hand, the type the learner to take action highlights the eagerness to participate in finding potential solutions against oppression, whereas the type the not taking a stand does not show an interest in this. The type the learner to take action tends to develop its own skills and learn and empower itself to become a competent activist; on the contrary, the type the not taking a stand's tendencies in their daily lives do not lead to learning to be an activist. Thus, it is documented that the type the learner to take action develops critical motivation, whereas the type the not taking a stand does not perform it.

Finally, through critical reflection and critical motivation, the type the learner to take action struggles for social change against LGBTIQ+-related oppression and inequalities, which leads the learner to take action to developing critical action. In

time, the scope of the struggle has also widened to address various situations related to critical action (e.g., workplace oppression, HIV activism, etc.). Nevertheless, the type the not taking a stand does not act against oppression, since it does not prefer struggling against social problems with its own justifiable reasons (such as worries about systematic threats, terrorizations, etc.), which indicates that this type does not develop critical action. In this sense, activism practices contribute to learning processes both personally and mostly collectively; however, there are several factors rather than performing activism, which I will discuss in the next chapter.

In the following chapter, I summarize, discuss my findings, and draw a conclusion to address limitations and suggestions for future studies.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I summarize the main findings of empirical analysis and discuss these based on the theoretical framework I proposed. The chapter ends with the limitations of the study and suggestions for future studies.

This study aimed to examine the activism experiences of LGBTIQ+ activists compared to the LGBTIQ+ individuals who do not define themselves as activists. I investigated learning and developing critical consciousness processes of LGBTIQ+ activists based on their biographical narrations. I tried to better understand them by focusing on their similarities and differences from non-activists.

Critical consciousness is a liberation process in which people utilize critical approaches to address situations and enact social change (Freire, 1974; Jemal, 2017). Activists are considered as changemakers who stand up to oppression, discrimination, and rights violations in society and seek solutions at micro or macro levels for social problems. Since activism has a dynamic that is open to innovative and changeable practices (Whittier et al., 2001), and activists have initiatives aimed at transforming systemic issues, it became valuable to examine activists' learning and critical consciousness development processes. LGBTIQ+ activists in Turkey are those resisting systematical threats and violence.

In accordance with these aims, this study focused on the following research questions:

I. Do activists learn from their activism-related experiences? If so,
    i. What and how do activists learn?
    ii. Do those activism-related learnings lead to developing a "critical consciousness"?

II. Do activists' learning experiences differ from non-activists, and are there differences in terms of learning from experiences between activists and non-activists?
    i. How do activists and non-activists differ in learning through their experiences?
    ii. Do activists and non-activists differ in developing critical consciousness through their experiences?

I used theoretical sampling to select the participants from several LGBTIQ+ communities and associations. I conducted Biographical Narrative Interviews (Schütze, 1983) with three LGBTIQ+ activists and three non-activist LGBTIQ+ individuals. I analyzed the interview data using Documentary Method to explore their orientation frames and conjunctive experiences (Bohnsack, 2014). First, the participants were grouped according to whether they had performed activism in the past and today. First, I analyzed activist participants to explore the commonalities in their orientations toward learning and activism-related learning experiences and whether they have developed critical consciousness. Then, I analyzed non-activists comparatively to clarify whether they differ from activists in learning and developing critical consciousness. The comparative analysis enabled me to define essential commonalities and differences between activists and non-activists, so I could reconstruct two typologies: *the learner to take action* and *the not taking a stand*.

5.1 Discussion of findings

5.1.1 Differences between activists' and non-activists' learning experiences

Although activists have diverse social backgrounds (e.g., their socio-economic status, education level, and family culture, etc.) and their life experiences vary in many aspects, they have several parallelisms and commonalities in their activism experiences, such as their eagerness to investigate their situations through individual exploration, their willingness to participate in a community after their explorations, the feeling of inferiority in a community at first, and therewithal their drive to learn and develop their skills in a community.

First, the type narrates a triggering event that led to questioning specific live events (such as coming out, getting an HIV diagnosis, etc.). This trigger enables a curiosity to understand and explore the emerging situation, which results in an individual learning process using the internet, magazines, or videos. Individual learning efforts are not satisfactory by themselves, so the need for participation in a community arises to sustain learning. However, the motivation behind the type the learner to take action's first participation in a community is vague. Even if attending a community event is the first move toward becoming an activist, continuing these actions is a pivotal part of the activism efforts. Factors such as a welcoming environment in the communities contribute to the motivation to continue; additionally, emotional sharing and intimacy are sought to satisfy the need to understand the LGBTIQ+ related issues and acknowledge that queer individuals are not experiencing these alone.

Additionally, the type the learner to take action's participation in a community leads to accessing different learning resources. Learning experience occurs through human interaction and firsthand experience rather than through

internet sources or articles. Community involvement provides an opportunity to gain transfer of experience from other people, as well as encounter and get in touch with individuals from diverse backgrounds that may not have been previously encountered (e.g., Kurds, Alevis, other LGBTIQ+ individuals, etc.). These experiences serve as learning sources for the learner to take action.

The type the not taking a stand, on the other hand, also has similar experiences, such as coming out. However, these experiences are not considered to be triggers for exploring and further understanding emerging situations, which would lead to learning. This is one of the main differences between the learner to take action and the not taking a stand; the triggering event does not have an influence on learning processes. Furthermore, the not taking a stand also shows no interest in joining a community to explore emerging situations. Nevertheless, there is no intention of an individual learning process for this type. Thus, joining a community cannot grow into a learning resource, unlike the learner to take action whose learning resources are real-life events, other individuals, and the transfer of experiences from experienced activists.

The scholars (Kutlaca et al., 2020; Pozzi et al., 2022) investigated activists' and non-activists' attitudes and tendencies toward participation in a community comparatively, and they highlighted several social-psychological factors affecting the activists to join a community, such as "group identification" (people's psychological bonds with the community) and "collective efficacy" (people's assessments of their capacity to cope with social change) (Kutlaca et al., 2020, p. 2; Pozzi et al., 2022). However, it remains unclear why similar experiences and life problems can affect the need for learning and exploring, resulting in different orientations toward learning.

This is because studies comparing activists with non-activists are insufficient to reveal the learning processes.

After participating in the communities, the learner to take action shares similar feelings of inferiority and incognizance. These feelings motivate to learn further about the related problems (e.g., “Who are gays?”, “How does HIV spread?”), and the learning process starts individually. After participation in a community, the type the learner to take action recognizes that the individual learning process is not sufficient enough, which makes feel incompetent and motivated to learn and develop activism-related skills. Involving the community facilitates encountering new milieus (different from its own) and learning about previously unfamiliar inequality dimensions (e.g., religion, race, etc.), which leads to reflection on own prejudices, past behaviors, attitudes, and oppression at the broader level. Thus, the type the learner to take action is open to change and learning, which we do not see in the type the not taking a stand. In this whole process, the continuous learning motivation of these activists emerged as an orientation. The type the learner to take action’s learning processes are supported by community dialogue, shared experiences, as well as non-formal training programs.

The type the not taking a stand, on the contrary, neither indicates a drive to learn and change nor joins a community. There is no indication of exploring emerging situations after a triggering event; thus, the motivation for learning does not emerge as an orientation of this type. Besides, the not taking a stand does not engage in a learning process related to the LGBTIQ+ identity and activism. In the literature, since there are limited studies comparing activists and non-activists (Klein, 2021; Kutlaca et al., 2020; Pozzi et al., 2022), I could not find any study focusing on

activists' and non-activists' learning experiences comparatively. Therefore, I cite studies focusing on learning through activism (Donahue & Wise, 2020; Ollis, 2021).

In the study conducted by Ollis (2021), environmental activists were categorized as circumstantial (novice) and experienced according to the level of their activism experiences. Ollis (2021) uncovered that circumstantial activists learned to perform activism through actions and the community environment, especially by monitoring experienced activists' efforts. The experienced activist group did not take a position of teaching; however, they were involved in circumstantial activists' learning processes unintentionally (Ollis, 2021). In line with the findings of Ollis (2021), my analysis also indicates that activists are inclined to learn in community settings rather than individually. However, activists are not grouped in this study, which shows that they lack an understanding of the depth of activism experience on learning.

Donahue and Wise (2020) studied queer student activists' international service-learning processes and their insights on learning and activism. It was highlighted that the activists tended to learn from others rather than teach others, and they defined themselves as "learners" to develop new skills to oversee their queer identities through community building (Donahue & Wise, 2020, p. 23). Confirming the findings of Donahue and Wise (2020), the activists in this study tended to learn from their environments and were only concerned about their learning.

5.1.2 Difference between activists and non-activists in developing critical consciousness

Critical consciousness, a Freirean (1974) concept, refers to examining and addressing societal issues to achieve change (Jemal, 2017). When analyzing whether activists

and nonactivists raise critical consciousness, I focused on three components of critical consciousness: critical reflection, critical motivation, and critical action (Jemal, 2017).

The first component I examined in orientation frames is critical reflection. It became clear that the type the learner to take action critically reflects on its life experiences and ideas after being involved in a community, and this component has developed over time. For example, the learner to take action realizes the continuation of its own attitudes and behaviors reproducing oppression, recognizes that these served the status quo, and starts criticizing others. As Freire stated (1970) that individuals must critically reflect on repressive circumstances and social injustice. The not taking a stand also somehow recognizes the threats towards LGBTIQ+s and criticizes its own past beliefs and behaviors. However, this attitude fails to address systemic issues and the broader status quo. As Freire (1974, cited in Watts et al., 2011) stated that critical consciousness was composed of recognition and analysis of the societal dilemmas and oppression and taking action that creates a potential for change; critical reflection without action does not serve to change (Watts et al., 2003). Thus, the critical reflection process of the not taking a stand has limited contribution to developing critical consciousness by itself.

Joining a community is a significant action to explore the crucial contributors to developing critical reflection. When I examine the elements that could serve as a factor to develop critical reflection, the dialogues, in essence, became prominent in building critical reflection in their activism environments. Freire (1970) presented dialogue as a chance to identify reproductive ideas and raise people's awareness of these ideas, which can encourage critical thinking about the linkages between societal and personal concerns (Jemal, 2017). In this case, the learner to take action is

privileged to participate in a dialogue deriving from individual concerns to challenge the power dynamics and oppression at the societal level. Sharing common concerns and issues and feeling connected within solidarity is essential to establishing a dialogue to reflect critically. Conversely, the type the not taking a stand does not engage in an environment where it could establish a dialogue to analyze and question its own life critically.

In addition to critical reflection, learning motivation of the learner to take to develop their skills for activism is aligned with critical motivation, an emerging component of the concept of critical consciousness (Jemal, 2017). Critical motivation is explained as a sociopolitical development and political efficacy, which can lead individuals to become empowered and take action (Jemal, 2017; Watts et al., 2003). The orientation of the learner to take action, such as the motivation and tendency to seek knowledge and learn to contribute to social change, become apparent. However, I did not find any supporting research in the related literature. I see this common point as a punchline since the learner to take action's quest for knowledge has become a drive to participate in a community and learn how to perform activism.

Kieffer (1984) explained that risks and challenges to individuals or groups initiate what eventually emerges as an empowering reaction. Confirming Kieffer's statement, the type the learner to take action is empowered through their critical consciousness processes. For instance, this type overcame the feeling of inferiority when first joined a community to take action against perceived oppression. Additionally, this type also has the motivation to take a role in society and struggle for its own rights; there is a wish for violence and oppression to come to an end, and there is a potential for change in this type's lives, which is an indication of becoming empowered and competent through learning.

The type the not taking a stand, on the other hand, considers its own learning processes as completed; for instance, this type proposes that activism cannot contribute to its personal development and society. There is no motivation to learn and an intention to act for social change in contrast to the learner to take action, which can indicate that the type the not taking a stand does not develop critical motivation.

The third component I sought to discuss in orientation frames is critical action. It becomes obvious that the learner to take action's efforts for struggling for rights, acting against oppression and violence, and being in solidarity lead to develop critical action. It becomes possible to say that this type's own practices are not only important for social transformation but also crucial for its own "liberation" (Freire, 1970, p. 37) to free from oppression. As Freire (1970, p. 37) stated that people become "active" against oppression when they "liberate" themselves from the oppressors, and "liberation" must include resisting the "banking" system (p. 79); in this case, the learner to take action can become "liberated" from cis-heteronormativity through their activism practices.

Additionally, Freire (1970) also highlighted that action without critical reflection for liberation could not lead people to develop critical consciousness and vice versa, and the practices within reflection and action are called "praxis" (p. 32). In this case, the learner to take action makes a move after beginning to develop critical reflection. This type also critically reflects on its environment through its actions involving praxis.

On the other hand, it is vital to consider whether the learner to take action's area of activism has been expanded or not. The learner to take action engages in different activism fields than LGBTIQ+ activism (e.g., workplace activism, HIV

rights activism, etc.); however, these fields are still this type's concerns and related to its own lives. Yet, Watts and Hipolito-Delgado (2015) presented critical action as a spectrum ranging from individual to collective action and from internal to external struggle areas, and they suggested that critical action should go beyond the personal area to make a higher impact. In this sense, this type's scope of the struggle does not expand to the broader systemic issues but engages in collective action, and this type is still considered to be on the spectrum and the process. In addition to attending to its own struggles, there is an indication of a concern for the issues of others who have undergone similar experiences of oppression and discrimination.

In contrast to the practices of the learner to take action, the type the not taking a stand neither intends to take action at a personal and societal level nor regards its own actions as activism. Besides, this type supposes that its own actions should have been motivated to change the situations and convince others to be free from oppression to be counted as activism. Thus, the type the not taking a stand does not develop critical action.

When I return back to the definition of critical consciousness, it involves the process of learning to examine societal issues and practice for change (Jemal, 2017; Watts et al., 2011). Therefore, it becomes possible to state that the learner to take action raises critical consciousness since its activism practices involve reflection and action. However, examining the systematicity of critical consciousness in this study remains questionable.

In the literature, there are many studies focusing on activists' critical consciousness processes (Forenza et al., 2017; Kornbluh et al., 2019; Mosley et al., 2021; Mwangi et al., 2019; Turner-Essel, 2013; Watts & Hipolito-Delgado, 2015); by discussing how the person's developing critical consciousness can be examined.

For instance, Forenza, Rogers, and Lardier (2017) examined undocumented college students' participation in political activism through the perspective of critical consciousness. They investigated critical consciousness through a three-dimensional approach and considered critical reflection, critical motivation, and critical action. They stated that student activists raised three components of critical consciousness, and they have become active since they are supported and empowered by their activism practices. Confirming Forenza, Rogers, and Lardier's findings, the type the learner to take action in this study shows three components in its critical consciousness processes, yet activism's contribution to empowerment and support remains unclear in this study.

Kornbluh, Collins, and Kohfeldt (2019) also examined critical consciousness development and social justice identity formation of scholar-activists from diverse milieus. They proposed that activism environments supported consciousness-raising but could also reproduce power inequalities and oppression toward marginalized groups (Kornbluh et al., 2019). Their findings highlight that the contribution of background to raising critical consciousness in activists needs to be improved in my study since I did not aim to analyze the backgrounds of activists comparatively; instead, I focused only on the contribution of activism practice. Even if the type the learner to take action develops three components of critical consciousness, several factors (e.g., socio-economic status, race, education, etc.) could contribute to the critical consciousness process rather than only activism practices.

Turner-Essel (2013) conducted a study on Black women activists' experiences to explore personal and demographic factors affecting the development of critical consciousness. The factors such as past oppression experience, education level, and spirituality contributed to critical consciousness-raising processes of the

activists (Turner-Essel, 2013), which supported Kornbluh, Collins, and Kohfeldt's (2019) examination. Turner-Essel's findings confirmed that personal and demographic factors should also be taken into account to examine critical consciousness in activists.

5.2 Conclusion

Investigating activists' and non-activists' learning and development of critical consciousness processes was the central focus of this study. As documented in the findings of activists' and non-activists' biographical narratives, activism can contribute to learning processes. The learner to take action has a tendency to learn and develop its skills more through exploring its own situations (e.g., being an LGBTIQ+ in this study) and engaging in the collective learning processes through human touch and solidarity, whereas the type the not taking a stand does not demonstrate such an interest in this. Additionally, while the learner to take action encounters all components of developing critical consciousness, the type the not taking a stand does not. Although the not taking a stand may occasionally engage in critical reflection, this component alone is insufficient for developing critical consciousness.

Within the critical consciousness process, activists can detect systemic issues and develop a critical perspective toward these; in this way, they can develop a transformative praxis to address social change. As Freire (1974) stated that social action without conscientization is unavailing, critical consciousness is thus at the heart of an activism practice. Besides, just like the dynamic nature of activism, critical consciousness is a process that is constantly evolving and does not have a

definitive endpoint. Thus, the learning processes in this sense are also unfinished and valuable to take into account in adult learning.

5.3 Limitations of the study

There are many limitations to this study. The primary limitation is that the backgrounds of the participants and group categorizations could have been more diverse in order to allow for comparisons across multiple variables such as experience in activism, socio-economic status, education level, ethnicity, and more. This limitation hindered the socio-genetic typification (Bohnsack, 2014), i.e., the documentation of the social genesis of the orientations. For instance, Örgen (2022) stated that a trans-lesbian woman activist and a cis-gay activist do not have similar experiences in their activism practices due to their backgrounds and different privileged situations. This study is limited in its ability to fully explore the impact of personal and demographic factors on learning and development of critical consciousness through activism practices because it lacks in consideration the differences in experiences that can arise due to differences in background and privilege. This is because the current study is limited in its ability to explore and highlight the significance of personal and demographic factors within the available time frame.

Additionally, there are other limitations to the study, including coronavirus restrictions that prevented other forms of data collection, such as group discussions and participant observations. Because critical consciousness and learning are lifelong processes, a longitudinal comparative study would have been more appropriate. This is another limitation of the current study.

5.4 Suggestions for further studies

Through framing the consequences and encountering limitations of the study, a more detailed study is needed to explore activism practices' contribution to learning and critical consciousness from the comparative perspective. The followings are the recommendations for future studies:

- The activist groups should be further diversified (e.g., novice activists and experienced activists to specify the effect of activism experience.
- The types of activism should be specifically categorized (e.g., artist-activists, political activists, digital activists) or field (e.g., LGBTIQ+ activists only, or those involved in multiple areas such as eco-feminists and queer vegans).
- Future studies should address demographic factors and diversify personal backgrounds to understand the impact of factors beyond activism better.
- Lastly, further studies should focus on the empowerment and solidarity aspect of critical consciousness to better understand the learning orientations of activists.

APPENDIX A

APPROVAL OF THE ETHICS COMMITTEE FOR MASTER'S AND PHD THESES IN SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES

Evrak Tarih ve Sayısı: 03.11.2021-36982

T.C.
BOĞAZİÇİ ÜNİVERSİTESİ
SOSYAL VE BEŞERİ BİLİMLER YÜKSEK LİSANS VE DOKTORA TEZLERİ ETİK İNCELEME KOMİSYONU
TOPLANTI KARAR TUTANAĞI

Toplantı Sayısı	:	23
Toplantı Tarihi	:	03.11.2021
Toplantı Saati	:	14:00
Toplantı Yeri	:	Zoom Sanal Toplantı
Bulunanlar	:	Prof. Dr. Ebru Kaya, Prof. Dr. Fatma Nevra Seggie, Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Yasemin Sohtorik İlkmen
Bulunmayanlar	:	

İrem Ege Tuğcu
Eğitim Bilimleri

Sayın Araştırmacı,

"Aktivizm Deneyimleriyle Öğrenme ve Eleştirel Farkındalık Geliştirme: Karşılaştırmalı Bir Çalışma" başlıklı projeniz ile ilgili olarak yaptığınız SBB-EAK 2021/63 sayılı başvuru komisyonumuz tarafından 3 Kasım 2021 tarihli toplantıda incelenmiş ve uygun bulunmuştur.

Bu karar tüm üyelerin toplantıya çevrimiçi olarak katılımı ve oybirliği ile alınmıştır. COVID-19 önlemleri kapsamında kurul üyelerinden ıslak imza alınamadığı için bu onay mektubu üye ve raportör olarak Fatma Nevra Seggie tarafından bütün üyeler adına e-imzalanmıştır.

Saygılarımızla, bilgilerinizi rica ederiz.

Prof. Dr. Fatma Nevra SEGGIE
ÜYE

e-imzalıdır
Prof. Dr.Fatma Nevra SEGGIE
Raportör

SOBETİK 23 03.11.2021

Bu belge 5070 sayılı Elektronik İmza Kanununun 5. Maddesi gereğince güvenli elektronik imza ile imzalanmıştır.

APPENDIX B

PARTICIPANT INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Supporting research institution: Boğaziçi University

Name of the Research: Learning and Developing Critical Consciousness Through Activism Experiences: A Comparative Study

Project director: Assistant Professor Rahşan Nazlı Somel

E-mail address: xxxxx@boun.edu.tr

Name of the researcher: İrem Ege Tuğcu

E-mail address: xxxxx@boun.edu.tr

Dear Participant,

We would like to invite you to participate in a scientific research study that we have conducted as part of our master's thesis in the Department of Educational Sciences at Boğaziçi University. Before you make a decision, we would like to inform you about the research. The purpose of this research is to examine what activists have learned from their life experiences and activism practices. This research is conducted by Boğaziçi University's Institute of Social Sciences' master's degree student in Educational Sciences, Irem Ege Tuğcu, under the supervision of Assist. Prof. Rahşan Nazlı Somel.

This research is conducted for scientific purposes, and the confidentiality of participants' information is essential. At this stage of the research, biographical interviews will be conducted with you, information will be gathered about your life stories, and with your permission, the conversation will be recorded. Your personal information will not be asked at any stage of the interview, and the recordings and notes will not be shared with anyone other than the researcher. The research data will

be stored entirely anonymously. The data will be evaluated collectively and will only be used for scientific publications.

In this study, questions will be asked about your life experiences. Sharing experiences may carry the risk of being triggering. If you feel triggered during or after the interview, you can seek free support from the following LGBTI+ psychological support units or apply to the hospitals listed outside the working hours of the associations.

I. SPoD LGBTİ+ Hotline
phone: 0XXX XXX XX XX, e-mail: xxxx
Every weekdays 12.00-18.00

II. Pembe Hayat Life Hotline
phone: 0XXX XXX XX XX, e-mail: xxxx
Every weekdays 12.00-18.00

III. Genç LGBTİ+ Hotline / İzmir
phone: 0XXX XXX XX XX, e-mail: xxxx
Every weekdays 12.00-17.00

IV. Özgür Renkler Association / Bursa
Application for psychological counseling service: xxxx

V. BİZ Association / Antalya
Application for psychological counseling service: xxxx

VI. Ünikuir Association / Ankara
Application for psychological counseling service: xxxx

VII. İstanbul Bakırköy Prof. Mazhar Osman Psychiatry and Neurological Sciences Training and Research Hospital
phone: 0XXX XXX XX XX

VIII. İstanbul Şişli Hamidiye Etfal Training and Research Hospital Psychiatry Clinic
phone: 0XXX XXX XX XX

The participation in this research is entirely voluntary, and there will be no payment. Your expected contribution to the study is to attend the interview. The minimum age for participation is 18 years old, and there is no upper age limit. The interview will last approximately one hour. If you participate in the study, you have the right to withdraw

from the study at any stage without giving any reason. You also have the right to refuse to answer any questions directed to you in this study. If you have any questions about this study, please ask before signing this form. If you have any questions later, you can reach the researcher and project director via e-mail and telephone (office phone number 0XXXXXXXXXX). You can also reach Boğaziçi University Ethics Committee for Master's and Ph.D. Theses in Social Sciences and Humanities (xxxx@boun.edu.tr) about your rights regarding the study

* I have read the above text and fully understand the scope and purpose of the study I am being asked to participate in, as well as my responsibilities as a participant. I have the opportunity to ask questions about the study. I understand that I can withdraw from the study at any time and without any obligation to provide a reason, and that I will not face any negative consequences for doing so.

I understood what was explained to me and what was written above. I have / do not want to receive a copy of this form (in this case the researcher keeps this copy).

☐ I agree to participate in the study.

☐ I agree to the recording of my voice.

Name and Surname:……..

Signature: ……

Date (day / month / year):...../...../.....

APPENDIX C

PARTICIPANT INFORMED CONSENT FORM (TURKISH)

Tez araştırmasını destekleyen kurum: Boğaziçi Üniversitesi

Tezin adı: Aktivizm Deneyimleriyle Öğrenme ve Eleştirel Bilinç Geliştirme: Karşılaştırmalı Bir Çalışma

Tez danışmanı: Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Rahşan Nazlı Somel

E-mail adresi: XXXXX@boun.edu.tr

Araştırmacının adı: İrem Ege Tuğcu

E-mail adresi: XXXXX@boun.edu.tr

Sayın Katılımcı,

Sizi Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Eğitim Bilimleri Bölümü yüksek lisans tez çalışması kapsamında yürüttüğümüz bilimsel araştırmaya katılmaya davet ediyoruz. Kararınızdan önce araştırma hakkında sizi bilgilendirmek istiyoruz. Bu araştırmanın amacı aktivistlerin yaşam deneyimleriyle ve aktivizm pratikleriyle neler öğrendiklerini incelemektir. Bu araştırma Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Eğitim Bilimleri yüksek lisans öğrencisi İrem Ege Tuğcu tarafından ve Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Rahşan Nazlı Somel danışmanlığında yürütülmektedir.

Bu araştırma bilimsel bir amaçla yapılmaktadır ve katılımcı bilgilerinin gizliliği esas tutulmaktadır. Araştırmanın bu aşamasında sizinle biyografik görüşmeler yapılacak, yaşam hikayeleriniz hakkında bilgi alınacak ve görüşmede izniniz alınarak ses kaydı alınacaktır. Görüşmenin hiçbir aşamasında kimlik bilgileriniz sorulmayacak, kayıtlar ve notlar araştırmacılar dışında kimseyle paylaşılmayacaktır. Araştırma verileri tamamen anonim olarak saklanacaktır. Veriler toplu halde değerlendirilecek olup yalnızca bilimsel yayın amacıyla kullanılacaktır.

Bu çalışmada yaşam deneyimlerinize dair sorular sorulacaktır. Deneyim paylaşımının tetikleyici olabilme riski bulunmaktadır. Görüşme sırasında veya sonrasında, deneyimlerinizden tetiklendiğinizi hissederseniz aşağıdaki LGBTİ+ psikolojik destek birimlerinden ücretsiz destek alabilirsiniz veya derneklerin mesai saatleri dışında listedeki hastanelere başvurabilirsiniz.

I. SPoD LGBTİ+ Danışma Hattı
telefon: 0XXX XXX XX XX, e-mail: xxxx
Hafta içi her gün 12.00-18.00

II. Pembe Hayat Yaşam Destek Hattı
telefon: 0XXX XXX XX XX, e-mail: xxxx
Hafta içi her gün 12.00-18.00

III. Genç LGBTİ+ Danışma Hattı / İzmir
telefon: 0XXX XXX XX XX, e-mail: xxxx
Hafta içi her gün 12.00-17.00

IV. Özgür Renkler Derneği / Bursa
Psikolojik danışmanlık hizmeti başvurusu için: xxxx

V. BİZ Derneği / Antalya
Psikolojik danışmanlık hizmeti başvurusu için: xxxx

VI. Ünikuir Derneği / Ankara
Psikolojik danışmanlık hizmeti başvurusu için: xxxx

VII. İstanbul Bakırköy Prof. Mazhar Osman Ruh Sağlığı ve Sinir Hastalıkları Eğitim ve Araştırma Hastanesi
telefon: 0XXX XXX XX XX

VIII. İstanbul Şişli Hamidiye Etfal Eğitim ve Araştırma Hastanesi Psikiyatri Kliniği
telefon: 0XXX XXX XX XX

Bu araştırmaya katılım tamamen gönüllülük esasına dayalıdır ve herhangi bir ödeme yapılmayacaktır. Çalışmanın amacı için sizden beklenen, görüşmeye katılmanızdır. Çalışmaya katılımda alt sınır 18 yaş olup herhangi bir üst sınır bulunmamaktadır. Görüşme yaklaşık bir saat sürecektir. Çalışmaya katıldığınız takdirde çalışmanın herhangi bir aşamasında herhangi bir sebep göstermeden çalışmadan çekilme

hakkına sahipsiniz. Bu çalışmada size yöneltilecek soruları cevaplamama hakkına sahipsiniz.

Bu formu imzalamadan önce, çalışmayla ilgili sorularınız varsa lütfen sorun. Daha sonra sorunuz olursa, proje yürütücüsüne (ofis telefonu 0XXXXXXXXXX) sorabilirsiniz. Araştırmayla ilgili haklarınız konusunda Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Sosyal ve Beşeri Bilimler Yüksek Lisans ve Doktora Tezleri Etik İnceleme Komisyonu'na (SOBETİK) (xxxx@boun.edu.tr) danışabilirsiniz.

*Yukarıdaki metni okudum ve katılmam istenen çalışmanın kapsamını ve amacını, katılımcı olarak üzerime düşen sorumlulukları tamamen anladım. Çalışma hakkında soru sorma imkanına sahibim. Bu çalışmayı istediğim zaman ve herhangi bir neden belirtmek zorunda kalmadan bırakabileceğimi ve bıraktığım takdirde herhangi bir olumsuzluk ile karşılaşmayacağımı anladım.

Bana anlatılanları ve yukarıda yazılanları anladım. Bu formun bir örneğini aldım / almak istemiyorum (bu durumda araştırmacı bu kopyayı saklar).

☐ Çalışmaya katılmayı kabul ediyorum.

☐ Ses kaydı alınmasını kabul ediyorum.

Katılımcı Adı-Soyadı:……..

İmzası:……

Tarih (gün/ay/yıl):...../...../.....

APPENDIX D

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

I. Introduction

- First, I start by thanking the participant for taking part in this research.
- I briefly explain the purpose and content of the study. (e.g., "In my study, I am interested in the life experiences of LGBTI+ individuals and activists.")

II. Biographical narration

- I ask the participant to tell their life story from birth until now. I simply listen to their narrative without any intervention. (e.g., "I kindly request that you tell me about your life from the beginning until now. There are no limitations on our conversation. I would be grateful if you could share your life in detail, and feel free to discuss any topic or provide any details you wish. So, could you please tell me about your life from birth until now?")

III. Follow-up questions and closing

- After the participant finishes their narrative, I ask specific questions that may fall within the scope of the research related to the participant's life. I may ask them to elaborate on their experiences with activism or being part of the LGBTI+ community. (e.g., "You mentioned the first time you went to the X Association/Community/Collective. Could you tell me more about that time, starting from before you went? How did you decide to go, how did you get there, and what were your first impressions?")

APPENDIX E

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL (TURKISH)

I. Giriş kısmı

- Katılımcıya araştırmaya katılım gösterdiği için teşekkür edeceğim.
- Çalışmanın amacını ve içeriğini kısaca anlatacağım. (“Ben çalışmamda LGBTİ+’ların ve aktivistlerin yaşam deneyimleri ile ilgileniyorum.”)

II. Biyografik anlatım

- Katılımcıdan doğumundan bugüne kadar olan yaşam öyküsünü anlatmasını rica edeceğim ve bu bölümde katılımcının anlatısını hiçbir müdahalede bulunmadan sadece dinleyeceğim. (“Hayatınızı başından bugüne kadar anlatmanızı rica ediyorum. Hiçbir zaman sınırımız yok. Doğumuzdan bugüne hayatınızı ayrıntılarıyla anlatırsanız çok sevinirim, dilediğiniz konuya girebilir, dilediğiniz ayrıntıda anlatabilirsiniz. Şimdi, doğumunuzdan bugüne kadar hayatınızı anlatır mısınız?”)

III. Takip soruları ve kapanış

- Katılımcı anlatısını bitirdikten sonra katılımcının hayatına dair araştırmanın kapsamına dahil olabilecek spesifik sorular soracağım. Aktivizmle ilgili veya LGBTİ+ olmakla ilişkili deneyimlerini daha ayrıntılı anlatmasını isteyeceğim. (“İlk defa X Derneğine /Topluluğuna/ Kolektifine gittiğiniz günden bahsettiniz, o dönemi gitmeden öncesinden başlayarak tekrar anlatır mısınız? Nasıl karar verdiniz gitmeye, nasıl gittiniz, ilk izlenimleriniz neler oldu?”)

APPENDIX F

TRANSCRIPTION RULES

(n): Duration in n seconds of a break (e.g., (2) is stopping for 2 seconds.)

(.): Short break

something: Emphasized statement

@(.)@: Short laughing

@(n)@: Laughing taking n seconds

@something@: spoken while laughing

someth-: Interruption of a word

somethin:::g: Extension of a word while talking, the number of ":" matches with the extension length

((coughs)): Non-verbal utterances

(something): Uncertain statements

//mmhh//: Researcher's signal and short expressions while the participant is talking

Adapted from Güvercin (2018, p. 321) and Somel (2019, p. 288)

APPENDIX G

NARRATIONS IN TURKISH

Rose

1. Çalıştığım şirkette internetim oldu. 97 yılında, eee (.) ondan sonra (.) oradan İngilizce kaynaklar vardı tabi çoğunlukla, Türkçe pek bir şey yoktu internette zaten, çok az vardı, eee İngilizce (.) şeyler okumaya başladım. Bilgiler öğrenmeye başladım falan. Ama eee (.) tabi gerçek hayatta LGBTİ olduğunu bildiğim kimse yoktu hala. Eee (.) o şekilde biraz böyle teorik (.) bilgiler falan derken (.) eee(2) bir şekilde- (2) haa bu bu arada birkaç arkadaşıma da açılmaya başladım. Eee (.) bir tanesi şeyden bahsetti, Çiçek'ten. Çiçek Derneği'nin Eee Express dergisinde bir sayfası varmış o zaman. Eee (.) orada gördüğünü falan söyledi. Fakat sonra Express'te o sayfa artık yoktu o sırada. Eee sonra bir şekilde internette bir gün Çiçek'in websitesini buldum. Eee (.) ve orada böyle işte bi o zamanlar Çiçek'in çıkardığı bir dergi vardı, derginin son sayısı da oraya konmuştu. Oradaki yazıları okudum ve Türkiye'den deneyimler falan çok böyle (.) farklı hissettirdi. Yakın hissettim. İyi de hissettim. (satır 20-30)

2. Ondan sonra şeye, Çiçek'in Pazar toplantıları oluyordu Altınkoy'da, oraya gittim. Çok böyle korka korka, çekine çekine. İşte böyle bacaklarım titreye titreye merdivenlerden çıktım. Eee (.) içeri girdim, eee ilk deneyimim şeydi, e ilk düşüncem daha doğrusu, herkes gözüme fiziksel olarak ucube gibi gözüktü. Böyle eee (.) yani (.) algım nasıl çarpılmışsa, çarpıtılmış::sa böyle bir tuhaf (.) geldi her şey. Ondan sonra konuşmalar başladıktan sonra da yerini çok şeye bıraktı (.) hani yıllardır aradığım ailemi buldum gibi bir (.) hisse bıraktı. Ondan sonra da eee (.) işte oradaki arkadaşlarla tanıştım. Hemen böyle ben bir şeyler yapmak istiyorum, gönüllü olmak istiyorum dedim. Tabi daha kendim de bir yandan ee (.) hani (.) açılma sürecim, kendimi anlama sürecim devam ediyordu. (.) Eee ama oradakileri kanlı canlı görmek, onların hani işte (.) kimliklerinden-kimlikleriyle barışık rahat bir şekilde ee hayatlarını yaşadıklarını görmenin çok başka türlü bir etkisi oldu bende. Çok hızlı bir şekilde açıldım. (satır 32-42)

3. Dolayısıyla bir sorgulama süreci ve ee (.) siyasi görüşlerimde de bir gelişme eee (.) değişme oldu. (2) O yüzden Çiçek'in benim hayatımda çok önemli bir yeri var. Eee (.) o andan itibaren de hep (.) böyle çok (.) ait hissettim. O yüzden de bırakamıyorum yani, 24 yıl oldu. Eee (.) yani bundan da memnunum. Çünkü benim orada yaşadığım o şeyi (.) başkalarının da yaşamasına katkıda bulunmak (.) iyi geliyor bana da. (satır 46-50)

4. Bunun dışında eee… Editör olarak da bir örgütlenmenin içindeyim. Editörler Birliği. Önceden beri eee, bu işleri yapıyorum, içerik editörlüğü ve eee (.) orada benim gibi editörlük yapan arkadaşlarımla aslında bu işi eee (.) en başından itibaren eee bir örgütlenme çalışması içindeyim. Eeee (.) şimdi de işte Editörler Topluluğu altında devam ediyor. Çalışmalar biraz hızlandı. Eee bir (.) bir kooperatif eee kuruyoruz, kurmak üzereyiz. Ocak ayında kurulacak resmi olarak. Eee (.) bir grup insan hani biraz böyle (.) editörlerin koşullarının çok (.) iyi olmaması nedeniyle piyasada, biraz (.) hani böyle kâr amaçlı değil ama bir örnek oluşturmak için bu

kooperatifi (.) kuruyoruz. Eee (.) yani ücretler (.) çok düşük ve eee (.) aracı şirketler bu ücretlerin çoğunu alıyor. Yani özellikle şey işte bu içerik ajansları. Eee işte (.) yani atıyorum 100 lira (.) yani o şirketin verdiği 100 liraysa editöre 5 lira geliyor falan gibi bir durum var. Eee (.) bunu değiştirmek için, biraz hani 'başka türlü de olabilir'i göstermek için (.) böyle bir şeye giriştik. Eee (.) biraz son (.) dönemde ilgilendiğim şeylerden biri de bu. Ama tabi Çiçek benim hayatımda çok önemli bir yer tutuyor ve eee (.) hani eee (.) oldukça vaktimi de alıyor. (satır 98-111)

5. Ondan sonra onlarla beraber falan biraz İstanbul'da takıldık. Ve (.) bir tanesi şey demişti, eee "Ata da eşcinselmiş" demişti, ben böyle bi (.) donup kaldım ve 'hayır, öyle bir şey yok, olamaz' falan demiştim. Hani böyle bir yandan da eşcinsel olmak yanlış bir şey değil, ayıp değil falan, bu bilgi olarak var bende ama (.) Atam, Ata'mın eşcinsel olmasını kabul edemem @(.)@. Demek ki hala eee (.) eşcinsellik düze çıkmamış benim kafamda, yani sonradan dönüp bakınca onu anlamıştım hani. Kendi kendime de sormuştum aslında, sorgulamıştım yani 'hani eşcinsellik kötü bir şey değildi, niye Ata'ya yakıştıramadın acaba' falan diye bir sorgulamam olmuştu. (satır 167-174)

6. Eeee, onun dışında yani evet (.) görüşler biraz farklıydı. Eeee (5) yani mesela Kürt arkadaşlarımla tanıştığımda hani (.) eee biraz onların cephesinden görmeye başladım herhalde bazı şeyleri. Bunu şu anda çok net hatırlamıyorum. O kimlerdi onu bile hatırlamıyorum. Ama (.) eee böyle yani (.) yavaş yavaş oldu sanırım çok ani olmasa bile. Yavaş yavaş farklı cephelerden görmeye başladım, farklı hayatlar tanıdım sanırım. Çünkü (.) genelde benim hayatım sanırım biraz korunaklıydı. Yani işte orta sınıf, böyle beyaz, sünni Müslüman Türk. Hani böyle din bizim evde çok önemli değildi eee ama şey anlamında diyorum gelenek görenek olarak falan. Ne bileyim alevi olduğunu bildiğim kimseyi de tanımıyordum, Kürt olduğunu bildiğim kimseyi de tanımıyordum, bu kavramlarla çok da haşır neşir değildim. Hani isim olarak biliyordum elbette ama hani (.) 'nasıl yaşar o insanlar' bunu bilmiyordum pek. Biraz sanırım bunları görerek öğrendim. Eeee (2) farklı fikirler öğrendim. (3) (satır 174-192)

Magnolia

7. Eeee (2) kimliğim hiçbir zaman açık değildi (.) üniversiteye kadar. Ama (.) şöyle bir şey var ki bir kimliğim olduğunun bile farkında değildim ben. Yani benim için her şey çok normaldi. Benim için ben bir insandım, bir çocuktum sadece ve (.) normal olarak hayatıma devam ediyordum. Yani işte hani (.) cinsel çekimimin daha çok erkeklere karşı olduğunu duy:maya başladığımda mesela ilk, işte (.) özellikle soyunma odaları (.) ndan ve beden dersleri ya da dışarda sınıftan birine bakmak işte kesişmek ordan burdan (.) eee kadınlara çok ilgi duymadığımı, kız arkadaşlarıma çok ilgi duymadığımı fark edince (.) böyle bir şok olmuştum (.) nasıl olabilir diye. Eee (.) çünkü tabi ki de kabullenmek falan yoktu (.) çerçeve içerisinde yani bile. Öyle bir şey düşünmüyordum da. (.) Sürekli olarak buna karşı bir reddediş ve 'bunun olması imkânsız' vardı. (.) Bunu şimdilerde biraz şeye de bağlıyorum, insanlar (.) eee aşağılayıcı bir şey olarak görüp de sürekli olarak beni aşağıladığı ve işte beden dersinden tut da sınıfa, her yere kadar sürekli olarak böyle bir baskıya maruz kaldığım için (.) bunun kötü bir şey olduğunu, yani benim feminen olmamın ya da benim kibar olmamın ya da işte (.) ne yapıyorsam çünkü bilmiyordum bile o

zamanlar ne yaptığımı, onların gözüne batan şeyin ne olduğunu. (.) Bunun kötü olduğunu ya da kötü göründüğünü ben onlardan öğrendim. Çünkü (.) eee ((öksürük)) yani çıkıp da kimse şey demiyor, 'aaa ben elimi böyle tutuyorum, neden böyle tutuyorum' demiyor. Bu benim elim ve bu böyle tutuyorum ya da bu benim burnum ve yamuk falan diyorsun kendini gördüğünde, öğrenmeye başladığında. Aynı şekilde (.) cinsel kimliğin ve cinsel yönelim de böyle olduğunu düşünüyorum ben. (satır 81-99)

8. Ama (.) içimdeki hak (.) savunucusu sanırım her zaman oradaydı. Nerden geldiğini, nasıl tanıştığımı bilmiyorum sanırım (.) ya da üzerine hiç düşünmedim. Ne için (.) bulabilmiş değilim. Ama yani sınıfta (.) öğrenciler arasında bir haksızlık olsa dahi yani ilkokul ortaokul zamanında da işte (.) silgi çalmak olsun ya da kalem almak o bu, bunun için bile savaş verdiğimi ya da verebilecek şeyde olduğumu hatırlıyorum, hani (.) bu doğru değil, sen şu an hakkını gasp ediyorsun gibi (.) şeylerle. Eşitlikten sanırım yani. (.) Sürekli olarak içselleştirilmiş bir yerden belki de. Sonrasında işte ortaokuldayken sürekli bu olduğu için eee (.) popülarite tarafından (.) hem o popüler konumunu istediğimden, (2) insanların o ilgi ve sevgisini ulaşmak için sanırım(.), hem de 'ya hayır ben buraya bir şeyler yapmaya gelmek istiyorum, bahçemizde (.) basketbol potasında futbol kaleleri vardı fileleri yoktu, yani herkes ağlıyordu müdüre her şekilde (.) file taktırın lütfen, çok çok sorunlu yani, oynamak istiyoruz falan. Çünkü atıyorsun top kaçıp gidiyor, atıyorsun top girmiyor falan filan gibi şeyler yani. (.) Ben bunun için adaylığımı koydum. (satır 114-127)

9. (.) Şimdi düşündüğümde kulağıma çok acımasız(.)ca geliyor bunu yapmak ve yani (.) hiç böyle bir yerde değilim şu an. Çok daha şiddetsiz bir yaşamla barıştım, öğrendim ve çok daha (.) eeee sağlıklı iletişim kurabiliyorum falan. Ama bunun üzerine çok da düşündüm. (.) Bir de bunun tamamen böyle öz-savunma yerinden (.) ve tamamen (.) 'sen bana bunu hissettirdin, aynısını ben de sana yapabilirim, (.) bu güce tek sahip olan sen değilsin' (.) gibi bir yerden olduğunu anladım. Yine de justify ettiğimi düşünmüyorum. Keşke yine de (.) öyle bir (.) eee sosyal çevreyle büyümeyip de aslında hiç bunu yapmaya bile gerek olmadığını öğrenebildiğim zamanlar olsaydı diyorum. Çünkü bence (.) çok daha güzel olurdu benim mental sağlığım için de (.), çünkü yani bakıyorum ediyorum bunlar öğrenilmiş şeyler, @(.)@ çok daha net şekilde hani. (.) Bir çocuk çıkıp da 'aaa okey, ben senden daha iyiyim, gideyim de birine hemen (.) hatta hava atayım' ya da işte 'üstünlük taslayayım' demiyor bence. (.) Neyse. Biraz kulağa kendimi aklamaya çalışıyormuşum gibi de geldi, bu durumda hala kötü hissediyorum. (.) (179-191)

10. Eeee (.) çalışırken sonuçlar açıklandı. Ve ben iş yerinin bilgisayarından Deniz Üniversitesi'ni kazandığımı gördüm. (.) Ve koştur koştur sokağa çıkıp bağırmaya başladım, müdürüme bağırdım ettim. Annemi aradım ettim direkt. Ya aynı gün ya da birkaç gün sonrasında kulağımı deldirdim. Kulağımı deldirmeyi çok istiyordum ve eee (.) ailem izin vermiyordu. Dövme ve kulak deldirme konusunda böylelerdi. Yine de yaptım (.) bir isyan duruşu olarak. Baya bir konuşmadılar falan ama sonra alıştılar. Üniversiteye başladım (.) ve (2) aktivizm camiasıyla lisede çalıştığımdan kat kat daha fazla üniversitede tanıştım. Lisede aktivizmle kesişimim eee (.) youtube videolarıydı. (.) İstanbul'da yaşanan olaylardı. Gezi Parkı'ndan eee işte daha öncesinde işte 15'te 13'te yaşanan onur yürüyüşlerine kadar. Ama bunlardan ben

kendim de kaçıyorum (.) çünkü kimliğimle kendimle (.) kesiştiğim zorluk yaşadığım dönemler olduğu için. Benim için böyle bir videoları izleyip de böyle işte bu insan gerçekten de var hani (.), neden kendimi kötü hissediyorum bu konuda (.) 'den ibaretti biraz. Ama bunlar bana hep güç veren şeyler oldu. Yani (3) gerçekten de hayata tutunmamı sağlayan şeyler oldu. Devam etmemi ve bir gün o noktaya geleceğimi (.) inandıran şeyler. Çünkü 18 olduktan sonra gideceğim, üniversiteye başlayacağım ve kurtulacağım (.), açık açık yaşayabileceğim, hiç umrumda olmayacak elimi kolumu nereye koyduğum, ne giydiğim, nasıl davrandığım (.) diyordum hep. (.) Üniversiteyle birlikte bu gerçekten de oldu, zaten, eee mühendislikten vazgeçme nedenim de oydu, Deniz Üniversitesi'nin güvenli ortamına girmek istedim. LGBTİ+ Topluluğu var yani (.) oha bu çok iyi bir şey (.) dedim yani gördüğüm andan itibaren. (.) (322-341).

11. Üniversitedeki LGBTİ+ topluluğuyla ilk tanıştığımda çok çekiniyordum, çünkü mimlenmek istememiştim okulda. Eee (.) tanışma çayına ya da bir şeyine gidersem mimleneceğimden emindim. (.) Ve yani hani, aman fotoğraf falan bile çekinilmesin diye düşünüyordum. Ama sonrasında konuşmaya başladım ve oradaki insanlar (.) yani (.) feminen bir sürü erkek görüyorum, atanmışı erkek görüyorum karşımda. Eee (.) ya da maskülen atanmış kadın görüyorum karşımda bir sürü. Bu zamana kadar bana olmaması gerektiği söylenen bir sürü insanın varlığını karşımda birebir olarak görüyorum. Ve yani bu (.) benim için (.) böyle şey gibi (.) bir yerdeydi, (.) 'Siz ne diyorsanız diyin biz buradayız ulan!' falan gibi hani bana yok diyorsun, nasıl ol-ay hadi ben yokum, hadi ben diyelim hata oldum, buradaki 50 kişi bu odadaki 30 kişi de mi hata? Mümkünatı yok, mümkünat:ı yok yani böyle bir şeyin diye çok büyük bir güç verdi. Sonrasında ben direkt toplulukta sorumluluk almak istediğimi, toplantılara katılmak istediğimi falan filan söyledim. Eee (.) tiyatroya devam ettiğim için ilk başta çok zordu, ikinci yıl tiyatroyu bıraktıktan sonra daha fazla aktif olmaya başladım (.) özellikle 2018-19 yılında falan işte. Eee sonrasında eee (.) okuldaki lubunya arkadaş çevremden eee (.) kendi arkadaşlarımla yolum kesiştiği için çok minnettarım. Daha fazla içine girebilmeye başladım ve akran zorbalığı (.) bu ailemi yani (.) ailemi demek istiyorum, seçebildiğim için (.) akran dayanışması haline gelmeye başladı (.) bu güvenli ortam içerisinde. (3) Ve bunu ilk defa yaşıyordum, ilk defa yaşadığım için bana çok daha (.) fazla güç vermeye başladı. Ve ben artık o gücü de aldığım için şey demeye başladım (.), hani artık ben de yapmak istiyorum bir şeyler. Ben de artık gireceğim falan, yani hani (.) ilk zamanlarda özellikle 'ıı tamam ben poster yapabilirim (.) ya da işte ben şuraya gidip şunu yapabilirim' falan derken, (.) sonrasında *'pride ne zaman'* @(.)@ ya da hani 'ne zaman yürüyoruz, (.) video mu çekeceğiz olur, ben çekerim, benim yüzüm gözükebilir sorun değil' falan gibi yere evrilmeye başladı. Çünkü (.) içinde bulunduğum çevrenin desteğiyle birlikte anladım ki (.) ben her zaman insanlardan zarar görmeye ya da taşlanmaya, ona buna devam edeceğim (.) bu kimliğim yüzünden, ama ben (.) içinde bulunduğum çevreyi ve bu işte akranlarımı seçebildiğim için (.) güvende hissettiğim ve mutlu olduğum bir alan oluşturabileceğim de (.) ve bana bunu aktivizm sağlıyor. Bana bunu yaşatabilen şey (.) bir arada olabilmemiz, dayanışma. Ben o yüzden bundan vazgeçmiyorum (.) diyip de (.) beni lisede (.) kurtarmış, lisede bana yardımcı olmuş şeye (.) içine dahil olup ben meşaleyi taşırcasına devam etmek istiyorum dedim bir yerde. (.) Çok mutluyum çok mut-düşününce çok mutlu oluyorum gerçekten. (satır 512-528)

12. Şeyi hatırlıyorum, ilk Martı Topluluğu'na gidişimi de hatırlıyorum, kendimi çok ezik hissetmiştim. Eee (.) çünkü kullanılan terimleri bilmiyorum, konuşulan eee (.) birçok şeyi anlayamıyorum falan. Yani bir kelime kullanılıyor, o kelimeye dair hiçbir bilgi yok. Eee kelime (.) LGBTİ+ (.) lügatında en çok kullanılan kelimelerden biri diyeyim (.) ve yani bunları öğrenmeye başladıkça işte (.) bunun ne olduğunu sorup öğrendikçe aslında insanların (.) hiçbir şeyi bilmediğim için beni aşağılamadığı, aksine bana öğretecek bir ortam oluşturduğunu ve bu bilginin paylaşılmasının değerli olduğunu gösterince (.) ben böyle şey oldum 'Nasıl yani nerdeydiniz siz bu zamana kadar! Hani bu mümkün müydü, hep buna çalıştım hep buna çaba verdim.' Hani işte lisedeyken de arkadaşlarımla, orada burada elimden geldiğince (.) hani bir bilgiyi paylaşmak olsun, o olsun bu olsun falan gibi. O gücü aldıkça da onun kopmasını istemediğim için, o gücün aha katlanarak da artmasını istediğim için (.) koparmadım yolumu bir daha da. (satır 528-539)

Lotus

13. Eeee, Gezi olaylarında (.) ben o döneme kadar çok örgütlü değildim. Ama (2) eee (.) ortaokuldayken İstanbul'a gelmiştim ve Taksim'de yürüyorken böyle, işte biz İstanbul'a gelmiştik. Kadıköy'de yürüyorken annemlere ben iki dakika D&R'a gireceğim diyip Sultanlı'ya, Sultanlı mı hatırlamıyorum Büyüksultanlı'dan Çiçek Derneği'in ofisine gidip gökkuşağı bayraklarını görüp (.) böyle derin bir nefes alıp ailemin yanına geri gittiğimi hatırlıyorum. İstanbul'a ilk geldiğimde de direkt derneklere gitmiştim, Çiçek Derneği ofisi vardı çok aktifti, direkt 'Ben geldim aşkım nerdesin' @(.)@ dercesine oraya girmiştim ofise, ama çok böyle (.) aşırı bağlı bir (.) gönüllü değildim. Arada toplantılara gidiyordum, etkinliklere gidiyordum, insanlarla tanışmaya çalışıyordum ama (.) çok büyük bir sosyal anksiyetem olduğu için (.) insanlarla tanışamıyordum, tanıştığımda garip davranıyordum. Biri bana yürüdüğünde, flörtleştiğinde bununla nasıl başa çıkacağımı bilmiyordum. (.) Çok zordu yani örgütlenememiştim. Gezi olayları başladığında (.) bir anda şey oldu, ben bir anda Gezi Parkı'ndayım, Taksim'deyim, dernek ofisindeyim, örgütlüyüz ve (.) benim örgütlenme deneyimim bile çok kısıtlıyken (.) etraftaki natrans (.) işte cislerin natransheteroların (.) deneyimsizliğiyle karşılaştırıldığında (.) benim örgütlülük, protesto ya da polisle mücadele et- öyle bir ortamda Gezi'de hayatta kalma deneyimim benim oradaki natrans heterolardan daha yüksekti. Dolayısıyla ben bir anda böyle lubunyalarla Gezi'de örgütlenmiş oldum (.) ve etrafımızdaki heterolara, natrans heterolara yardım eder bir anımız da oldu. Bir anda şey oldu, ben örgütlüyüm, etraftakilerden daha örgütlüyüm ve (.) bu örgütlenmenin getirilerini gerçekleştirmeye başladım falan böyle. (.) Haftalar böyle geçti zaten. (satır 5-24)

14. Eee sonra (.) aylar böyle geçmeye başladı. Ben HIV tedavisine başladım. O oldu bu oldu derken (.) ben bilgiye ihtiyacım olduğunu fark ettim. Yani açım, gerçekten bilgiye açım. Öleceğimi sanıyorum ama ölmüyorum, ilaçlar alıyorum, ölmeyeceksin deniyor. Ben neden diye soruyorum (.) falan. Bir üniversitede eğitim oldu bir cinsel sağlık derneğinin, ona katıldım. Ardından oradan biri bana Avrupa'da bir dernekten bahsetti, o derneğin bir yıllık süren bir eğitimi vardı. Ona başvurdum (.) ve bu bir yıllık eğitime katıldım. (satır 30-36)

15. Cin(.)siyet kimliklerini ya da cinsel yönelimlerini, genel olarak kimliklerini (.) istediği gibi ifade eden insanlarla bir araya gelmek beni aşırı güçlendiriyor. İşte (.) makyaj yapan yakın arkadaşlarımla sokakta yürümek ve bunun Belçika sokağı olması (.) benim İstanbul'da deneyimleyemediğim bir şeydi o zamana kadar. Ya da o kadar güvende olduğumuzu bilerek bunları yapmak (.) ve bunun gerçekten güven içinde gerçekleşiyor olması gibi bana çok yabancıydı. Benim böyle kimliğimi de yaşantımı da keşfetme dönemim o eğitim sürecinde biraz daha açıldı, biraz daha derinleşti başka şeyleri deneyimlemeye (.). Başka şeyler görmeye başladım, falan (.) bir yıl böyle devam etti. (satır 49-56)

16. Hani bu şey değildi yani bunun savaşını o zamanlar içimde düşündüm. Benden bu beklendiği için mi bunu yapıyorum, çocukluğumdaki o (.) davranış biçimine geri mi dönüyorum, yoksa şu an ben (.) zaten bu alanda var olmak istiyorum ve bu alanda daha hızlı (.) yürüyebilmek ya da bu insanları da susturabilmek, bu insanların da üstüne çıkabilmek için bir yerde (.) ya da bu tartışmalarda daha fazla kabul görmek için bunu yapmam gerçekten mantıklı dedim. Ve (.) başvurdum, kabul edildim. Sonra işte şimdi yüksek lisans yapıyorum, hatta son dönemim başlayacak birkaç hafta sonra. Sağlık bilimleri üzerine yüksek lisans yapıyorum, istediğimden çok daha quantitative ve çok daha klinik bir yere gitti yüksek lisansım. Ben daha fazla sosyal ve qualitative kalmasını istiyordum ama şu an oldukça klinik ve quantitative'e gidiyor. (.) Biraz da şeyi tekrar deneyimliyorum şu an, çocukken demiştim ya 'ben bu kadar çalışmak istemiyorum ve yapabileceğimi biliyorum ama yapmadım' diye, şu anda da şey (.) çok komplike şeyler yapıyorum ve bunlar aslında çıkış- başlangıcım aktivizmdi (.), bölüm okuma sebebim aktivizmdi. Aktivizmde böyle klinik (.), böyle quantitative değildim. Benim aklımdaki (.) savunuculuk da bu değildi. Ama bir yanda şu anda aldığım eğitim böyle bir yere döndü ve (.) zor ama memnunum. Bu kadar matematik öğrenmek, bu kadar fizik öğrenmek, bu kadar biyoloji öğrenmek istemiyorum deyip sayısalı bırakmıştım (.), şu an hepsini tekrar öğreniyorum. Ama bu sefer isteyerek yapıyorum (.), isteyerek yaptığım için hayatımda hiç olmadığı kadar da başarılıyım aslında eğitimde. (satır 97-115)

17. "Kürt hareketiyle ilk ilişkilenmem de Gezi aynı zamanda benim. Çünkü ben Antalya'da (.) çok beyaz bir Balkan göçmeniydim (.) yani Antalya'da büyüyen. Dolayısıyla çok büyük bir kürt düşmanlığı, kürt korkusu, kürt fobi vardı yani Antalya'da benim büyüdüğüm mahallelerde özellikle. İnsanlar parmakla gösterilirdi Kürt'müş diye ve Kürt'ler Kürt olduklarını kabul etmeyip inkar ederlerdi falan. Ya da şey diyaloğu hatırlıyorum 'Kürt ama doktor' falan hani böyle tanımlamalar hatırlıyorum. Böyle bir mahallede büyüdüm. Ve benim önyargım, işte büyüdüğüm yerde de önyargıların kırıldığı bir yerdeydim Gezi direnişinde ve Taksim Meydanı, Gezi Parkı. Kürt (.) insanlarla örgütleniyordum, birbirimize yardım ediyorduk, beni yerden kaldırıyorlardı, ben onları yerden kaldırıyordum, polisten birlikte kaçıyorduk. Eee, böyle bir etkisi de oldu, bunu ilerleyen süreçlerde çözümledim ben kendi içimde. (satır 151-161)

18. Her neyse, (.) bir sürü aktivist var. Avukatlar, doktorlar, uzun süredir harekette örgütlenmiş aktivistler var ve ben şok içindeyim, sadece insanları izleyip gözlemleyebiliyorum. Konuşamıyorum, soru soramıyorum. (.) Hiçbir şey bilmiyorum çünkü, tam anlamıyla hiçbir şey bilmiyorum. Hani (.) farklı bir harekette örgütlenmiş bir aktivist olarak da gitmedim çünkü ben, 3 ay önce tanı almış,

Türkiye'de de böyle tam anlamıyla örgütlenememiş (.) bir lubunya olarak gittim ben de. Her şeyi orada öğrendim diyebiliriz. Ve bir sürü farklı ülkedeki insan, aktivistlerin ve uzmanların da bir arada olmasıyla (.) Avrupa'daki insan hakları savunuculuğunun ne demek olduğunun ya da nasıl bir-ne demek olduğunu öyle öğrendim ya da bu aktivizm o ülkede nasıl, o ülkede nasıl yürüdüğünü oradan öğrendim. (satır 183-191)

19. O eğitim sürecinde, o bir yıl boyunca benim yaşadığım kimlik değişimi, özgüven kazanımı, (.) kendimi kendim olarak daha fazla yaşamaya başlamam, her ne kadar çok erken yaşta bunu yapmaya savaşını vermiş olsam da (.) bir anda çok güçlendirdi beni. Zaten şeydi yani, 'skills to empower patients' dı. İşte HIV ile yaşayanları ve alanda çalışanları güçlendirme eğitimi gibi bir şeydi eğitimin adı. Ve gerçekten benim için böyle oldu. Eğitimden hala yakın arkadaşlarım var. Ve şey diyorlar yani 'o kadar uğraştık ki seninle, utangaçlığının, sosyal anksiyetenin ya da konuşmaktan korkunun geçmesi için'. Ben eğitimin başlarında hiçbir (.) oturumda soru sormayan, her şeyi öğrenen not alan bir insanken eğitimin sonunda böyle challenge eden, farklı argümanlar ortaya atan, 'bu niye böyle, böyle mi böyle de olamaz mı' diye sorgulamaya başlamış (.) bir insana dönüştüm. Hani gerçekten, utangaç sessiz bir (.) Türkiye'de büyümüş lubunya olarak girdim, böyle Avrupalı aktivistlerle akademik ya da politik tartışmalar yapan ve kabul etmeyen, kendi argümanlarını öne süren, (.) fikirlerini daha iyi ifade etmeye başlamış bir aktivist olarak çıktım bu programdan." (satır 199-211)

20. Zaten şey dedim ya, Fransa'dayken çok uzun süre çalıştığım için şey (.) suçu hissetmeye başlamıştım, ülkede hiçbir şey yapmıyorum. (.) Kendi ülkemde hiçbir şey yapmıyorum. 'Kendi ülkeme gram faydam dokunmuyor' (.) diyordum. Çünkü ülkeden para kazanamıyordum, dolayısıyla hep ülke dışında çalışıyordum bu alanda. Dedim ki yani (.) 'Yani tezimi yazmak için ülkeye dönmem lazım, örgütlenmek, bir zahmet Türkiye'deki harekette de bir işim bir noktam olsun, bir şey yapmış olayım, (.) bir sesim çıksın' dedim. Bu şekilde örgütlendim ABC'yle. Gönüllülük eğitimine ilk girdik. (.) Ben böyle bifobiklik yaptım, transfobiklik yaptım, transfobilik uyguladım. Abuk subuk konuşuyorum yani anladın mı, 25 yaşına gelmişim ama hala örgütlenmemişim, örgütlendiğimde de (.) abuk subuk potlar kırıyorum. Hani benim insanları eğittiğim kadar (.) HIV alanında, HIV konusunda, ekipteki gönüllüler de beni eğitti kendi kimlikleri, ortak mücadelemiz hakkında. Bu süreçte (.) ben ABC içinde çalıştıkça şey oldu, Türkçe aktivizm yapamadığımı fark ettim (.) ve Türkçe yayınlanmış yayınları okumaya başladım. Ekip içindeki insanlarla bazı şeyleri tartışarak kendimi Türkiye'de HIV alanında çalışmaya hazırladım aslında yeteneklerimi ya da bazı (.) noktalarda kendimi böyle geliştirdim. (satır 219-232)

Olive

21. Eeee orada zaten dünyanın aktarımı var hani ebeveyn konumuna koyuyorum, kendi konumuma koyuyorum, eee karşı cins, kendi cinsim bilmem ne falan derken sanıyorum bir senenin sonunda ona kimliğimi açabiliyorum artık. Bu süreçte de hep şey diyorum acaba anlıyor mudur biliyor mudur falan diye, bunu düşünüp orada hikayeyi yönlendirmeye çalışıyorum aslında yani hani işte bir kızdan hoşlandığımdan bahsediyorum öyle bir şey yokken, eee böyle bir şeyden şüphe ediyorsa aksini düşündürtecek olmayan yapay detaylar ortaya atıyorum terapide, bunu zaten bir süre

sonra terapinin hikmeti yani, zamanla yerini gerçekliğe bırakan şeyler bunlar bir süre sonra çünkü bu (.) yani elimde değil, hiçkimsenin elinde değil öyle saklanmıyor yani. Eee orada aslında bu kimliği fark ediyorum, bu kimliği kucaklıyorum. Eee ve o zamana kadar da şey kendi içimde bir homofobi hissediyordum terapinin (.) öncesinde de terapi sürecinde de. İşte bu Güzcan Kılmaz gibi çok daha medyatik eee bireylerden nefret ediyordum, çok öfkeleniyordum. Çünkü şey diyordum yani bunu bu kadar marjinalleştiren şeyler insanlar bunlar, eee böyle olmak zorunda değil, bu kadar feminen davranmak zorunda değiller, bunu bu kadar bağırmak zorunda değiller, onlardan nefret ediyorum diyordum. Şimdi fanıyım yani, o kadar komik birisi ki çok seviyorum onu izlemeyi. Eeee ve şey, zamanla aslında bu içselleştirilmiş homofobinin kendi (.) kimliklerimden bir tanesini kapının dışında bırakmak olduğunu görüp onu içeriye buyur ediyorum. Ve çok daha huzurlu oluyorum, ne Güzcan'dan rahatsız oluyorum ne kendimden ne etrafımda gördüğüm herhangi bir femininiteden. (satır 92-110)

22. Araştırmacı: Teşekkür ederim. Üniversite sürecinde terapiye başladığınız dönem neler olmuştu? O dönemi tekrardan anlatabilmeniz, aklınıza gelen detaylarıyla açabilmeniz mümkün mü?

Olive: Düşüneyim. (.) İlk başta o homofobi çok dikkat çekici geliyor bana. Iıı o geliyor yani aklıma (.). Ne söyleyebilirim bununla ilgili (.), onu çalıştım daha çok, bu nedir, nereden geliyor, eee ne kad- aslında ne kadar zorlayıcı bir şey bu, şey kadar zorlayıcı bir şey susadım diyip kendini suçlamak kadar zorlayıcı bir şey aslında bu homofobiyi de içinde barındırmak. Eee ama, şey konusunda yeterince cesaretli hissedemedim hiçbir zaman ve hala da devam ediyor (.) bunu açık bir şekilde eee toplumsal bir kimlik olarak toplum içerisinde *yaşamak*. Bununla ilgili şu örneği de verebilirim sanırım, üniversitede ilk senede ya da ikinci senede olması lazım, eee işte 'Dünyalar' diye bir belgesel izliyorum orada civcivlerin başına geleni görüyorum ve işte vegan olmaya karar veriyorum falan. Eee uzun süredir de veganım ve şey (2) bunu hiçbir zaman aktivistlik ıiıı üzerinden yaşayamadım, o yüzden hani ben buna veganım demek yerine bitkisel beslenmek mi desem, hani bunun sosyal bir rol olarak üstlenip de eee bunun aktivistliğini yapma isteği yok içimde hiçbir zaman. Yani ben bunu yaşıyorum, eee soranla konuşuyorum mesela. Ama hani şey demek hiçbir zaman gelmiyor yani içimden, çünkü bunu böyle de görmüyorum bir yandan, bu ahlaki bir üstünlük değil, bunu konuşmak isteyenle konuşurum ama konuşmak istemeyenle de 'alo uyanın işte tabağınızda ceset var' demek, hiçbir zaman o aktivistliği üstlenmek içimden gelmemişti. Aynı burada da olduğu gibi yani hani. Eee (5) LGBTİ birey olmakla (.) aktivistlik çok farklı şeyler. Hiçbir zaman aktivistlik tarafında (.) eee değildim. (satır 173-191)

23. Onur yürüyüşünde yapılan müdahaleleri görüyordum. Tamamen serbest çağrışım bu arada, terapiyle ilgili şeyler söylemem gerekiyordu ama kesmiyorum da //yok yok// otosansürsüz, eeee şey yani o onur yürüyüşünde yapılan müdahaleleri görüyordum bir yandan, yine bir bastırma çabası var. Yani şey çok ilginç, mikro ve makro levelda, mikro levelda ben ne yaşıyorsam, kendi bireysel anlamda ne yaşıyorsam (.) bastırmadan daI aslında bunun toplumda, devlet nezdinde ıı inanılmaz sembolik bir karşılığı var. Yani orada da yani bastırma var. Eeee (4) dışta bunu görüp de mi içeriye aldım yoksa insanlar içlerinden bunu dışarıya taşıyıp da bir politika eeee unsuru haline getirdi, bunu zaman zaman düşünüyorum. Eeee hani bu müdahaleleri gördükçe ve eee bunun terörize edildiğini gördükçe ve birazcık da

kendi yapımdan ötürü hiçbir zaman bunun aktivistliğini hissedemedim, yaşayamadım, yaşamıyorum da. Eee ama bu konudaki tutumum da bellidir bir yandan. Yani hani homofobik bir insan gördüğümde eeee ya da ne bileyim (.) şöyle bir deneyim geliyor aklıma, mesela işte 'tamam bu insanların derdini anlıyorum, tamam ifade etsinler ama (.) eee mesela bazı yürüyüşlerde translar işte göğüslerini gösterir ya, işte bunu çok taşkınlık olarak görüyorum' diye bir ifade duyduğumda orada şundan bahsediyorum çünkü bu çok bilmediğiniz bir bilgi oluyor genelde arkadaş çevremde, o bir mücadelenin sonucu, yani o göğüs bir başarı bir kazanç yani bir galibiyet eee ve bunu göstermek madalya sallamaktan farksız, o yüzden gösteriliyor diyip hani bunun anlaşılması üzerinden bildiğim tüm açıklamaları yapıyorum. Ama bunu aktivistliğe dahil edemiyorum açıkçası. (satır 191-209)

Maple

24. İkinci sınıftan itibaren artık çevrem de oluşmaya başladıkça (.) İzmir'e de adapte oldum, İzmir'i çok sevdim. Ve İzmir'de (.) artık (.) kimliğimi de rahatça yaşamaya başladım. (.) Ancak (.) eee oradaki yakın arkadaşlarım da bir süre beni hiç bilmiyorlardı. Ta ki (.) üçüncü sınıfa kadar. Üçüncü (.) sınıfta eee (.) hayatımın aşkıyla (.) tanıştıktan sonra ((gülümsüyor)) artık (.) eee (.) ondan da aldığım güvenle birlikte (.) çevreme açılma kararı aldım, (.) ve sırayla işte arkadaşlarımı teker teker karşıma alıp (.) kendimi açıkladım. Hepsi tabi şaşkınlık yaşadılar başta. Ondan sonra (.) eee tabi ki kabul ettiler. Tabi onlar da pek bilmedikleri için başta garip (.) sorulara maruz kaldım, 'nasıl oluyor (.) iki erkekle, eee nasıl olabilir ki, cinsel ilişki nasıl gerçekleşiyor' gibilerinden. (.) O sorularla uğraşmak da zordu açıkçası, en yakınlarıma kendimi açıklamak (.) her ne kadar (.) beni kabul etseler de (.) hiç bilmedikleri için, hayatlarında (.) benim gibi (.) queer dediğimiz bir insanla da hiç (.) iletişimleri olmadıkları için, sadece (.) sosyal medyadan izledikleri iki Güzcan Kılmaz videosuyla (.) tüm (.) queerleri o kalıba (.) soktukları için (2) açıklamak biraz (.) zordu hani (.) onlara (2) kendimi, bu işin nasıl olduğunu, hani. Ama zamanla onlar da alıştılar (.) adapte oldular. (satır 14-27)

25. Daha (.) yolumuz uzun tabi daha planladığımız, geleceğe dair yapacağımız çok şeyler var. O şu anda çalışıyor, işinden çok memnun değil, ben yüksek lisansı bitirdikten sonra (.) ne yapacağımı hala bilmiyorum. Doktora mı yapsam (2), yeni bir iş mi bulsam. Eğer güzel bir iş bulursam doktorayı (.) yapmaya da bilirim. Bunların kararsızlığını yaşıyorum. Artı özellikle son eee 4-5 yıldır (.) ülkedeki politik olaylardan dolayı ülkenin geldiği hal bizi epey (.) korkutur ee duruma geldi. Hükümetin lgbt bireylere (.) gün geçtikçe artan nefret söylemleri (.) bizi bu ülkede yaşayalım mı yaşamayalım mı, kafamızda soru işaretleri oluşturmaya başladı. Ve bu nedenle ee ben yüksek lisansımı bitirdikten sonra (.) açıkçası yurt dışında da doktora ve iş bakmayı düşünmeye başladım. Aynı zamanda sevgilim de öyle. Eğer iyi fırsatlar olursa yurt dışına 2023 itibariyle (.) gidebiliriz. (satır 40-49)

Spruce

26. Ortaokul (.) eee (.) biraz daha eee şeydi tabi (.) çalkantılıydı, ergenlik sebebiyle. (3) Eeee (.) yani (2) ne hatırlıyorum ortaokuldan diye düşünüyorum. (2) Eeee (.) yani çok (.) böyle hiçbir zaman çok maskülen ya da (.) böyle toplumun

erkek prototipine uyan (.) zevklerim olmadı. O yüzden daha (.) yani böyle (.) sınıfta oturan, kitap okuyan, (.) ne biliyim (.) böyle (.) inek tiplerdendim @yani@ tırnak içinde. Eeee (.) o yüzden yani(.) o dönem eee böyle ufak tefek (.) bullying başlamıştı diyebilirim. Ama hani böyle hani (.) rahatsız edecek eeee (.) ya da ne biliyim (2) okula gitmemi engelleyecek, böyle günlerce ağlayacak, düşündürecek şeyler değildi. Böyle ufak tefek (.) bazen isim takma, bazen (.) böyle (.) eeee (.) işte (.) ilginç yorumlar (.) neden onlarla oynamadığıma ya da işte birlikte olmadığıma dair. (.) Ya da neden işte yakın arkadaşlarımın daha çok kadın-kız olduğuna dair (.) yorumlar. Ama (.) yani öyle çok majör bir şey hatırlamıyorum (.) o kadar (.) beni (.) rahatsız edecek. (satır 2-12)

27. Eee (.) yeni insanlarla tanıştım yine(.) çok sevdiğim, eee yine heralde yaklaşık bir yıl geçtikten sonra, yani 2017 2018 gibi (.) yeni tanıştığım insanlarla ya da eski arkadaşlarıma daha kolay açılabildiğimi hatırlıyorum yönelimim açısından. Yani artık ıım (.) ne biliyim hani… Hatta açıl açılma gerekliliği bile hissetmediğimi hatırlıyorum, ne bileyim. Eee Mesela birisi eee (.), mesela ortak üç beş kişi ee dışarıya çıktığımızda ve eee bir kısmını tanıyıp bir kısmını tanımadığımda benimle ilgili bir konuşmada mesela duruyorum, işte kız arkadaşım olup olmadığını sorduklarında ben yani 'neden kız arkadaşım olduğunu tahmin ediyorsunuz ki belki erk-erkek arkadaşım var, nerden biliyorsunuz ki yönelimi' falan gibi eee(.) cevap(.)lar verebildiğimi ya da daha rahat (.) konuşabildiğimi hatırlıyorum (.) tanımadığım insanlarla bile. Mmm ama geriye dönük açılmak daha zor oldu. Eee (.) en azından benim için, çünkü eee (.) bir yandan @(.)@ şey geliyor insanın aklına yani arkadaşlarımın eeee (.) 'niye söylemedin ki şu zamana kadar yani' gibi ıı bir tepkiyle karşılaşacağımı düşündüm ben hep (gülümsedi), geriye yönelik açılırken. Yani, (.) hani 'nasıl böyle bir şey olur'dan çok yani hani (.) 'bunu-beni bunu söylemeyecek kadar yakın görmüyor musun' gibi arkadaş tepkisiyle karşılaşacağımı düşündüm yani (.) eski arkadaşlarıma açılırken(.). Eee bir kısmıyla da hala yani (.) çok bilmiyorlar yönelimimi. (satır 48-63)

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