

ANALYSIS OF ALTERNATIVE ROCK SCENE THROUGH  
FEMINIST STANDPOINT

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Approval of the Graduate School of Social Sciences

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## ABSTRACT

### ANALYSIS OF ALTERNATIVE ROCK SCENE THROUGH FEMINIST STANDPOINT

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Music, as a social field, is affected by the patriarchal practices which are relevant in society. As an outcome of these practices: the knowledge regarding women's experiences is being transmitted either insufficiently or distorted, which harms the gender equality both in the music scene and society. This study, fundamentally asks an overarching question such as: How do women's experiences get constituted in the alternative rock scene? Additionally, with subquestions study examines that: How do women's experiences contribute to the feminist progress in the scene, which is consisted of consciousness-raising, forming solidarity, and creating politics? With the contribution of Feminist Standpoint Theory, the study aims to reach true knowledge by producing knowledge on women's experiences from women's social positions. Sexist practices exists in the scene such as; assigning rock music and instruments to men, alienation of women, sexual objectification of women, harassment, representing women over men, keeping women's musician identity in the background and putting their sexual identity forward. Women who share their experiences are willing to form solidarity against sexist practices. However, due to the lack of knowledge regarding

each other's experiences and communication, a strong bond of solidarity could not be observed in the scene. Approaches such as staying neutral to the gender issues appear to be weak to ensure feminist progress in the scene while expressing powerful statements that are derived from women's socially 'powerful alternative' positions, appears to be promising on making serious contributions to the feminist progress in the scene.

**Keywords:** Women's Experiences, Musician Women, Alternative Rock Scene, Feminist Progress, Feminist Standpoint Theory

## ÖZ

### FEMİNİST DURUŞ NOKTASI ARACILIĞIYLA ALTERNATİF ROCK ALANI ANALİZİ

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Yüksek Lisans, Toplumsal Cinsiyet ve Kadın Çalışmaları Bölümü

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Toplumdaki cinsiyetçi pratiklerin, diğer sosyal alanlarda da olduğu gibi, müzik alanına da yansıdığı görülmektedir. Bu cinsiyetçi pratiklerin bir çıktısı olarak kadın deneyimlerinin yanlış ve eksik aktarılması, kadınların toplum ve müzik alanı içindeki haklarına zarar vermekte, eşitlik anlayışını bozmaktadır. Bu tez çalışması temel olarak, sosyal söylemler üretmek için elverişli bir müzik alanı olan alternatif rock alanı içinde, Türkiye özelinde, kadın müzisyenlerin toplumsal cinsiyet deneyimlerinin nasıl oluştuğunu sorgulamaktadır. Bu inceleme yürütülürken, kadınların alandaki deneyim paylaşımının: bilinç yükseltme, dayanışma ve politika alt başlıklarından oluşan feminist ilerlemeye nasıl katkıda bulunduğu sorgulanmıştır. Feminist Duruş Kuramı'nın konumlandırılmış bilgi ilkesi benimsenerek; kadınların sosyal konumlarından, kendi deneyimlerine dair bilgi üretimi ile araştırmanın doğru bilgiye ulaşılması amaçlanmıştır. Kadınların deneyimleri, alandaki yaygın cinsiyetçi pratiklerin; rock alanının ve enstrümanların toplumca erkeklere atanması, kadınların ötekileştirilmesi, cinsel objeleştirme, taciz, kadınların temsilinin erkekler üzerinden yapılması, müzisyen kimliklerindense 'kadın' kimliklerinin ön plana çıkarılması gibi

pratiklerden oluştuğunu göstermektedir. Yaşadıkları bu deneyimleri röportajlar, şarkı sözleri, konserler ve sosyal medya paylaşımları gibi alanlarda paylaşmakta olan müzisyen kadınlar, birbirleri ile cinsiyetçi pratikler karşısında dayanışma kurmaya noktasında isteklidir fakat birbirlerinin deneyimlerine dair bilgi ve iletişim eksikliğinin etkisiyle, ciddi bir dayanışma ve politika üretimi görülememektedir. Uluslararası alternatif rock alanı içinde yer alan Riot Grrrl akımı, Pussy Riot grubu ve Alternatif Türk rock alanındaki feminist ilerlemeye dair pratikler birlikte incelendiğinde, toplumsal cinsiyet tartışmalarında nötr pozisyon benimseyen müzisyenler feminist ilerlemeye katkıda bulunma anlamında zayıf kalmakta; kendi sosyal konumlarından, ataerkil düşüncelere karşı ‘güçlü alternatif’ söylemler üreten müzisyenler ise feminist ilerlemeye ciddi anlamda katkıda bulunmaktadır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Kadın Deneyimleri, Müzisyen Kadınlar, Alternatif Rock Alanı, Feminist İlerleme, Feminist Duruş Kuramı

In memory of a dear friend, Lucile

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I was afraid of finding enough numbers of interviewees on this subject, however all of the candidates that I contacted accepted my request for an interview, and they were all eager to transmit their experiences. I would like to express my gratitude to all of the women who shared their experiences with me. I believe, together, we will make a difference.

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## **CHAPTER 1**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 Introduction and Background of the Study**

Music, as a social notion, functions as a mirror to our social relations. As-built by humankind, music is affected and influenced by our social dynamics. Therefore, social and music are inseparable two notions. The notion of music is taken as a social relation in this study. Social issues which exist in our social lives, exist in the scene of music, which is a social sphere as well. Therefore, it is possible to see the social practices of the society in the music scene which is a social sphere as well.

Gendering is a relevant social issue in music as well as it is in the society. Examples of the sexist practices can be seen in the music sphere. Sexist approaches and discriminative values are among the issues women musicians experience in the music scene. In order to understand the structure of the music scene, I have categorized the music into two main categories such as mainstream and alternative music. By this categorization, it is my aim to reflect their social characterizations rather than their technical, musical characterizations. According to this conceptualization, in their social meanings; mainstream music reflects the mainstream social values in the society, while alternative music reflects the criticisms of the mainstream social values which includes sexist values as well. This study focuses on the alternative music from a feminist approach and by this; it is my aim to include feminist interpretations which are placed inside the alternative rock scene which offers a sufficient area to criticize sexist practices in the society and in the music scene.

However alternative music criticizes the mainstream values; in some cases, it might stay inefficient to criticizing sexist practices while criticizing other mainstream values. Therefore, a need for a feminist approach emerges in alternative music as well. In order to comprehend feminist actions effectively, I will be focusing on the alternative rock music scene, which includes significant feminist movements such as Riot Grrrl and Pussy Riot.

In this study, I prefer to use the term 'scene' as an umbrella term to describe the performers, audience, and all of the social activities that involve in the musical sphere. Also, in the literature search, it is seen that the term 'scene' is more coherent with the definitions of rock music than other alternatives such as 'community' or 'world.'

I will be contextualizing the alternative rock music as a scene and associate with Feminist Standpoint Theory, which forms the theoretical basis of the study. While benefiting from the values of Feminist Standpoint Theory, I will be discussing the social relations in the scene in detail from a feminist point of view. A documentary research on women's expressed experiences in rock music and a semi-structured interview will be carried out. Experiences will be derived from interviews, women's statements, lyrics, their performances in the scene.

As an individual who studies in social science and who is interested in alternative rock music and have an amateur background in the scene as well, I have noticed both the feminist thought and some of the activities in the alternative rock scene, show parallelism with each other. I have chosen this subject to emphasize the importance of gender discussions in rock music, and to find the relation between feminist thought and alternative rock scene, and strengthen their socio-feminist bond in theoretical means.

## **1.2 Research Problem of the Study**

The alternative rock scene appears to be lacking women's experiences. Due to the male dominance in the scene, either women's experiences are not being transmitted, or they are transmitted in a distorted way.

As Feminist Standpoint Theory suggests, I will be starting this study with women's experiences to actualize an attempt to fill the gap of the knowledge on women's experiences. Women's experiences will be directly derived from women who are placed in the location of musicians in the alternative rock scene.

As it will be analyzed in detail in the following chapters, I expect to find an alternative feminist standpoint in music as a challenging standpoint to the mainstream genres. In this study, I will be forming my main focus on the issue of gender in rock music. Alternativity, gains a significant position both in the social thought and music scene, with standing against the major discriminations in the social life. I will be researching, especially for the gender analysis in the rock music scene. As taking Feminist Standpoint Theory as my theoretical starting point, women's experience forms the main emphasis of the study. Researches on women's experience in the scene can lead to the realities of inequalities regarding gender. Therefore I have an **overarching research question** to guide my inquiry process: "How do women's experiences get constituted in the alternative rock scene?"

All women in the alternative rock scene might have different experiences; however, I assume that their experiences have common points regarding sexism in the scene. Therefore, in this study, I will be questioning the constitution of women's experiences in the scene. I aim to go into the details of women's experiences and analyze them from a feminist approach.

Within the process of research, I will be questioning the feminist progress in the alternative rock scene. I will be taking the event of experience sharing as an initial step to starting feminist progress in the scene. Based on the assumptions of feminist progress in the music scenes are consisted from the themes of consciousness-raising, forming solidarity and creating politics; these elements will be questioned in these **subquestions**, to analyze the feminist progress in the scene:

- How do women's experiences contribute to the consciousness-raising in the alternative rock scene?
- How do women's experiences contribute to the forming solidarity in the alternative rock scene?

- How do women's experiences contribute to creating politics in the alternative rock scene?

Consciousness-raising, solidarity, and politics were taken as the main themes of the feminist progress in the scene. According to this schematization, consciousness-raising will be taken as the first theme of the feminist progress in the study. Based on the assumption that consciousness-raising is related to awareness, I will be questioning how the event of consciousness-raising is formed within the alternative rock scene and raise awareness. I will be questioning the contributions of women's experiences while analyzing this process.

Forming solidarity is taken as the second theme of feminist progress. The contributions of women's experiences will be analyzed while questioning the validity of solidarity in the alternative rock scene.

Creating politics forms the third theme of feminist progress. Political events in the alternative rock scene will be analyzed from the feminist approach. The current effects of political actions on the feminist progress will be questioned while discussing the women's experiences contributions to political actions.

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

The main objective of the study is to fill the void of the knowledge of women's experiences in the alternative rock scene. With this objective, I aim to increase the number of discussions regarding the gendering subject in the rock scene and make women's issues more visible. By revealing the experiences of women in the scene, I am hoping to change the distorted knowledge regarding women's lives in the scene with the knowledge which are derived from their actual experiences. Harding asserts that according to the Feminist Standpoint Theory; marginalized groups can create knowledge that is not distorted from their privileged positions. (Harding, 1992, p. 56) Starting from this point of view, the undistorted feminist knowledge regarding women's lives in the scene, will be derived from their experiences in their privileged positions.

Social discrimination, sexism, inegalitarian practices are prevalent in our social lives, which are shaped by gendered notions. However, it has been discussed in academia, in politics, and in social lives, it would be beneficial to extend the discussions to the musical sphere in order to benefit from the discussions in the social relations which exist in music. Within the alternative rock, discriminations on multiple social issues have been discussed through the years when discriminative norms are prevailing in the mainstream music genres. It is my intention to strengthen the term **alternativity** with my contribution of **‘powerful alternativity’** conceptualization. According to this conceptualization, the powerful alternativity adds up to the position which individuals embody an alternative position and firmly criticize the mainstream values. Their powerful alternative positions contributes to their criticizations of the social issues. Regarding the subject of this study, gendering issues in the alternative rock scene will be analyzed while interpreting the **‘powerful alternativity’** from the feminist approach.

#### **1.4 Methodology of the Study**

In this study, both international alternative rock scene and Turkish alternative rock scene is analyzed from a feminist approach. Textual sources are used to accomplish a literature research regarding the international alternative rock scene in the chapter **‘Feminist Standpoint Analysis of the Alternative Rock Scene.’** Sources of the literature consist of: song lyrics which are created in the alternative rock scene, articles and books which include interviews of the performers as well as information on women’s activity in the scene, fanzines which are created by women in the scene in order to express their experiences and create politics. Within the literature research document analysis is chosen as a research method.

The chapter **‘Women in the Turkish Alternative Rock Scene’**, which also forms the main research of the study, is based from semi-structured interviews with women in the Turkish alternative rock scene. Due to the insufficient available data regarding the women’s herstory in the Turkish alternative rock scene, I have built my main aim as enriching the data on women’s presence in the scene in Turkey. In order to accomplish it, I have chosen the semi-structured interview method as a qualitative research method. Due to the fact that I will be questioning the gendered relations in the scene, my questions were built around the gender-specific subjects. It is my aim to reveal the

gendered relations in the rock scene through interviews and analyze these relations from a feminist approach.

Interviewees were composed of 10 women who have contributed to the Turkish alternative rock scene as musicians. One of the interviewees is also a music column writer, and all of them are scene members in addition to their musician profiles.

In order to reach the interviewees, I have made announcements on social media and used the snowball technique in social circles. Respondents were eager to contribute to the study; some of the interviewees stated that they have been feeling the lack of information regarding women's presence and the social hardships women go through in the Turkish rock scene, and they are thrilled to be contributing to the study. While using the snowball technique, I have reached 12 women in total. However they stated that they would like to participate, one of them did not return calls, and one of them wasn't available at the time of the interview due to reasons beyond her control. Therefore the research consisted of 10 interviews in total.

In order to protect the privacy of the interviewees, their names were changed with different names which are chosen randomly.

**Table 1.1: Profile of Interviewees**

Name	Age	Location	Years of Interest and Experience Rock Music	Expertise Area	Interested Sub-Genre	Current State of Their Music Careers	Sex Distribution in Their Current or Latest Band	Interview Duration in Min.
Eliz	30	Ankara/ Munich	~16 & 12	Singer Bass Guitar Player	Grunge Classic Rock Post Rock	Took a break & rarely gets together with her band to give concerts	All women	59
Günce	30	Ankara	16 & Amateur experience since high school / 5 years of prof. experience	Singer	Death Metal	Active	Mixed	25
Umut	29	İstanbul	13 & 12	Singer	Hard Rock Blues Rock	Active	All women	74
Fulya	26	İstanbul	11 & 10	Bass Guitar Player	Hard Rock Blues Rock	Active	All women	55
İnci	27	Bursa	15 & 12	Bass Guitar Player	British Heavy Metal Grunge	Took a break	All women	43
İlgin	38	İstanbul / Nordenham	23 & 14	Pianist	The generation of 68 & Death Metal	Currently not active	Solo Pianist	50

**Table 1.1** (Continued)

Aysu	44	İstanbul	Since high school (~28) & More than 20 years	Singer Pianist Music Teacher	Classic Rock Hard Rock Heavy Metal Blues	Active	Mixed	43
Hale	34	Ankara	~21 & ~14 first practice in a band in her early 20's.	Drummer	Metal Punk Rock Hard Rock Classic Rock	Took a break	Mixed	51
Hazal	48	Ankara	Since second year in high school (~30) & Started in high school ~30	Acoustic Guitar Player	Indie Punk Rock	Currently not active	Mixed	78
Filiz	28	Ankara	~15 & ~8	Electronic Guitar Player	Grunge Punk Rock	Currently not active	Mixed	25

Profile analysis of the interviewees consists of the elements such as: age, location, years of interest in rock music, years of experience in rock music, expertise area, interested sub-genre, current state of their music careers, sex distribution in in their current or latest band and interview duration in minutes.

Five of the interviewees reside in İstanbul, four of them reside in Ankara, and one of them reside in Bursa. Eliz (Ankara) and Ilgın (İstanbul) seperetaley stated that they

currently moved to Germany. I interviewed four women musicians who live in Ankara or came to Ankara to play at a concert. Six of the interviews took place with the online video assistance due to the hardships of traveling or the quarantine circumstances in Ankara due to the outbreak of Coronavirus disease.

Age range of the interviewees were composed between 26 to 48 years. It is observed that the majority of the interviewees, six of them were aged between 26 to 30, and four of the interviewees were aged between 34 and 48.

Regarding the period of their relationship with rock music, it is found out that the interviewees had a relation with rock music for; from 11 to 30 years. Five of them stated that they are related to rock music for 11 to 20 years; five of them stated that they are related to it for, from 20 to 30 years.

The years of their experience in rock music as musicians varies between 8 with 30. Some interviewees preferred to split their experience into two categories such as professional and amateur. It is observed that, in some cases their experience can differentiate by their level of professionalism.

When interviewees were asked the relevant subgenre of rock music which they are interested in, these ten subgenres were referred for 24 times. Subgenres' mentioning numbers formed like this: hard rock four times; punk rock three times; grunge three times; classic rock three times; blues three times; death metal two times; post-rock one time; British heavy metal one time; metal one time; the generation of 68 one time; heavy metal one time; indie one time. It is observed that all of the sub-genres they were interested in, were related with alternative rock music or can be defined in alternative rock music as well.

### **1.5 Expected Contributions of the Study**

The potential theoretical, methodological, and practical contributions of the study are revealed in this section. Theoretically, 'alternative' position in music is discussed from a feminist position with the approaches that are adopted from feminist standpoint theory. Methodologically, gendered relations in the music scene were approached with

combining women's experiences in the scene with feminist standpoint theory. Finally, the expected practical contributions of the study will be discussed in this section.

Feminist Standpoint Theory is chosen as theoretical basis for this study. It is predicted that the position of the Feminist Standpoint Theory in social theory and its main principles which are related with women's experience, privileged position, situated knowledge will be beneficial when analyzing women in the alternative rock scene. In addition, the modernist assumptions such as universalism and essentialism are objected by standpoint theorists. Characterizations, needs of musicians, or discriminations they face might differentiate for all musicians. Therefore the objections which are made by standpoint theorists, are also relevant in this study as well. Sexist implementations of social practices are valid for the music scene as well as other social areas. These unfair social implementations can not be explained accurately with the modernist rationality assumption. For instance, looking into modernist universal truth interpretation in music, there is an understanding stating that women can not play guitar as well as men. However, there are many virtuose female guitar players in the alternative rock scene. Universalizing women in the incapability of playing guitar is an instance of sexism in the scene. Although this universal thought is rejected by feminists and other female musicians, the truth of 'facing many sexist approaches within the process of learning how to play the guitar and existing in the scene as a woman' can be achieved from their experiences. The unit of analysis within this study is 'woman in the alternative rock scene.' While abstaining from the essentialist approach to musicians, I will be abstaining from approaching women in the alternative rock scene in an essentialist way as well.

As embracing the Feminist Standpoint, it is accepted in this study, as Hartsock asserts as well, knowledge is socially constituted, and it is produced in specific locations that are shaped by power relations. (N. C. M. Hartsock, 1997, p. 367) Therefore taking women as a unit of analysis might contribute to this study to reveal the truth and knowledge which are not affected by gendered power relations. The feminist standpoint asserts that marginalized groups can create knowledge that is not distorted from their privileged positions. (Harding, 1992, p. 56) Therefore, women in the alternative rock scene might create reliable knowledge without getting affected by power relations.

Dorothy Smith suggests that the researcher should start the feminist standpoint theory with women's everyday practice and experiences. (Smith, 1997, p. 395) The lack of expressions of women's everyday practice and experiences might lead to the distortion of the knowledge when they are expressed by men in the mainstream rock scene. The distorted knowledge might produce gendered notions in an endless loop. Therefore it is my aim to examine women's own experiences and their own definitions regarding their position in the scene.

Embracing the Standpoint Theory and spanning the boundaries of it, I will benefit from the notion of multiplicity and take every single experience in a unique way. However, I expect to find some central notions at the end of the study, such as the consequences of sexist, inequalitarian, unjust systems that women face in the scene, although they have unique experiences. Also, the notion of 'self' is taken as related to social experience and cultural context within this study. Everyday experiences and perspective of women in the scene will define my approach.

Women in the alternative rock scene form the research group of the study. Their gendered experiences will be researched in order to reach the undistorted knowledge regarding the social issues and women's status in the scene. The alternative rock scene is chosen as a research area due to the freedom of speech; it serves to scene members. 'Alternative' is taken as a social term, which adds up to any rock subgenre which objects the gendered social codes of the society which are embraced by the mainstream music as well.

Methodologically, I expect to reach the feminist knowledge from the informations which are derived from interviews. It is aimed to ensure a contribution to the feminist progress in the rock scene with combining interviewees' experiences with feminist theory and forming a feminist consciousness within the rock scene.

Additionally, I pursue to comprehend the relation between feminist practices in music and feminist standpoint theory. Conceptualizing the feminist alternativity in the alternative rock music contributes to our realization of the significance of 'powerful alternativity' in music and its benefits to music, social thought, and, eventually, women's lives. which forms the expected practical contributions of the study.

## **1.6 Structure of the Thesis**

This thesis is composed of six main chapters. The study starts with the ‘Introduction’ chapter. In the first chapter, the following sections will be included; the background of the study, research problem of the study, objectives of the study, methodology of the study, expected contributions of the study, and lastly, the structure of the thesis. In this chapter, I will seek to introduce the central issue of the thesis. In addition to explaining my motivation to pick the subject of my thesis, I will be stating the main research problems and sub-research problems of the study. It is my aim to ensure my study to reveal contributions to social theory and music scene, regarding the theory, methodology, and practice. Therefore I seek to clarify the expected contributions within this chapter. And lastly, within this section, the structure of the thesis is explained in detail.

In chapter two, ‘Social Theory and Feminist Standpoint Theory,’ Modernity, its methods, and assumptions will be discussed in detail. Social thought will be discussed in three main categories, such as modernity, contemporary modernity, postmodernity. Their methods and assumptions will be compared with each other. Due to the Feminist Standpoint Theory is chosen as the theoretical base of the study, contemporary modernity, which Feminist Standpoint Theory place itself under, will be embraced in this study as well. Assertions of the theory regarding issues such as; the question of truth, power relations, located and situated knowledge, objectivity question, privileged position, strong objectivity, achievement through struggle will be discussed in detail.

Chapter three, ‘Music and Alternative Rock Scene,’ starts with the ‘Music From a Sociological Viewpoint. In this section, music will be discussed as a social relation. This section will be functioning as an introduction to music in terms of its social functionality and impact. Conceptualization of ‘The Mainstream Music’ will be created in the following section, which has two sub-sections, such as ‘Mainstream Music and Subculture’ and ‘Analysis of Mainstream Music.’ Next section ‘Women Within Mainstream Music’ includes women’s position in the mainstream music scene and reflects the hardships of existing as women in mainstream music, which embodies gendered social relations. Lastly, in the section ‘Rock Music’, the genre will be briefly introduced and discussed. The chapter will continue with the definition of alternative

music and introduction to the alternative rock scene, including its characteristics. In the following section, the paradox of alternative rock will be discussed. And lastly, the discourse and social functionality of alternative rock scene will be discussed in the chapter.

Chapter four, 'Feminist Standpoint Analysis of the Alternative Rock Scene,' aims to connect the theory with the alternative rock scene. Firstly two timeframes will be discussed, such as 'Feminism in Early Alternative Rock Scene' and 'Feminism in the Recent Alternative Rock Scene.' These sections will be followed by 'Subversion of the Sexist Practices in the Alternative Rock Scene,' which is a feminist method that is used for forming politics and feminist standpoints within the alternative rock. Then functionality of feminist practices in the scene will be discussed in three sub-headings: consciousness raising, solidarity and politics. Later on, the cases of Riot Grrrl and Pussy Riot will be discussed in other sections. Chapter four will come to a conclusion with 'Feminist Analysis of the Alternative Rock Scene.'

Chapter five, 'Feminist Standpoint Analysis of the Turkish Alternative Rock Scene,' includes a brief introduction to the Turkish alternative rock scene from the feminist approach. It continues with the analysis of the interviews carried out with ten professionals in the scene. In conclusion, 'Concluding Remarks' will be shared at the end of the chapter.

Chapter six, 'Conclusion,' forms the last chapter of the study. 'Introduction' will be providing a brief analysis of the outcomes and evaluation of the study. Research contributions such as methodological, theoretical, and practical contributions will be placed in the following sections. Later on, the limitations of the study will be explained. And lastly, recommendations for future study will be shared in the last section.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **SOCIAL THEORY AND FEMINIST STANDPOINT THEORY**

Feminist Standpoint theory is taken as a theoretical basis for this study. In this chapter, modernity, contemporary modernity and post modernity will be briefly analyzed in order to comprehend the principles, background and position of the Feminist Standpoint Theory. This part will be followed by a detailed analysis of the Feminist Standpoint Theory and its theoretical principles, which is adapted to the subject of this study.

#### **2.1 Modernity and Methods & Assumptions of the Modernity**

Since the beginning of the social thought, social scientists have been working on their theories, grounding them on theoretical paradigms. These paradigms include social, historical, and cultural developments. One of the main paradigms, modernism, emerge when the age of reason and enlightenment was starting. The timeline of modernism differs by the scholar who defines the modernism in their work. Yet, modernity often categorized in the timeline that starts from the nineteenth century to the 1920s. (Suárez Sánchez, 1997, p. 11)

As taken as social and cultural development in the society, modernism adds up to a meta paradigm with methodological and theoretical tools. (Kravchenko, 2008, p. 1) Modernity sociologists mainly focused on subjects such as social class, rationality, capitalism, binary gender notion, family, mass production, community life, scientific thought. In addition to these subjects, reality, knowledge, and truth constitute the philosophical base of the modernity of sociology.

When doing research based on the theory of modernism, essential steps that should be taken are; choosing an ontology, epistemology, and methodology. Modernity use; ontology, epistemology, and methodology within the process of searching for the notion of truth and questioning knowledge and reality. According to Maykut and Morehouse:

Ontological assumptions concern questions about the nature of reality. One key ontological question is: What is the nature of reality? Epistemological assumptions concern the origins of knowledge. What is the relationship between the knower and the known? What role do values play in understanding? are important epistemological questions (Maykut & Morehouse, 2002, p. 4)

Ontology questions that if there is a thing as reality and existence, and philosophers dissent according to their answers. And methodology, in basic terms, answers to 'how to do philosophy?', Spirkin informs us: "A methodology is a system of principles and general ways of organizing and structuring theoretical and practical activity, and also the theory of this system." (Spirkin & Cymbala, 1983)

The main assumptions that modernity creates must be followed in a modernity based research or study. These assumptions are; essentialism, universalism, and rationalism. Essentialism, prioritize the true essence. Diane Fuss explains essentialism: "Essentialism is most commonly understood as a belief in the real, true essence of things, the invariable and fixed properties which define the 'whatness' of a given entity." (Fuss, 1989) According to essentialists, the true essence can not be changeable, reducible. Essence exists and remains constant.

Some ideas, principles, the notion of truth are taken as universal within the Modern theory. According to universalism, there is one fundamental truth. In order to assert some ideas in modern theory, it is assumed that the idea is universal. Therefore it can be applied to all individuals in all circumstances.

Opinions and actions are based on rationality in Modern thought. According to the thought of modernism, reason and knowledge transcends an individual's existential, historical, and cultural contexts. Rationality is an essential part of the thought.

Scientific and rational knowledge is superior to emotional other types of knowledge. 'Universal' reason has the power to solve all conflicts.

Also, modernist thought takes gender as a binary notion. Taking the gender subject as a binary position such as femininity and masculinity, alienated the notions which can not be simply identified in these two specifications. However, modernity is concerned about Ignoring the categories outside of this classification also adds up to ignoring subjective self-identification. Therefore, modernism has a problematic approach to gender, and it is clear that many issues need to be worked on and solved.

In the light of these pieces of information, modern thought takes conceptualization as a base of thought system. It proceeds as a theoretical thought. Diving into the relations of concepts forms the basis of the thought. Modern thought constitutes covariational, a causal relation between concepts. According to Goldman's article "A Causal Theory of Knowing," in order to reach the empirical knowledge, we must examine a variety of causal connections. (Goldman, 1967) With the essential position, the modernist thought analyzes the causal relationship between concepts in order to reach true knowledge. It asserts that without the causal relation, it is impossible to reach the truth. Social structure can be meaningful in social institutions. Therefore subjective acts are also meaningful within the social institutions according to this thought. True knowledge can be reached with essentialism, rationalism, and universalism, with the help of the scientific method. Because there is an acceptance of a 'universal truth' notion, it supposes that the 'universal truth' is valid and stable for every single individual regardless of their historical, cultural, ethnic, religious backgrounds. Modernity takes the individual as a unit of analysis. 'Individual' is taken as a holistic and unified notion due to universalism. Language is based on a dichotomic system which is called signifier and signified. Also, there is a dichotomy within the relational system of social structure and social institutions.

## **2.2 Contemporary Modernity, Post Modernity and the Critiques of Modernity**

Scholars who produce thoughts and theories while taking modernist assumptions and methods as a basis showed that they hardly build a consensus with modernity at some specific points. However, they mostly accept the vast majority of modernity; they felt the need to clarify some points according to their thinking system, which criticizes

modernity. The Feminist Standpoint Theory, which I build my thesis on, derives from contemporary modernity. Contemporary Modernity has a wide range of thoughts that differ by the scholars. Yet, the point of criticizing modernity while accepting many assumptions of modernity remains valid for all of the contemporary modernists.

However, contemporary modernity does not deny the modernity completely; postmodernity has an approach that firmly rejects the modernist assumptions and methods. Ferraris, explains the starting point of philosophical postmodernism as the consequence of the dissolution of modernist projects instead of criticism or reaction to modernism. (Ferraris, 1988) While modernity takes reason and science as a basis of the thought, postmodernity is seen to assault modernity by rejecting the validity of reason thought of modernity and scientific method. Kuntz clarifies this as:

The postmodernist school of thought arose to question these assumptions, postulating that claims about the existence of a real-world—the knowledge of which is attainable as objective truth—have only been relevant in Western civilization since the Enlightenment. In recent decades, the movement has begun to question the validity of claims of scientific truth, whether based on their belonging to larger cultural frames or through heavy criticism of the scientific method. (Kuntz, 2012)

Also, Flax criticizing modernity for taking science as a paradigm for all true knowledge. According to her, modernity assumes that the right use of reason is socially beneficial, and it steered scientists into using the rules of reason. (Flax, 1987) Modernity did not take any method that exists outside the rational discourse. In his article, Kuntz claims that the central goal of science is defining what is true and what is false. (Kuntz, 2012) In the light of the assumptions of modernity, these assertions of being ‘true or false’ is also universal. Hence, for instance, the modernist claim of ‘truth’ must be valid for all cultures. Postmodernism denies this validity. Instead, it suggests that there are multiple truths. Different types of truths exist in different cultural contexts. The concept of signifier and signified is denied within the postmodern thought. Instead, there are power/knowledge relations. Ferraris asserts that postmodern scholars such as Adorno, Foucault, and Derrida suggest using

deconstruction, which is a criticism of practical reason that negates the claims of reason notion of modernity. (Ferraris, 1988)

Modernity takes language as a transparent notion. It assumes that language does not construct objects. (Flax, 1987) But according to postmodernity, objects are constructed by language or social. Therefore language is not transparent but fluid and highly correlated with power and knowledge relations.

Also, the modern ‘the self-notion,’ which is accepted to be stable and coherent, is sharply criticized. (Flax, 1987) Rather than a stable self, it is related to social experience and cultural context.

Contemporary and postmodern thought criticizes the concept of gender within the modern understanding. While the large part of the critiques is concerned about the binary notion of gender, other critiques steered into the notions of truth, knowledge, self, power, and language. According to Jane Flax, these notions are taken for granted in the modernity and with the postmodern deconstructive feminist approach aspires to distance us from this system of thought. (Flax, 1987) Contemporary and postmodernism involved non-binary genders into their description, and their feminism consciousness goes further than only ‘women.’

It is my aim to locate this study within the contemporary thought due to its rightful criticizations directed to modern thought. In addition to this, within the contemporary thought, Feminist Standpoint Theory is applied to this study. Profiting from contemporary thought with the feminist perspective is expected to be beneficial to this study.

### **2.3 Feminist Standpoint Theory**

The Feminist Standpoint Theory dates back to 1983 when Nancy Hartsock published “Money, Sex, and Power: Toward a Feminist Historical Materialism.” (N. Hartsock, 1983b) Hartsock is one of the leading standpoint theorists who took the initiative to build the theory. However, many philosophical issues need to be solved within the modern theory as it is explained beforehand, many issues concern the notion of gender within the modernism as well. Philosophical and gender issues were stimulants at the start of the theory. While the modernity put the scientific method forward, the lack of

everyday experience, and the perspective of women, arose. Ignoring the discussion of women's self experiences and women's right to explain their social position and relations themselves led to frustration in the social world. Thus, theorists created the feminist perspective located within the contemporary modernity. Hekman describes a summary of the background of the theory as:

Nancy Hartsock's essay in Sandra Harding and Merrill Hintikka's pathbreaking book *Discovering Reality* (1983) brought the concept to a philosophical audience. In a number of influential publications, Dorothy Smith developed a sociological method from the "standpoint of women." Harding featured feminist standpoint theory in her two important books on science and feminism. Patricia Hill Collins articulated a specifically black feminist standpoint. (Hekman, 1997, p. 341)

They argue that the theory is not only a perspective but a discussion of the experience which is highly related to women's socio-historical position and collective struggle within the social world. According to Harding, struggle exists in both science and politics. (Harding, 2004)

In addition to this, Ramazanoğlu and Holland conceptualize the standpoint theory as an area of linking feminist knowledge and multiple experiences of women with gendered social relations. (Ramazanoğlu & Holland, 2002, p. 2) When discussing the theory, the constant main argument is, the theory takes women's experience as a fundamental data. As taking women's experiences as a starting point, the theory investigates the reality of gender relations. Feminist analysis and feminist methods constitute a feminist consciousness and reveal factors of gender inequality which are invisible to other theorists who research about other dimensions of sociology. Sociological researches and studies which involve women as a subject do not result in trustworthy outcomes when the researchers rule out the issue of gender. In order to ensure credible outcomes, feminist analysis with the feminist method must be accomplished.

There are three focal points of feminist standpoint theory; method, truth, and epistemology. The main aim of theory is to use the feminist method to analyze reality in order to justify the truth claims of feminism. In that, there is a lack of women's

everyday experience within the modern theory, according to theory, social institutions that shape everyday life is analyzed by the feminist method to link everyday life of women to theory. It is the main theory in this thesis due to the currency of its importance on the improvement of feminist theory and politics.

Hartsock theorizes the basis of standpoint according to Marxist theories. Looking into the standpoint from the Marxist lens, she raises questions about three main topics:

What is nature of the subject, what is the nature of the knowledge produced by this subject, what kind of privilege can one claim for knowledge that arises from any particular social location, with the understanding that social locations are fundamentally structured by power relations? (N. C. M. Hartsock, 1997, p. 367)

Questioning the nature of the subject, Hartsock criticizes Marx in that the lack of the diversity of oppressions by merely taking one kind of oppression: class. However, gender oppression is one of the main matters of criticism of any kind of feminists; it is not sufficient that only speaking about one kind of oppression while categorizing all women into one holistic category. Hartsock asserts that she fell into a similar mistake as Marx by missing the multiplicity notion. (N. C. M. Hartsock, 1997, p.368) Embracing the importance of the differences among women is necessary for an adequate reading of the standpoint theory.

### **2.3.1 Question of Truth**

Within the age of enlightenment, the truth was asserted to be an autonomous notion, which can not be linked with human consciousness. It was accepted as universal. Therefore the notion of truth is valid for every individual and group regardless of their backgrounds. Many truth definitions were made by scholars since the Enlightenment, starting from the definitions of absolute truth, which asserts that cumulative and archimedean point, ending with absolute relativism, which includes multiple truths and incommensurate validity. Inbetween intermediate truth definitions were made, such as contingent and socially structured truth. (Ramazanoğlu & Holland, 2002, p. 4)

Hartsock describes the modernist 'truth' as a notion that must be discovered from nowhere. She criticizes this modernist version of truth and interprets the truth with a Marxist understanding. In her theorization, she approaches notions of truth, knowledge, and power relations engaged with each other.

If truth is the reality and power of ideas in action, then knowledge and truth must be treated in a much more historically specific way, and attention should be devoted to the social, historical, and ultimately conventional form of all definitions of truth. (N. C. M. Hartsock, 1997, p. 370)

With this approach, she basically denies the universality of truth and recognizes the diverse basis of the notion of truth. Ramazanoğlu and Holland uses Haraway's 'greasy pole' metaphor and states that:

The pursuit of truth is slippery because feminist knowledge claims cannot directly specify connections to reality, and 'truths' are socially constituted within male-dominated disciplines and academies. The grease persists, because there are no absolute solutions. (Haraway, 1991; Ramazanoğlu & Holland, 2002, p. 3)

Connecting knowledge and reality is a methodological discussion that differs by the scholar within the social theory. Modernist truth understanding asserts that the actual knowledge of an external reality is autonomous from its researcher; this thought is considered as God's eye view by scholars. Within this thought, the researcher/observer is entirely independent of the observed event. On the other hand, within the postmodernist thought, social reality is constructed in language. Knowing subjects are deconstructed and diverse, and there are multiple truth definitions. Within the continuum of modernity and postmodernity, Feminist Standpoint Theory place itself in between and researchers in order to reach valid knowledge and place themselves in relation to the observed subjects. Harding's term 'strong objectivity' claims to reach the truths that are partial and less corrupted. Harding criticizes the relativist postmodernism stating that it does not express the real power relations. (Harding, 1995; Ramazanoğlu & Holland, 2002, p. 4)

In light of these thoughts, the theory describes truth as a notion that discovered from the standpoint of women rather than nowhere -as it is in modernist theory. It also criticizes the relativist approach and challenges the idea of 'knowing feminist.' The description of a 'feminist' is formed as socially constituted and contradictory to the modernist characterization of knowing self. (Ramazanoğlu & Holland, 2002, p. 6) Feminists substantiate the action of knowing from their specific standpoints, and the knowledge composed of this is always partial.

In addition to these, Hartsock also stands against making a fixed, unchangeable, solid definitions of truth. (N. C. M. Hartsock, 1997, p. 371) Creating the definition of truth, which is valid for all, rings the alarm bells of universalist assumptions.

### **2.3.2 Power Relations**

According to her reading of Marx, the effort to understand some notions is to change them. She asserts that: "the point of understanding power relations is to change them."(N. C. M. Hartsock, 1997, p. 370) In order to make a simple definition of Feminist Standpoint Theory power relations, it is possible to state that they approach this subject dividing society into two categorizations, such as the dominant and the dominated or oppressor and the oppressed. The theory mainly takes power as a relation between these agents. Standpoint theorists assert that the actual experiences of social actors must form the sociological method and the concepts. From this point, they conceptualize the oppressed/dominated position as the privileged position, which they assert the knowledge constituted from this position leads us to truth.

Kristina Rolin, conceptualizes the notion of power within the the theory, taking Amy Allen's thoughts on power as a basis. She states that power can be understood as an individual's or groups' ability to act despite other elements obstacles. (their power) (Allen, 1998, p. 34) Rolin, in that sense, takes power as a relational concept within the system of oppressor/oppressed. However, power is not taken as an active agent to create a direct domination; it can be an indirect agent/ a tool to create domination as a relational concept. Considering that relevant evidence must be used in the process of reaching the truth and knowledge, Rolin asserts that the relevant evidence can be concealed or distorted by using power as a tool. (Rolin, 2009, p. 219)

The question of how can power functions as a concealing or distorting evidence is interpreted in two ideas by Rollin. First, she states that intimidating the agents with using power as a tool in hierarchical relations suppresses the evidences. The area of this intimidating relations occur may be an organization that had chain commands such as corporates and army. In addition to these instances that Rolin made, academic platforms or even NGO's and civil society organizations can be included within this circle of platforms. Fear of losing a job or losing seniority can prevent one from the submitting real evidence. The second, power relations can be harmful when it affects the trust between the researcher and contributor. According to Rollin, trust must be ensured between the researcher and the contributor. When the trust is ensured, the researcher can access the real evidences. (Rolin, 2009, p. 222)

### **2.3.3 All Knowledge is Located and Situated, Objectivity Question**

In this suggestion, Feminist Standpoint Theory interrogates the notion of **objectivity**. While postmodern feminists, such as Jane Flax (1990), chooses to reject the modernist definition of science, objectivity, and truth, Feminist Standpoint Theorists embrace a challenge against these notions.

Haraway created a metaphor of 'climbing the greasy pole' which stands for the aim of reaching a valid knowledge using a reliable objectivity, which in the modernist sense of objectivity, seems impossible. Holding on to both ends also stands for the dichotomy of modernity, which creates hardships within the process. According to her, feminists aim to reach applicable and reliable accounts of things. (Haraway, 1988, p. 580)

Feminist Standpoint Theory is fundamentally based on the assertion that **knowledge** is linked with the **social position**. Social, economic, cultural, political, educational factors can be counted as components of social class. According to Feminist Standpoint theorists, knowledge can not be inseparable from these factors; as a matter of fact, it is composed of these factors. Therefore, as a result of knowledge is linked with social position, 'social situatedness' comes into existence in theory. It argues that knowledge can only be understood and interpreted by looking into the social location

of the individual who created it. By embracing the linear rate between the multiplicity of social location, it is rightful to state that there are multiple standpoints as well. This process results with multiple knowledges. This method was beneficial to women to understand the social relations and practice and realize their political goals.

Stoetzler and Yuval-Davis assert that situatedness of knowing subject has been used in two different ways in the theory:

The first, claims that a specific social situatedness endows the subject with a privileged access to truth; the other, closer to the theoretical view expressed in this article, reject such a position and views the process of approximating the truth as part of a dialogical relationship among subjects who are differentially situated. (Stoetzler and Yuval-Davis 2002, p.315)

In this thesis, I will be embracing the **social situatedness** and **located knowledge**. Within the media, music scenes, and social life, women's experiences were expressed by men due to male domination. However, the experiences, social relations, social practices which transferred by other individuals do not turn out to be the actual truth. Every single person can only transfer their truths due to multi-variational social, economic, religious, ethnic circumstances.

As Susan Hekman discusses Hartsock's ideas asserting that activity equals to epistemology and women and men create their realities through their different activities and experiences(Hekman, 1997, p.343), the discussion should be gone further and discussed that is it correct to take women as one category. Coming from different cultural, economic, social backgrounds, every individual creates a unique knowledge and the notion of truth. In order, no not to clear away between the search of truths, it may be beneficial to look into the relations between standpoints.

#### **2.3.4 Privileged Position, Strong Objectivity, and Strong Reflexivity**

Individuals or groups of people who are in the process of searching for the truth or looking into relations of subjects who are differentially situated establishes the **epistemic privilege** by expressing their experiences or assertions from their standpoints. Donna Haraway asserts that: "Only partial perspective promises

objective vision” (Haraway, 1988, p.583) She links situated knowledge and limited location with the term ‘feminist objectivity.’

Harding and Hartsock make a strong emphasis on women’s experiences and everyday practices, yet they claim that the epistemic privilege of women stems more from their political standpoint. Grasswick explains this as:

Hartsock (1983) and Harding (1986) insist that the Marxist-inspired arguments imply that although the feminist standpoint is deeply connected to the lives of women, the epistemically privileged nature of the feminist standpoint stems from active political engagement in the feminist cause, and does not just represent the perspective of women. Thus, a certain kind of political activity is required in order to appreciate the situation of women or other oppressed groups. (Grasswick, 2018)

This thought proposes that women who are socially or politically marginalized, can become the source of epistemic privilege, and they provide productive starting points for feminist research. With this method, they can create less partial and distorted reality for not only women’s lives but all of the social order. (Harding, 1992, p. 56)

However, another standpoint theorist, Dorothy Smith, objects to the notion of privileged position, claiming that it has universalist values. Smith asserts that:

It has seemed to me that in the women's movement, some women have wanted to be able to go directly from what we know by virtue of how we participate in social relations to claims to knowledge at the level of a universalizing discourse. The critique of "essentialism" aims at this move. Standpoint theory is often understood, as I think Hekman understands it, as foundational to knowledge claims of this kind according to which women's experience is privileged. I do not make this claim. Rather, taking women's standpoint and beginning in experience gives access to a knowledge of what is tacit, known in the doing, and often not yet discursively appropriated. (Smith, 1997, p. 395)

Avoiding universalist claims with confining the theory with women’s everyday practice and experiences, Smith suggests starting the theory with them.

Another point of view is submitted by Kristina Rolin, stating that sometimes Feminist Standpoint Theory includes the assumption of essentialism and the assumption of automatic epistemic privilege, which is a result of a misguided interpretation of the theory. (Rolin, 2009, p. 218) Accepting that all women have the same experience of being a woman, sharing the same everyday experiences and perceptions, cause the theory to include essentialist values. Identifying women in the subordinate group and assessing their experiences as the same while ignoring their different social backgrounds, therefore accepting that there is an automatic epistemic privilege, is properly an instance of essentialism.

Theorists, whether or not to build a consensus on accepting the privileged position's vitalism, they all embrace that starting with them is beneficial to the theory.

According to Harding, the dominant scientific explanations of nature and social life has sexist and androcentric bias. (Harding, 1992, p.437) Therefore, for feminist standpoint theorists, it is not possible to accept the point of view of modernist scientists, which they call '**objectivity.**' Instead of this frequently used objectivity term, she suggests using '**strong objectivity.**' (Harding, 2004, p.458)

According to the conceptualization of Sandra Harding; Objectivity defined the image of women as emotional, less impartial, less capable of objective judgments, etc. (Harding, 1992, p. 332) Modernist assumptions within the dichotomic social thought system placed women in this unequal image, at this point, feminist analysis was needed to solve this problematic definition. On the other hand, relativism is identified with objectivism's other/subjectivism. (Harding, 1992, p. 340) This approach strongly rejects all assumptions of objectivism. According to relativism, there are no valid truths that include all people, and it puts a strong emphasis on the importance of individual choices. Strong objectivity approach, which is accepted by standpoint theorists, denies the traditional objectivity however they do not accept the relativist, subjectivist approach either. The theory, standing in between, does not involve universal assumptions yet it does not explain the relations with a autonomous individual preferences either.

Feminist Standpoint Theory accepts that the knowledge is socially situated, tries to take advantage of it, and asserts that if feminists use their standpoint and their partial perspective, they can reach to real knowledge.

Marginalized lives can provide better insight into subjects. Looking into the expressions of the experiences of a marginalized person, the expression of herself will be different from another person. Therefore women's claim about themselves is the starting point of the theory. Yet, the universalism question also appears here. Is it right to universalize all women into one category? However, some theorists stumble on this subject; some factors can not be neglected, such as cultural, economic, ethnic, religious differences between women. Multiplicity between women must be taken into consideration. However, many factors can be taken as differences; women can still pursue the same mission. The theory asserts that each of the standpoints of women is beneficial to theory; they can support each other. Sharing the different standpoints with each other will provide an observation of the unjust social system. Thus it will be possible to generate ways to contend against them.

According to Harding, marginalized lives can create knowledge and raise questions; however, they may not create solutions. Instead, there is a possibility of other theorists or scholars may create solutions for their problematic issues. She attributes the examples that; Hegel was not a slave, or Marx was not a proletarian, yet they created thoughts and solutions on the specific subjects. (Harding, 1992, p.451)

Also, Harding finds a modernist understanding of objectivity, sufficient due to excluding social factors. With her term 'maximized objectivity,' she includes all of the social factors and supports her thesis with the term 'strong reflexivity,' which links the subject of knowledge with the object of knowledge. When strong reflexivity followed, all of the subjective factors are focused on the process of evaluating nature and social relations. (Harding, 1992, p.459)

### **2.3.5 Achievement Through Struggle**

For most feminist standpoint theorists, including Hartsock, a standpoint is understood as an "achieved stance" and is not just a synonym for a "perspective." The achievement of an epistemically privileged standpoint involves a political engagement that makes clear to the socially underprivileged the shared nature of their experiences of oppression and reveals the systematic structure of power relations. (Grasswick, 2018)

Unjust social order creates distorted truths that are invisible without the efforts of struggle. The true reality is reflected only by the feminist analysis, which includes this part of the struggle. Feminist Standpoint Theory can not be claimed but achieved. When theories do not link with everyday practices and experiences, they become insufficient and do not reflect the actual reality. It gives voice to the everyday experiences of the people who have many different backgrounds. Without feminist analysis, these experiences may become invisible to other people. Hekman, in her article “Truth and Method: Feminist Standpoint Theory Revisited,” emphasizes Hartsock’s ideas stating that the nature of oppression is not visible to every woman at first, yet it becomes visible with feminist analysis and standpoint. (Hekman, 1997, p.346) Embracing the high effort on finding the actual knowledge and reaching the reality, it becomes an achieved theory.

The system of patriarchal understanding of gender puts pressure on men and women to participate in the system. Truth and reality, which is discovered by the modernist assumptions such as universalism, essentialism, rationalism, creates knowledge that carry patriarchal values. When analyzing these values from the patriarchal lens, it is not possible to detect unjust power relations. Feminist study becomes compulsory in order to detect the invisible power relations. Therefore, Hartsock asserts that a feminist standpoint is struggled for. (N. Hartsock, 1983a, p. 232) This **struggle** leads to **achievement** of the theory which expose the actual relations of unequal gender relations and the domination. (Ramazanoğlu & Holland, 2002, p. 10)

## CHAPTER 3

### MUSIC AND ALTERNATIVE ROCK SCENE

‘Music and Alternative Rock Scene,’ starts with a brief introduction of social functionality of music from a sociological viewpoint. In order to comprehend the social impact of music and the values which music transmits and reproduces, music will be divided into two categories such as: mainstream music and alternative music. These categories were discussed regarding their social meanings and functions. The position of women in the mainstream music will be analyzed in the section of ‘Women Within Mainstream Music.’ This section reflects the hardships women encounter, which are created by sexist relations and codes in the mainstream music. The chapter continues with an analysis of rock music from a feminist approach. Alternative rock scene, its social functionality to social issues and gendering discussions were explained in the following sections of the chapter.

#### **3.1 Music from a Sociological Viewpoint**

Music, in itself, is an essential part of our lives. Transmitting stories and cultures from generation to generation is one of the main functions of music. Music can be used to understand the cultural structures of groups of people, which can be considered as a subject of sociology.

The social meaning of music is questioned within this study, rather than its technical meanings. With taking music as a social relation, it functions as a tool which shapes our social relations or it helps us express ourselves.

In this study, using Simmel's viewpoint on music is very beneficial, as he takes music as a social relation. According to him, music functions to structure and restructure social relations. Etzkorn adapts Simmel's thoughts on music, suggesting, music is related to feelings and feelings are related to the process of language and the thought. (Peter Etzkorn, 1964) With specifying the 'social relations' with 'gendered social relations', it is possible to interpret this thought as: music can function to structure and restructure gendered social relations.'

While music has such power in shaping social relations, it can be predicted that it reflects the values which it embodies in its structure. At this point, a categorization of music becomes necessary to comprehend its values more efficiently. In this study, music is taken into two categories such as mainstream and alternative. These categorizations are made under their social meanings rather than their technical/musical meanings. According to their social meanings: these two sub-category of music, reflects their own values to their audience. Therefore it is possible to state that they are forming their own cultures and shaping the social relations according to them.

Mainstream music is taken as a notion which reflects the social codes of the dominant culture in the society. It functions as a reproducing tool for these social codes, which embodies the gendered codes in the society as well as discussable social codes. On the other hand, alternative music is taken as a notion which has the power to object these codes in the society and offers an efficient place for the musicians to freely speak their minds. Due to their distinctions in their structures, these two sub-categories mostly reproduce quite dissimilar codes. While mainstream music is mostly being produced to satisfy the needs of capitalistic consumers, alternative music generally is not concerned with material issues. Their audience, their goals and their discourses within the music are being diverged according to their aims. The main focus of the mainstream music can be considered as to make profit while alternative music does not have such materialistic concerns. The main focal point of the alternative music is to transmit their music and their social discourses without facing any limitations by the music market forces.

In order to analyze the gendered relations and women's position in the rock scene, the structure of the mainstream and alternative music is discussed in details in the following chapters.

### **3.2 The Mainstream Music**

The definition of mainstream varies by the scholar who interprets the term from the different backgrounds or the subject matter of popularity. "Popular music is like a unicorn; everyone knows what it is supposed to look like, but no one has ever seen it." (Denisoff, 1975, p. 1) Making a definition of the term mainstream might be imbued with challenges due to the term's changeability by different cultural contexts and construction of industries. A relatively uncomplicated approach to the definition of mainstream music is to define a genre as mainstream, which is still relevant in the current cultural structure, engages attention, and in the contemporary market, makes money. Mainstream music proceeds in the same direction with mainstream culture. Jones and Rahn approve this thought stating that:

Although some difficulties of definition are peculiar to music, the specialized area of popular music provides a good testing ground for theories of popular culture. (Jones & Rahn, 1977, p. 82)

To consider some genre as mainstream, the number of people who embrace and engage these genres in their life can be taken as primary data.

Moreover, following that, accepting genres as a contemporary mainstream, the current mainstream culture must be examined. If it is still relevant in the social lives of people and has its place in the current market, it is possible to state that it is a mainstream music genre. Another component that can be beneficial to determine a mainstream genre is to investigate the size of the business. In today's conditions, there might be numerous steps of music production depending on how much budget the artist spares. However, there is a linear ratio between the musician's budget and the expected success of the product in the music market. When an album gets into the most selling mainstream charts, new album deals are most likely to be established with major record companies with significant budgets. Also, the efficiency of transmission

is another critical component of mainstream music. Jones and Rahn states that: “The more popular genres appear to seek out the more efficient means of transmission.”(Jones & Rahn, 1977, p. 83) Starting from their point, using the word ‘exposure’ instead of ‘transmission’ would be logical in the modern world. When a piece of music is exposed to society well enough, it is most likely to be a product of mainstream music. Although Jones and Rahn emphasize that aural transmission is more important than the visual transmission, it can be a questionable statement in contemporary mainstream music. With the development of technology, visual exposure is also maximized in order to sell mainstream works more. The observation of a common pattern is possible in mainstream music, losing artistic values, visualizing to the maximum according to the mainstream culture trends, foregrounding the performers rather than the songwriters, becoming a product of consumption.

Concerning the more elaborate analysis of mainstream music, we must look into the discourse of mainstream music regarding its social analysis and its place in the market structure regarding the industry analysis.

### **3.2.1 Mainstream Music and Subculture**

An approach to understanding mainstream music suggests that mainstream music is a product of mainstream culture. The term ‘Mainstream culture’ refers to a generally accepted culture by masses. Chris Jenks approaches to the culture as an embodied, collective category which appeals to a state of intellectual and moral development of society, and a social category that implies the lifestyle of people. (Jenks, 2005, p. 2) Some people have a hard time finding their place in the dominating culture within the society. When harmonizing with the main culture is not possible for those, the need for a subculture came into existence. According to Hebdige, who approaches the term subculture regarding the style, subculture adds up to “expressive forms and rituals of those subordinate groups.” (Hebdige, 1979, p. 2) Hebdige also states that “The tensions between dominant and subordinate groups can be found reflected in the surfaces of subculture.” (Hebdige, 1979, p. 2) According to Hebdige, the meaning of subculture adds up to the conflicts between the dominating and subordinate groups, and the outcome of the conflicts comes out as different expressing styles of people who form sub-groups (subcultures.) However, subculture

is taken as a notion about style, culture, and society within this thesis. Chris Jenks contributes to the Hebdige's discourses on subculture and adds that:

I would like to demonstrate the place of subculture as a concept in the development of social and cultural theory, to point to the reasoning behind its selection as an analytical and descriptive vehicle, in a variety of locations, and to reveal its ambivalent and perhaps unintentional contribution to the deconstruction of the concept 'society.' (Jenks, 2005, pp. 5–6)

The conception of 'Mainstream' is placed in the same base with Jenk's conceptualization of 'society' and Hebdige's conception of 'dominant groups.' Mainstream also refers to the values of dualistic modernist thought as well due to their commonly shared norms.

In pursuance of understanding mainstream music more accurately, mainstream music industries and mainstream culture must be examined. Adorno and Horkheimer preferred to use the term 'culture industry' instead of 'mass culture' and defined the term as "products which are tailored for consumption by masses." There is a consumer and producer relation within industries in which producers integrate their customers from above. According to Adorno, cultural entities were commodities of the culture industry. (Adorno & Rabinbach, 1975, p. 12) The culture industry appeals to the masses. Therefore it has a compatible structure with the characterization of masses. The task of the culture industry is to produce goods that target groups of people consume, while the primary concern of it is merely economic. In the light of these information, there is a common ground of culture industry and mainstream music industries; in fact, the mainstream music industries might be categorized under the culture industry due to their shared principles.

Due to mainstream music is a production of mainstream culture, thoughts, and messages that it transmits to its audience also runs parallel with mainstream culture, which will be explained further.

### 3.2.2 Analysis of Mainstream Music

Comparing the contemporary mainstream music with the older versions, for instance, a type of mainstream music that belongs in the 19th century, devaluation of the music can be observed regarding the context, representation, content, and artistic value. However, older versions of mainstream music such as classical music, jazz, blues were dominated by men; the discourse of their music did not carry the qualification to be, for instance, misogynist and violent. This situation can be taken in two dimensions: The reality of music and the specific messages they transmit to their audience. In reality, it is possible to state that there has been gender inequality in the music industries from the very beginning. Gendered roles were applied to the practice of classical music rigorously as in a male-dominated scene, allowing women to be a singer. Yet, the vast majority of composers and conductors were still men. In the traditional dualistic thinking system, instruments were divided into two categories; feminine and masculine. Women were encouraged to play feminine instruments such as harp, piano, guitar, violin, and singing. (Sergeant & Himonides, 2016) However, while the reality of gender inequality remained existing in the specific types of mainstream music, gendered information were not represented in the actual music. (Sergeant & Himonides, 2016, p. 12) The difference with older versions of mainstream music between the contemporary mainstream music becomes observable at this point. The purpose of music is defined as expressing and communicating the composer's experiences and ideas to the audience. (Ballantine, 1984, p. 2) It is concrete that many subjective pieces of information that are created by musicians with the influence of mainstream music industries, are transmitting to the audience and the society as well.

The article "What has America been singing about? Trends in themes in the U.S. top-40 songs: 1960–2010" shows the content of mainstream songs between 1960 and 2010. In the article, the finding of the research shows that there are radical changes in the percentage of some contents of music. It is explained that sexual content became more explicit over the years. Also changing lifestyle –which can be considered as a topic under the mainstream culture- is in evidence as changing contents of music such as mentioning the subject of 'dancing, partying' in an excessive way. Comparing the 1960s with 2000s mentions of violence, death, alcohol, and drugs can be seen as above the average. (Christenson et al., 2018)

Another research article which is carried out by Shane Snow shows the significant changes of the contents of mainstream songs within the last 50 years. According to the research, in 1965, the most used words in mainstream songs were; love, escape, loneliness, lessons, and loss. When looking into the data of 2005, it can be seen that these words were transferred into; sex, street life, freedom, lust, loneliness, partying, love, money. In addition to that, words of being awesome, love, partying, lust, life, loss are found in the 2015's data. Drastically change on the emphasis of self, material life, changing lifestyles were observed at the end of the research. (Snow, 2015)

Another subject that suffers a significant change is the gendered content. Transformation of women's position as a musician and women as a subject in mainstream music underwent a change as well as mainstream culture.

### **3.3 Women Within Mainstream Music**

Mainstream music carries and expresses the characteristics of mainstream culture. Women's discriminated position is among these characteristics since the very beginning of the history of mainstream music. However statistics may change over the years, discrimination problem was not solved completely, as a matter of fact, it changed forms due to the social change in the process of time, but still kept its characteristics regarding the inequality.

The gender differences between men and women is related to gender construction. Social constructions create a distinction between genders, which leads to the constitution of gendered roles. What society perceives from men and women, forms the expectations of men and women. Thus, gendered areas come to existence.

As is the case with many industries, the industry of music is also highly gendered. The lack of representation of women in the music is disgraced for many years. It would not be surprising that if people with common knowledge can not be able to count the female composers within the classical era. The case is not different for the 20th century. According to the publication of The Parlor Songs Academy, Only a few of the women songwriters had the chance to publish their music during the 20th century. (*In Search of Women In American Song; A neglected musical heritage.*, 2018) Beyond any doubt, male domination is ruling every field of music due to gender inequality.

When looking into the late 20th and 21st century's modern music fields such as mainstream, rock, indie, metal, punk, heavy metal, grunge, it is possible to state women's contributions as visible. However, being visible does not mean equal. These musical fields, which are also subcultural, still embody gender inequality.

The research "Inclusion in the Recording Studio?" of Annenberg Inclusion Initiative finds that women are highly underrepresented in the music industry over the last six years. The study takes 600 songs in the Billboard Magazine's Hot 100 list between 2012 and 2017 as the subject of the study. Grim outcomes of the study show that women constitute only 22.5% of all artists, 8.7% of bands, 12.3% of all songwriters, 2% of producers. While the top male writer has 36 credits, the top female writer has only 15 credits across 600 popular songs from 2012-2017. Women's rates at Grammy's also expose the gender gap: women constitute 7.9% of the record of the year, 6.1% of the album of the year, 21.3% of the song of the year, 36.4% of the best new artist of the year and 0% of the producer of the year. (Stacy L. Smith, 2018)

These statistics instances clearly show the reality of women's lives within mainstream music. The second dimension of analysis is to follow through research on the messages regarding women that mainstream music transmits. The link between mainstream culture and mainstream music should be analyzed due to mainstream music is positioned as a product of mainstream culture. Over the years, a sexist image on women has been created in the mainstream culture, which works in society. Many contributors take a hand in transmitting this sexist image on women, such as television programs, movies, news, music along with others. These contributors take the image that is socially constructed, consolidate it with their productions and impose it on the society; thus, it causes an infinite loop of gender inequality. Music became an essential contributor to this process. Mainstream music holds its misogynist, sexist characterization from the 1950s to this day.

In 1958 Chuck Berry released his song "Sweet Little Sixteen." Lyrics states:

Sweet Little Sixteen  
She's got the grown-up blues  
Tight dress, and lipstick  
She's sportin' high heel shoes. (Berry, 1958)

As it is seen from this instance as well, the sexual objectification of underage girls was normalized within some of the mainstream songs of the 1950s. Another instance from 1962's mainstream song by Crystals "He Hit Me (And It Felt Like a Kiss)" included statements such as:

He couldn't stand to hear me say  
That I'd been with someone new  
And when I told him I had been untrue  
He hit me, and it felt like a kiss  
He hit me, and I knew he loved me  
If he didn't care for me, I could have never made him mad  
But he hit me/And I was glad. (King & Goffin, 1962; Crystals, 1962)

These lyrics were taken as an unproblematic by some people who have embraced the mainstream culture in the 1960s. Lyrics were not only normalizing the violence against women, but it romanticizes the violence as well. Lyrics suggest that violence is the way of a man showing his love, and women could be glad to face it in the name of love. In addition, degrading women was also another subject of mainstream music, as it can be seen in the lyrics of Guns N Roses song "It's So Easy": "Turn around, bitch, I got a use for you. Besides, you ain't got nothing better to do. And I'm bored." (McKagan, Rose, & Arkeen, 1987, Guns N' Roses, 1987) In 2005, the degrading perception of women can be observed in another mainstream piece, Kanye West's song "Gold Digger." Lyrics of the song says:

She take my money when I'm in need  
Yeah, she's a triflin' friend indeed  
Oh, she's a gold digger  
Way over town that digs on me....  
If you f\*ckin' with this girl, then you better be paid  
You know why? It takes too much to touch her. (West, Charles, & Renald, 2005; West,2005)

This song handles the perception of women in a degrading manner as if women choose to date someone considering material issues. In a manner of speaking, they aim to gain money from their relationships. Sexist approach is one of the main issues in

this song; however, universalizing women is also another vital point that should be noticed and not normalized.

Approaching to the present time, in 2013, Robin Thicke released his song “Blurred Lines,” which hit the number one in the charts and stayed there for 33 weeks. (*Blurred Lines Chart History Billboard*, n.d.) Some statements among lyrics are:

OK now he was close, tried to domesticate you  
But you're an animal, baby, it's in your nature  
Just let me liberate you, you don't need no papers  
That man is not your maker , and that's why I'm gon' take a good girl  
I know you want it.... But you're a good girl ,the way you grab me  
Must wanna get nasty, go ahead, get at me. (Thicke, Williams, Gaye, & Harris Jr, n.d.; Thicke, 2013)

Lyrics hold the characterizations of misogyny, encouraging men to own women, asserting that women are always willing to have intercourse inwardly, when a man demands it, in this way sexualizing women and ignoring women’s willpower.

Due to mainstream culture has a strong bond with social life and socialization, there is a both way feeding or influencing system on social codes. While mainstream culture influence the socialization process, outcomes such as gendered norms comes into sight. Women’s position within mainstream music gets affected by this process, and their disadvantaged position is one of the outcomes of this process. On the other hand, transmitted messages, gendered codes regarding women are contributors to his process as well. Constant production of the social norms, involving them in the social lives and making the society absorb them with the help of the mainstream culture and by this recreating the norms, create a perverse cycle. As a result of these events, women have disadvantaged positions in every social areas, including the production of music. Therefore women’s current disadvantaged position in music and gendered codes on women can not be analyzed separately. When the production of gendered norms affects both of them negatively, breaking some gendered norms will affect both of them as well, resulting in more equal positions and equitable norms.

### **3.4 Rock Music**

Rock music, as it is mentioned previously, is defined as a genre of mainstream music and developed from its foundation 'rock n roll' around the 1950s. (Studwell & Lonergan, 1999) Blues, rhythm blues, country, jazz, folk music were the early inspirations of rock music. Rock music usually created by rock bands, which consist of the instrument players who play electric guitar, bass guitar, drums and percussions, and singer/singers. Rock music is always linked with subcultures due to its attitude towards what is mainstream. The protesting feature is one of the main features that defines rock music, which is actively included in the social and cultural movements as well. Most of the time, rock music is not concerned with the aesthetics of the music, instead, the main concerns of the music are a pleasure it gives to the audience and the discourse it creates.

Within time, as the musicians and audience continues to increase, the diversity of rock started to expand. This process started with the classic rock, continued with genres such as blues-rock, folk-rock, jazz-rock, psychedelic rock, progressive rock, glam rock, punk rock, indie rock, alternative rock. As the popularity of rock music increases, content and the quality of rock music started to change. Due to mainstream products bring in more in the capital market, products of mainstream rock music started to take more space in the capital market as well. Therefore, in these categories of genres, alternative rock is slightly different from other mainstream rock genres.

### **3.5 The Definition of 'Alternative Music'**

According to the Cambridge Dictionary, the term 'alternative' stands for something different from what is usual, and it has a small enthusiastic group that supports it. (*Alternative - Meaning in the Cambridge English Dictionary*, n.d.) The term 'alternative' can be applied to many sorts of things. An alternative way implies there is another way that is expected. An alternative medicine implies the sort of medicine which does not use the usual scientific methods. Alternative energy sources refer to biomass, wind, solar energy, which is different than the usual energy sources such as nuclear and fossil energy.

The alternative approach can be applied to culture and music as well. The alternative culture refers to the group of people who embraced a dissention against the mainstream culture. The majority of society also embraces the mainstream culture. Nonetheless, it is not match up with the identity of all society members. From this point, the conflict arises, furthermore an alternative culture which is named as 'subculture' emerges from the conflict. At this point, the subculture has almost identical meaning with the term alternative. Hebdige conceptualizes subculture as acts of those who are insubordinate groups such as expressive forms and rituals. He asserts that like-minded individuals who are placed apart from the central culture build a consensus and build their identity. (Hebdige, 1979, p. 2) These small groups which form the subcultures share the same classifications and needs. Hebdige also links his subculture notion with alternative music types, and his notion of subculture is useful when describing the alternative rock music scene.

### **3.6 Alternative Rock Scene**

Alternative rock refers to a genre that is independent of popular music that feeds from capitalistic concerns. It is an umbrella term, which emerged in the late 80's. However, the emergence of the term was in the 1980s; first alternative rock bands started in the 1960s in the genre of proto-punk. (*Alternative Songs: Top Alternative Songs Chart*, 1988; *Proto-Punk Music Genre Overview*, n.d.) Nonconformist and do it yourself attitudes are the main characteristics of alternative rock. It has an opponent standpoint to every element which is embodied by popular music. It is a broad term that confronts mainstream music. Capitalistic concerns such as money-making and the sexism that comes with it, create main elements of popular music. Women in the music industry have been exposed to being commodified since the starting point of the merging of capitalism and the industry of music.

Independent music constitutes the most of alternative music. Standing outside of the mainstream music comes with the do-it-yourself methods since it is quite impossible to meet the expectations of big record labels without referring popular elements in your lyrics and arranging your composition of music according to the trends.

Alternative rock, which is an umbrella term for underground music, mostly refers to punk rock, riot grrrl, pop-punk, grunge, indie rock, new wave, post-punk, etc. The social context of the lyrics, the composition, and releasing of the songs and albums differ from popular music. Subgenres of alternative rock are mostly defined as; Brit-pop, Brit-punk, college rock, garage-rock, proto-punk, emotional hardcore (emo/emocore), hard-rock, experimental rock, folk-rock, folk-punk, goth / gothic-rock, grunge, hardcore-punk, indie-rock, lo-fi, new wave, progressive rock, punk, shoegaze, steam-punk, Christian-rock, noise-rock, nu-rock/nu-metal, post-rock. (*Music Genre List - A Complete List of Music Styles, Types and Genres*, 2019)

It is noticeable that alternative rock is quite rich regarding the variety of its subgenres. Shared characteristics of these subgenres are;

1. They were derived from independent music scenes.
2. They are generous on taking influences from other main genres, such as folk, reggae, electronic, jazz. They are not limited to only rock music. Therefore the composed genre becomes an authentic genre. It is more likely to express the identity of specific groups and gives voice to them.
3. Subgenres are specified to groups of people who share; the same taste in music and substantially the same values as well. Musicians, audiences, other people in the scene choose their standpoints within the music scene under the favor of subgenre classification.
4. They share common values such as standing against the popular culture and the norms that popular culture dictates.
5. Within the independent music scene, they form a solidarity, and they mostly collaborate in order to exist in the scene and realize themselves. Solidarity consists of acts such as support each other in any means, forming independent labels that include other alternative bands, distributing each other's music, arranging concerts collaboratively, creating social discourses which are about their shared values, and by this, empowering their discourses, and many more.

Some of the alternative subgenres created their own alternative cultures, which some scholars name subculture. (H00ebdige, 1979) Grunge, metal, punk rock, hard rock, and many other subgenres have their characteristics, style, and their own alternative cultures against the mainstream culture. Alternative culture becomes a lifestyle for those who define their standpoints in the specific subgenres. The expression of the self develops into the styles they borrow from their subgenre. Glam rock, for instance, challenged the dualistic image of gendered looks, and men used glitters, big hairstyles, makeup, and many more societal assigned feminine features. Grunge was challenging both previous alternative rock movement glam rock and gendered roles in society. However, glam rock was full of gaudiness, grunge was the very opposite of glam-rock with their greasy hair, ripped jeans, old clothes stating that they do not concern about the good looks and vanity.

Regarding challenging the gendered roles, Kurt Cobain chose wearing makeup and vintage women's clothes, wedding dresses to the concerts of Nirvana. In a 1992 dated interview on Rolling Stone Magazine, Cobain states that:

I definitely feel closer to the feminine side of the human being than I do the male – or the American idea of what a male is supposed to be. Just watch a beer commercial, and you'll see what I mean. (Azerrad, 1992)

He is criticizing the constituted male image in society and denies to be a masculine person as it was portrayed in the beer commercials. He protested this discrimination and the alienation based on the gendered roles with his style and the contents of his lyrics. Apart from the Nirvana, grunge era used unfashionable items in their styles in order to rebel against the mainstream fashion and mainstream culture. As a matter of fact, many people who are associated with alternative rock subgenres shared this approach in different ways. Wearing black, using leather on clothing and accessories with chains, spikes, safety pins, they all had meanings in the alternative rock context. These items had universal meanings as rebellion and reaction, due to that it was chosen by the people in the alternative rock scene to strengthen their position against the mainstream music and culture.

### 3.7 Paradox of 'Alternative Rock'

The Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) shares up to date selling numbers of artists, albums, singles. According to the 'Top Artists (Albums)' list, some of the alternative rock bands and musicians can be seen in the top numbers of the list. The list which only includes the selling numbers in the United States provides numbers as such; Alanis Morissette 20.5 million, Nirvana 25 million, Pearl Jam 31.5, Creed 25 million, Green Day 24 million, Red Hot Chili Peppers 25 millions, Smashing Pumpkins 19.5 million. (*Gold & Platinum - RIAA*, 2019) However these numbers differ by the source to some degree, it should be paid attention to the situation that alternative bands and musicians, as a matter of fact, have high degrees on the best selling charts, which seems to conflict with the actual mentality of being an alternative. This event leads the researcher to the evidence that at some point, alternative rock diverges from its focal point and eventually got mainstream.

Some of the rock bands which were started as 'alternative,' when they get more attention from the mainstream sphere with their previous work, it is observable that they sign contracts with major labels for their next albums instead of their underground labels. Eventually, this situation concludes with their increased popularization and becoming a mainstream rock band. This situation reflects the paradox of alternative rock. However, being in the most selling albums charts is not the primary purpose of the original alternative bands and musicians; success brings along the popularization, fame, and significant earnings. At this particular point, change in the content of songs is questioned. Changing lifestyles of musicians, presumably reflects on the content, it might be followed by positioning in the mainstream sphere regarding both music and culture. At this point, an expected question appears: Is it possible for an alternative band to maintain the alternative position even though it appeals to masses, signs deals with major record labels, and becomes popular? As going back to the definition of alternative rock, alternativity of musicians is defined as abstaining from feeding the capitalistic values. In order to elaborate this statement, if the band/musician starts to share mainstream values such as materialistic, patriarchal, or discriminating values which are based on gender, race, religion, age, and other factors, it forms an opposite standpoint to the actual existence of alternativity. However, even though

bands/musicians catch significant success in the music scene and still share their values against these mainstream social values, they can state themselves as an alternative.

Nevertheless, handling the alternativity in a holistic approach, alternativity becomes a meaningful notion when it includes the collaboration of all of the social values that supports the unity of humanity. It is not expected from musicians to process every social issue with their songs; however, when they fail a single issue, it is not equitable to label them as an alternative. For instance, when musicians share indiscriminating messages regarding race issues while creating patriarchal contents as well, it becomes mainstream due to the patriarchal norms in mainstream music and culture. The main idea also exists in social sciences such as, when a social scientist starts an argument on feminism while discriminating against the Christian or atheist women; her feminism might become weak. Therefore alternativity must be inclusive.

### **3.8 Discourse and Social Functionality of Alternative Rock**

As well as other channels of media, social issues that concern society are tackled in music as well. Alternative rock offers sufficient place to musicians for examining social issues and bringing discourses out as a result of the examination. Positioning on the critical side of the music, musicians who are placed in the alternative rock subgenre tackled many social topics such as; poverty, politics, racism, sexism, war and peace, human rights, capitalism, acceptance of the society, alienation and many more. Regardless of the topics, the common points of the contents are critics of the contemporary world, contemporary society, and mainstream culture. Alternative rock functions as a tool to; understand the social world in a better way, share our experiences from our standpoints, offer solutions at some point, awaken people on social problems, and to make an impact on people regarding social issues.

One of the main concerns of alternative rock is **human rights**. Human rights include social justice, equality, freedom, and other topics such as racism, sexism, and other discrimination types. Alternative rock musicians aimed to create a significant impact on society by approaching social issues with their songs. As one of the human rights sub-topic, alternative rock musicians embraced an **anti-racist** approach in their music. Alt-rock band Social Distortion points out to the racism in the society in their lyrics of

the song 'Don't Drag Me Down' (1996). Some critical statements they share with their lyrics are:

Children are taught to hate, parents just couldn't wait,  
Some are rich, and some are poor, others will just suffer more,  
Have you ever been ashamed and felt society try to keep you down,  
I begin to watch things change and see them turn around (Ness, 1996)

Oppression that society creates and how it affects the lives of people is aimed to transmit within this song. The critique of nationalism follows anti-racism in the song "American Jesus" by Bad Religion. (1993) Lyrics of the song includes statements such as:

I don't need to be a global citizen, because I'm blessed by nationality  
I'm a member of a growing populace, we enforce our popularity  
We've got the American Jesus, see him on the interstate  
We've got the American Jesus, he helped build the president's estate. (Graffin & Gurewitz, 1993)

As it is noticeable, songwriters Graffin and Gurewitz aims to criticize the synthesis of the nationality and its abuse in religion. Alienation of those who are not a citizen of the United States is also discussed in this song. Approaching to today's music, American punk-rock band Anti-Flag released a single in October 2019. The song "Christian Nationalist" was interpreted as an 'anti-fascist anthem' by the music critics. (Smith-Engelhardt, 2019) Lyrics of the song included statements such as: "Corrupted patriotism sold as nationalism, your theocratic beliefs are a moral weapon, full of venom, armageddon." (Sane, 2019)

A comparison between theocracy and weapon forms a striking statement. Passing patriotism off as nationalism, showed the entire act as more innocent and rightful to society; however, it is a destructive act

Another topic held by alternative rock musicians is **poverty**. Pearl Jam urges upon an experience of a homeless person in their song "Even Flow," which is released in 1991. Lyrics carry the abstract characterization of the alt-rock genre grunge. "Oh, feelin', understands the weather of the winters on it's way, Oh, ceilings, few and far

between all the legal halls of shame, yeah” (Vedder & Gossard, 1991) When the lyrics scrutinized, the critique of Western civilization and nonfunctionality of laws for those who are homeless and in need becomes observable. Wrong government policies and social stolidity are subjects of alternative rock’s criticisms. Queen, a famous alternative rock band which is led by Freddie Mercury, performed the song “Is This the World We Created?” in 1984. The aim of the band with this song is to raise consciousness about poverty, hunger, unbalanced income distribution.

You know that everyday a helpless child is born,  
Who needs some loving care inside a happy home  
Somewhere a wealthy man is sitting on his throne  
Waiting for life to go by, is this the world we created,  
We made it all our own. (Mercury & May, 1984)

Emphasizing the dramatic truth in the lives of those who are in need, Queen takes society as responsible for the injustice and aims to canalize the society to work collaboratively to create justice.

Within the numerous social and political issues that alternative rock tackles, **war, and peace** become an essential subject among them. Offspring, a punk rock band, combines the critique of politics and war, stating that: “ In a world without leaders who'd start all the wars, the world that your saving will always be yours...in a world without leaders who'd make people starve” (D. Holland, n.d.) Holland, the songwriter of the song, accuses the government leaders and politics of starting wars, cause starvation, in a manner of speaking stealing from the public’s savings. When these events examined, it is evident that they are related to a high correlation to each other. Past wars in history forms a source of the lyrics of alt-rock songs as well. The band Alice in Chains takes the Vietnam War as a subject of their song ‘Rooster’ (1992). Lyrics of the song transmits the tragic war experience of the father of the guitarist Jerry Cantrell: “Ain't found a way to kill me yet, eyes burn with stinging sweat, seems every path leads me to nowhere, wife and kids household pet, army green was no safe bet, the bullets scream to me from somewhere” (Cantrell, n.d.; Yates, 2006) Lyrics also point out to the damaged psychology of an individual after war.

Without a doubt, social issues such as politics, human rights, war and peace, nationalism are all combined, therefore a single alternative rock song, in most cases, does not take one main concern as a subject of the song, other social topics mostly contribute to the central theme. More courageous lyrics about politics are mentioned mostly in the punk rock subgenre of alt-rock. It can be seen that punk rockers daringly challenge mainstream social values and mainstream politics. Punk rock band Green Day released “American Idiot” in 2004, criticizing the government management methods of the world leaders. The song subsequently applied to the masses and became an anthem for the alternative world.

Well maybe I'm the f\*\*\*t America  
I'm not a part of a redneck agenda  
Now everybody do the propaganda  
And sing along to the age of paranoia  
Don't wanna be an American idiot  
One nation controlled by the media  
Information Age of hysteria  
It's calling out to idiot America (Armstrong et al., n.d.)

Green Day criticizes the power of the media on masses, which spreads xenophobia, nationalism, and fear. Afterward, Billie Joe Armstrong, singer, and songwriter of the band, states that the song was released when the Iraq war started, however, significant media channels such as CNN, Fox, and MSNBC were covering it. (Di Perna, 2012, p. 133)

Sexism, gendered norms, and roles are also discussed topics in the alternative rock scene. Issues on sexism became more often heard with the rise of the alternative rock in the 1990s. Regardless of their gender, many musicians choose to discuss the topic, due to its effects on their identity, personal life, and professional life in music. The issue of gendering became a vital and enhancing notion to the musicians who strengthen their claim of being alternative. A comprehensive examination of gendering in alternative rock is handled in the farther chapter “Feminist Standpoint Analysis in the Alternative Rock Scene.”

However, currently, there are many shared social values that alternative rock musicians express; rock music did not adopt an egalitarian approach the entire time. Rock music, as it is the case with other genres, first heard by masses when it gained fame as a mainstream genre. Therefore it was adopting mainstream music values such as capitalist, sexist, racist, discriminative as well. Mainstream rock musicians avoided subjects such as social justice, gendered roles, poverty, effects of war, unity against discrimination. This avoidance stems from the situation that mainstream culture is a significant source of influence for mainstream music, and they both move forward in a parallel way.

Alternative rock subgenres are derived from the challenges pointed out to mainstream values. However, sub-genres might gain mainstream values even after their emergence. Resistance to the mainstream values may fall through in the process. This situation forms another source of research in the relation of music and social and additional critical discourse for the alternative rock scene. There have been racist, sexist discriminations within the subgenres, even in punk rock whose main aim is to protest. For instance, punk rock was used by some Western musicians to alienate non-white people and women, to strengthen racism and masculinity. When this is the case, it adopts mainstream values, and specific musicians and bands which have these characteristics no longer meets the social characterizations of alternative music. Lawrence Grossberg discusses the empowering function of rock'n roll:

I am concerned with the ways in which rock and roll provide strategies of survival and pleasure for its fans, with the ways in which rock and roll are empowered by and empowers particular audiences in particular contexts. Rock and roll becomes visible only when it is placed within the context of the production of a network of empowerment. (Grossberg, 1984)

Agreeing with Grossberg, alternative rock has been a functional and vital tool to empower a specific group of people. Social values that are shared by groups are expressed by their representatives in music, heard by more people, gained strength, and empowered. There have been two major prevalent problems within the history of rock: Racism and sexism. However, any discrimination forms a significant problem within the social music history; in order to categorize, two most faced discrimination

problems are handled in this classification. Non-white people's contribution to the alternative music has always been prevalent. However, for instance, punk rock, considering it emerged mainly in Britain, was considered as a music genre that belonged to white and male people. However, there have been many contributions to punk rock from all over the world, and non-white people resisted the white dominance in punk rock music and scene.

In 1982, Greg Tate interviewed the punk band Bad Brains. In his article, there are statements such as:

That's right. I'm talking a black punk band, can y'all get to that? Because in the beginning, the kid couldn't hang – I mean when I was coming up, you could get your a\*\* kicked for calling another brother a punk. (Tate, 1982)

Bad Brain's existence in the punk rock scene in the late 1970s pioneered the representation of nonwhite people in the alternative rock music. However, Bad Brains faced many racist challenges in the scene at the time, today thanks to them and other rebellious bands, the non-discriminative approach is embraced by the alt-rock scene members. K. Wadkins proposes that punk rock has been made popular by white men, but it was heavily influenced by black men. (Wadkins, 2012, p. 240) An early and subsequently became legendary punk rock band, The Clash released a song in 1977, which proves Wadkins' argument accurate. The lyrics of the song White Riot includes:

White riot, I want to riot  
White riot, a riot of our own  
Black man gotta lotta problems  
But they don't mind throwing a brick  
White people go to school  
Where they teach you how to be thick  
And everybody's doing  
Just what they're told to  
And nobody wants to go to jail (Strummer & Jones, n.d.)

It is evident that songwriters Strummer and Jones envied the protesting culture of the Black community. They aimed to gain protesting characteristics of punk rock while taking influences from other cultures, even following their footsteps.

When the emergence of rock music is examined, it is clear that rock was primarily influenced by jazz, blues, R&B, and other genres that emerged in New Orleans, United States, and performed by mostly non-white people. However, mainstream rock music, mostly known as a place where white dominance rules. Wadkins explains the integration of white and black cultures in white-dominated rock music, with the help of the masculinities of cultures:

The appropriation of Black culture by MC5 and Stooges (white punk bands) conflated ideas about race and gender, making Black masculinity crucial to their re-imagination of white masculinity through punk. (Wadkins, 2012)

It is seen that punk's existence and acts within punk are defined and explained with masculinities. At this point, one can only wonder, where are women in the history of punk and, in general, alternative rock? Were they absent or just invisible? Race and white dominance have been discussed within the history of alternative rock; however, while discussing, sexism usually was ignored. There can not be competition between social topics of discrimination. However, it is not fair to ignore any discrimination and to abstain from taking any steps to discuss and solve the particular social problem. For that reason, the alternativity of the musician's standpoints is not sufficient as long as they overpass the subject of sexism. Women exist in music, whether it is mainstream or alternative rock. Women's' contributions to both alternative and mainstream music are as significant as men; however, the visibility of them is not on the same levels.

The common point of these examples of critical alternative rock lyrics is; they are derived from the shreds of evidence of social reality. Alternative rock musicians function as messengers to transmit their points of view, experiences, politics, and even lifestyles from their standing points. Alternative rock forms a productive place for musicians to express their primary concerns on social issues. Alternative rock music,

which does not follow the primary values of mainstream music, has particular aims to point out some issues.

Shared characteristics for any alternative values are: interdicting any discriminative approach, providing unity for smaller groups in the society that does not fit in the mainstream society, interrogating any kind of dictated thoughts and ideas.

Within the process of transmitting from musicians to audiences, when the content of the music incorporates a single mainstream value, it loses its validity in terms of being alternative. When musicians transfer their thoughts as supporting anti-racist acts yet overleaps women in the process, alternativity of these musicians should be questioned. In addition, sharing anti-capitalist values with the practice of sexism is not acceptable. Alternativity should include alternative values which preserves the resistance to mainstream values, that are created by alternative scene members.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **FEMINIST STANDPOINT ANALYSIS OF THE ALTERNATIVE ROCK SCENE**

‘Feminist Standpoint Analysis of the Alternative Rock Scene’ starts with a brief introduction of gender issues in the rock scene. The characterizations of the sexist practices in the scene are discussed with the examples which are derived from musicians’ interviews in the rock scene. Analyses on the feminism in early and recent rock scene aimed to reveal the gendered relations and the process of gendering in the scene in the progress of time. Which eventually comes to a conclusion such as: with the emergence of alternative rock, rock scene loses its gender blind status and the discussions of gendering becomes more visible. Feminist consciousness is recognized in the recent rock scene and it produce its social fruits on gendering: Riot Grrrl and Pussy Riot. These two movements in the rock scene and their contributions to the feminist progress in the scene were discussed. Feminist progress in the rock scene is discussed in three parts such as: Consciousness raising, solidarity and politics. In conclusion, chapter ends with a feminist analysis of the scene.

Rock music is mostly defined as an aggressive, fast, heavy tunes beginning since the late 1970s. At the time, hard rock was on the rise in the rock music scene. Being aggressive and other socially given characterizations of rock have been associated with masculine attitude, and consequently with men. In the everyday and social life, there is a division as feminine and masculine characterization in the modernist thought. In terms of music, soft music is assigned to women, while heavier music is assigned to men. This position leads to confusion of the conception of being a female in rock

bands. Even though musicians who generate feminist discourses may fall into this confusion. An instance of the particular confusion is detectable of an interview of Courtney Love; singer, guitarist, and songwriter of the grunge band 'Hole.' She asserts in a Q Magazine interview that: "I like there to be some testosterone in rock and it's like, I'm the one in the dress who has to provide it!" (Noyer, 1995) In the interview she points out to the need for testosterone without realizing it does not belong in the natural order, it is socially constituted. However she enjoys to be the one that provides testosterone for music, even though she is in a female body.

She refers that Hole has more successful heavy songs comparing with other male-dominated bands and she adds on that:

That's why Lars from Metallica is so obsessed with our band. He cannot believe that someone with a uterus is a better drummer than him. It's too much for him. (Noyer, 1995)

In an another instance of sexism in the mainstream rock music, Kim Thayil is stating that rock music divides in two parts regardless of the 'gender of the performers': testosterone and estrogen rock. He reported defining his band's tunes as such:

It's aggressive. It's loud. Being that it's visceral and I tend to associate visceral with masculine qualities. Testosterone. I do have a theory about estrogen rock. These aren't divided by the gender of the performer, but by the music itself. Women can play testosterone rock and there are a number of men who play estrogen rock. (Schippers, 2002, p. 166)

Then Thayil goes on states that women's initiative on 'testosterone rock' is not as good as men's and they are not capable of performing it well as men due to their characteristics:

I'm not saying there aren't aggressive women. But when I think of an aggressive guy, he certainly has a few notches up on an aggressive woman because they grow up that way. They probably had to deal with it more with other men. Everything from sports to fighting to competition... (Schippers, 2002, p. 166)

Thayil generates two problematic issues from his assertion. First, he asserts that music does not differ by the performers' gender; however, it differs from the female and male hormones. This supposition is an outcome of dualistic modern thought, which puts forward that men are strong, powerful, aggressive hence ready to fight, and women are emotional, fragile, soft, and easily might be defeated. Thayil transfers these gendered codes to music, which makes this thought as a part of the dualistic modern thought and mainstream music. Dividing the music into categories that include matching with biological hormones is not acceptable due to it generates sexist norms in music. The second problematic issue on Thayil's assertion is that men are more likely to perform aggressive music due to their aggressive social lives. The part which reflects the daily lives of men includes sports, fighting and competition can be considered partly true in terms of reality, due to gendered codes which are constituted for men by the society—however accepting this as an absolute truth outcomes with the alienation of men which does not comply with the gendered codes. Another harmful consequence would be accepting that women are not suitable for sports, fighting, competition, which reflects an absolute sexist approach. If the music were assigned regarding the anger and aggression, I would like to create a suggestion that includes dividing rock music by categorizing them regarding the unjust privilege that performers go through. Unjust privilege in the social life and the scene might be more likely to cause the actual anger and aggression than the socially constituted nature of gendered codes. Objecting to Thayil's conception of gendered rock music, using his reason for 'aggressiveness and anger cherish rock music,' then women who take the gendered norms as subjects to their music might perform much better than men in the masculine world of rock.

As being a drummer, fierce lead member of a rock band, existing without femininity are not expected from women by the society. The mainstream idea of women in bands was socially constructed as such: Playing feminine instruments, performing soft feminine vocals, having an attractive appearance in terms of the beauty of a face, body, or clothes. Women have been encouraged to adopt a provocative clothing style in order to gain more fame and obtain a rise in the selling records. The mainstream idea of the way to succeed in selling steered the members of music scenes as such. Women were seen as objects instead of real subjects who can perform the actual music.

Women's existence in the rock scene, defined as objects to sell more, caused many complications in the scene. The mainstream idea suggested that women were not capable of performing heavy and masculine music. But the primary complication was 'defining the particular music as masculine.' At this point, women in the scene realized that they needed to take the step forward and reclaim their rights, just as in the history of politics. As a matter of fact, their position in the process can not be examined separately from the politics as well.

Starting to share women's own experiences from first hand, forms a fertile base for feminist discussions. When there is no data on specific issues, it becomes meaningless to discuss it due to it does not land on any sound basis. Feminist discussions start with the shared experiences of women. In the rock scene, women choose to carry out this process with; positing their thoughts in their songs with lyrics, giving interviews on the specific issues, publishing fanzines. (zines- which it is called in the alternative rock scene) Also, performing activism both in stage and out of the stage enhances the feminist politics in the alternative rock scene. In the following parts, there will be instances of lyrics, interviews, articles from zines, activist performances both from the stage and daily lives of women. It is my aim to comprehend the scene through the lens of feminism with the contribution of these sources. While analyzing these sources, the categorization of the feminist methods will be helpful for placing the outcomes of the study.

#### **4.1 Feminism in Early Alternative Rock Scene**

There is no doubt that alternative music is emerged to challenge mainstream music, and alternative rock is emerged to challenge mainstream rock music. However, moving the categorization further, due to mainstream rock music is a male-dominated scene, women formed another form of alternativity to defend their existence and rights in the music scene: An alternative feminist standpoint in rock music. As it is the case with the history of social thought, politics, and everyday life, false representations and underrepresentation of women who are created by the mainstream culture are not acceptable in music as well. Male centered structure of rock did not allow women to exist in the scene as they are; on top of it all, it forced them into the images which are desired by the male hegemony. Women's experiences, statements, ideas were

expressed and misinterpreted by men for many years. The sexist mainstream values on music, imposed women that they are not capable of playing rock instruments as good as men and primitively prevented their progress even prevented their starting point. Women faced sexist attitudes against them in the scene, which included both the state of being a performer and being the audience. Therefore, against the mainstream male-centric and patriarchal values, a feminist approach in music was applied by musicians using the feminist standpoint in the alternative rock music. Also, feminist altertivity in alternative rock scene might be evaluated as a feminist subculture within alternative rock as well.

The first fragment of feminist alternative rock was taken in the period between the early 1970s to 1990. The second fragment includes feminist rock between the early 1990s to the current date. Until the 1970s, women were active in the music scene as jazz musicians, and as members of the popular bands whose members were formed as all women, and usually led by a male manager of a record company. There are instances of initiatives of underground rock performed by women, but they were defined as ‘all-female band.’ When there is no labeling such as ‘all-male band,’ unfortunately, the sexist labeling continues to this day. Another instance of the sexist labeling is ‘female-fronted band,’ and there are many formulations that are derived from this label, such as ‘female-fronted rock/punk/grunge/metal band.’

In the second half of the 1970s, with the emergence of punk and the rise of rock, there were more women in the scene than 1960s. Girlschool, The Slits, Vixen, The Runaways, Siouxsie and the Banshees, X-Ray Spex were among the most successful bands of the era. In their musicality, influences of punk rock and metal were evident. These 1970s bands were significant in terms of opening the gates of alternative rock for women. In that era, women who wanted to play a rock instrument were seen as strange and blamed for not being feminine. Joan Jett, songwriter, and guitarist for the band Runaways, stated in an interview:

Being told that girls can't play rock 'n' roll-I mean, even as a kid, it was so illogical to me-it's like, what do you mean? That girl can't master the instruments? I'm in school with girls playing cello and violin and Beethoven

and Bach. You don't mean they can't master the instrument. What you mean is they're not allowed, socially-it's a societal thing. (McDonnell, 2010)

Being a woman added up to play in the softer roles in the rock scene. Socially structured codes led women to be more in the art side rather than a dirty scene such as rock. Female alternative rock in the 1970s influenced subsequent feminist alternative rock and a major feminist movement in the rock history: Riot Grrrl. Tessa Pollitt, who was a bass guitarist for the band Slits, says:

It was incredibly male-orientated then, within the record companies, and it was a real struggle. I think people forget how much of a struggle it was. I mean there has always been female singers, but not women playing their own instruments. (Bullman, 2009)

Society was extremely convinced that women could not play their rock instruments, some audience even showed the courage to ask band members that do they hire actual guitarist behind the stage to play for them in concerts. This forms a concrete example of the gendered roles in rock music as well as gendered roles in society. Women searched for an answer to why there is a common understanding of gendered roles in instruments, and the outcome of the search led to socialization. Punk singer, songwriter, and guitarist for the band Distillers; Brody Dalle, is known as to said a powerful quote on this subject: "I don't play the guitar with my f\*ckin' vagina, so what difference does it make?" (Way, n.d.)

With the emergence of punk rock, influences of rebellion was starting to exist in women's music. X-Ray Spex, a punk rock band from London, which formed in 1976, released a song in 1977, "Oh Bondage Up Yours!". The lyrics of the song is starting with an impressive statement for the 1970s: "Some people think little girls should be seen and not heard, but I think "oh bondage, up yours!" (Styrene, n.d.) The word 'bondage' here does not stand for a sexual meaning. Instead, it represents the limitation that society puts women into. Styrene, songwriter and the singer of the song was verbalizing the oppression women face in the society in an ironic method: "Bind me, tie me, chain me to the wall, I wanna be a slave to you all, thrash me crash me, beat

me till I fall, I wanna be a victim for you all.” Lyrics represented the violence, oppression, and power relations, such as male dominance, which constitutes women’s unequal position. After Styrene’s death, her daughter Celeste Bell was explaining how it was for her mother being on a stage in the 1970s:

But she’d tell me plenty of the negative stuff: the aggressiveness of the crowds, the spitting on stage, how very few women were present at many of these gigs – and how that made her terribly anxious about performing. (C. Bell, 2017)

Women have been carrying the anxiety of being judged for their capability of being a singer/guitarist/drummer in rock, just because they are women. In addition to the concrete obstacles that prevent women from entering the rock scene, psychological obstacles such as prejudicial thoughts of society and scene members, on the capability of women in rock, should be taken into consideration. Jessica Hopper, a rock criticist, shares her experience about researching the gender-based discrimination in the scene, in one of her speech; when she asked women and other people who are marginalized, about their marginalization in the scene, answers to her questions varied as such: Female musicians were asked that if they are with the band if they came to see their boyfriend perform or their capability of playing in the rock scene have been questioned. (Hopper, 2015) Even women exist in the art scene without the company of men; society expected them to be singers, dancers, models, etc. Kevin Petty states that:

Following the logic of patriarchy, successful female musicians are generally pigeonholed in this manner to prevent them from threatening the masculine privileges of musicianship, creativity, talent, genius: Hazel O'Connor and Amanda Lear tied to David Bowie, Nina Hagen tied to a dissident East German poet, Kate Bush tied to David Gilmour, Courtney Love tied to Kurt Cobain, ad Infinitum. Female performers are restricted to the roles of chanteuse or dancer. (Petty, 1995)

Women have been blamed for preventing male musicians' success for many years. However, when women gain success in the industry, it is assumed that there is a man (her musician boyfriend/her manager and many more) behind her success.

The events of being judged with the musical, technical, and artistic abilities, being judged for their appearances, and their bodies formed a dysfunctional and distressing platform for women in the scene. Joan Jett protested the dictated image of women in the scene. She states in one of her interviews in 2019:

What you're saying is society doesn't allow women to access their sexuality in relationship to music. They have to be a certain thing, and that's it. Once they do that, they're w-----, they're s----, they're d----.(Nolasco, 2019)

Confused society expects an unsexualized attitude from women because being 'dirty' is not very well received from society. However, the mainstream music scene expects provocative images and attitudes from women with the mentality of 'sex sells.' Once it is established, women are labeled in sexist tags by the environment.

Around the second half of the 1970s, Nina Hagen and Siouxsie Sioux were among the icons who had the courage to rebel against the dictated image of women in the music scene. Their common characteristics were they have performed within the same period, and they took inspirations from the punk music. Siouxsie Sioux, who fronted for the band Siouxsie and the Banshees, was named as one of the most influential British singers of rock era by the online music magazine 'Allmusic.' (Stone, n.d.) Sioux was challenging the mainstream idea of a woman in the scene with her unusual attitude and image. Leonard describes Sioux as such:

Punk performer Siouxsie Sioux of the well-known British band Siouxsie And The Banshees offered a visual challenge to conventions of female stage performance during the late 1970s by adopting a confronted, overtly sexual stage persona. (Leonard, 2007, p. 91)

In popular music, women's ability to dance is seen as an essential and compulsory talent. Since rock music does not involve in dance much, in order to disclose the sexuality of women, women are expected to behave more provocatively. Kevin Petty interprets Sioux's style as:

In both cases-pop/disco and rock-the female costume is expected to be both seductive and complementary to the actions of the performer. Siouxsie's actions and costumes, however, were enigmatic and indefinable within the pop music structure of knowledge of the feminine. (Petty, 1995)

With not adjusting to the rules of the mainstream music scene, Sioux carried rebellious characteristics. Even though she would face relentless critics, she was keen on her comfort and does not concern about gendered norms on stage clothing. Sioux confused the rock scene due to her ambiguous attitude, while societal norms in rock lead women into two strict images: well-tempered or nasty.

As other roles in the scene, singing methods are gendered as well. Screaming methods were unusual for women's choice; still, there is a reaction on a screamed song such as supposing some singers as male due to women can not scream, shout, and growl. Angela Gossow on 1970's punk singer and songwriter Nina Hagen:

She also sounds like a man, sometimes with a very deep voice. There are also many women with very deep voices, but that is naturally also affected by role models. Only it is disintegrating, I think. And growling is not totally male anymore. (...) And sometimes, I think it is not a compliment at all when men tell me, "you sound like a man," but it is almost an insult. (Heesch & Scott, 2016, p. 135)

This comment of Angela Gossow, who is also a lead vocalist for the metal band Arch Enemy, presumably has a background of Gossow's own experiences of sexism in the scene. Metal adopts growling and screaming from early alternative ancestries, which includes Nina Hagen among them. Feminist content in the alternative rock music is mostly centered in punk rock due to punk provides a convenient place for their emergence and progress; however, there are instances of feminist content in other alternative rock genres as well. Sonic Youth, alternative/noise rock band from New York, released a song in 1985, with the title 'Flower' which protests the gendered norms:

Support the power of women  
Use the power of man  
Support the flower of women

Use the word:

F\*ck

The word is love (Bert et al., n.d.)

Sonic Youth, approaches to the patriarchal power of men in a pragmatist way and offers to use it in the advantage of women. Using swearwords is defined as a men behavior, and it is not well received when women use them. By taking over the power of men, maybe Sonic Youth is referring to the discrimination on the choice of words. Sonic Youth leads women to gain their power back by adopting attitudes that do not hinge on the gendered norms. The set of words which are assigned as masculine can be used by women as well; Sonic Youth claims women's rights back on this issue. In this position, Sonic Youth performs as musicians while they maintain their politics on gendering. These kinds of activities were much needed in the rock scene; as a matter of fact, they will be bearing fruits in the following years as influencing feminist movements in the scene.

Viv Albertine, who was the guitarist for the band Slits between 1976-1982, states that she is still angry at the class, gender, and societal norms that dictate her in to behave in a specific way. She adds on, expressing that she still feels like an outsider in the society:

Female rage is not often acknowledged – never mind written about – so one of the questions I'm asking is: 'Are you allowed to be this angry as you grow older as a woman?' But I'm also trying to trace where my anger came from. Who made me the person that is still so raw and angry? I think that it's empowering to ask that question. I really hope it resonates with women. I want to say to younger women, especially that it's OK to be an outsider, it's OK to admit to your rage. You're not the only person walking down the street feeling angry inside. (O'Hagan, 2018)

At this point, it is evident that a need for the unity of women, especially in the scene as well, has been crucial in order to adjust the social in more equal terms. And while in the process, the unity of women provides power to them. Not being afraid of sharing the inegalitarian social experiences forms the first step of the progress. Sharing experiences also open the door to new knowledge that belongs to a specific standpoint

of a woman, which can not be correctly obtainable from another person. The unity of women in the scene must be inclusive, as it is a compulsory characteristic when defining an alternative scene member. Sharing experiences is empowering. It provides an opportunity to creating new discourses and forming politics against male dominance in the scene and the social life as well.

#### **4.2 Feminism in the Recent Alternative Rock Scene**

With the guidance of the feminist role models in alternative rock such as Joan Jett (The Runaways), Siouxsie Sioux (Siouxsie and the Banshees), Viv Albertine, Ari Up, Tessa Pollitt (The Slits), Poly Styrene (X-Ray Spex), Nina Hagen, Kim Gordon (Sonic Youth); new feminist discourses were generated following their footsteps. In common with other social insurrections, being the first one to raise voice in a fully male-dominated scene formed tough circumstances. The 1990s are known as the decade when women claim their power in the rock scene back.

Mecca Normal, Bikini Kill, 7 Year Bitch, L7, Slant 6, Bratmobile, PJ Harvey, Huggy Bear, Hole, Spitboy, The Julie Ruin, No Doubt, The Breeders, Garbage, Sleater-Kinney, Babes in Toyland and many more bands and musicians were the members of the most significant feminist discourse creators in the alternative rock scene. In the mid- 1980s, a significant feminist movement in the rock scene was emerging: Riot Grrrl. Apart from the Riot Grrrl, there were other women as well, who creates feminist content in the different alternative rock genres. They took influences from Riot Grrrl and the spirit of punk. Courtney Love and her band Hole did not identify themselves as Riot Grrrls, but they did not fall behind of forming feminist discourses for both the women in the scene and women in the audience and the social world. Love encourages women to take the power of their lives: “Do not hurt yourself, destroy yourself, mangle yourself to get the football captain. Be the football captain. That’s it.” (Love, 1993) She was taking her steps forward in her music career with this understanding. She interprets her career in the scene as:

I wanted the prize, and I might get the prize. If I don’t get the prize, I’ll be kind of sad but I’ll have gone down as being someplace in evolution that is a reference point to whoever does get the prize. The prize being the crown

passed from man to man to man in rock and roll and the prize is to get that crown and everything that goes with it as a woman on women's terms. (Love, 1993)

This is a statement that summarizes the male-dominated rock and roll history. Rock idols until the 1980s mostly consisted of male musicians. Also, grunge band Hole's most lyrics included statements on the issues of sexism, societal beauty standards, slut-shaming, hardships of being a woman in the male-dominated world. Lyrics of the Hole had the characteristics incidental to grunge; intangible, harsh, and complex. In order to comprehend Courtney Love and Hole's approach to feminist discourses, their three songs will be analyzed. Firstly; In the song 'Miss World' (1994) songwriter of the lyrics, Love expresses the experience of a perfect looking girl according to the societal norms; also she is 'Miss World,' a beauty contest winner, however, she feels alone, and does not have a perfect life, in contrary to her looks. She carried out the determined societal goals such as beauty; nevertheless, it does not give her comfort, and she wants to die. In here, there is a resemblance between the beauty contest winner and female musicians. There are not many instances of male musicians who get alienated because of their strange looks. However, Courtney Love was occasionally referred to as an ugly rockstar. Her drug addiction was one of the prior reasons for her bad reputation; however, the drug addiction is seen as an almost as a 'cool' thing for male rockstars. Secondly, 'Asking For It' (1994) refers to a harassment incident that Love faced. Stage diving is an event in which performers let themselves go in the audience crowd. The crowd carries them over their heads. Stage diving is a gendered event and dominated by men in the scene. Love describes the harassment she was exposed to as such:

Suddenly, it was like my dress was being torn off me, my underwear was being torn off me, people were putting their fingers inside of me and grabbing my breasts really hard." The worst thing, she went on, was seeing a photograph of herself later. And I had a big smile on my face like I was pretending it wasn't happening. I can't compare it to rape because it isn't the same. But in a way it was. I was raped by an audience figuratively, literally, and yet, was I asking for it? (France, 1996, p. 42)

Women in the alternative rock scene frequently deal with sexual harassment both within the stage and audience. Another example of the sexual harassment is stated by famous rapper Iggy Azalea as such: “Buying my album for \$12 doesn’t mean you get to finger me when I come to your city.” (Moskovitch, 2014) Outcome of the unfortunate events, she is reported that leaving stage diving completely. The stage and the place of audience of alternative rock were defined as a male space under the hegemony of male influence. Due to the gendered position of the scene, anxieties of stage diving have developed for women. These anxieties include being exposed to fat-shaming, judging because of their bodies, and sexual harassment. Women chose to wear layers of leggings in order to protect themselves, in case they would like to stage dive. Or else, they stopped stage diving and forced to hand the stage over back to men.

Third song from Hole, ‘Violet’ (1994), had themes such as sexual exploitation and violence.

You should learn when to go  
You should learn how to say no  
When they get what they want, and they never want it again  
Go on, take everything, take everything, I want you to  
Go on, take everything, take everything, I dare you to. (Love & Erlandson,  
n.d.)

The song was stressing the importance of being capable of saying ‘no.’ It might be interpreted that, coming from Love’s experiences on her past relationships, when in lack of opposition, it might lead the process to sexual exploitation. Today, the power of standing against the unwanted relations placed in our consciousness due to overly discussions through the years and raising voices on the subject. However, current progress is continuing on the subject of ‘no means no.’ This strongly resists and tries to diminish the unjust and violent practices of the male hegemony, which ignores women’s decision-making mechanism, sexual consent, and violates it.

In the 1990s, the rock scene and the world were facing an outstanding riot of women in the scene, which they have not seen before. Stage was a gendered place, but it was not the only physical place that offers hardships for women in the scene. Between the audience, the event called ‘mosh pit’ was taken as a male space as well. Mosh pit is

referred to as a punk rock based tradition in which people in the audience gather close to the stage and start to push or slam each other, in accordance with the music. It is often referred to as 'pit,' in short. In common with the participants of the audience of stage diving, sexual harassers exist in the pit as well. When there is an unequal balance, the pit becomes gendered. And in the best-case scenario, women leave the pit with bruises. In the case of inequality, the pit is open to the dangers of physical and sexual harassment. Due to the general knowledge of this situation, women might refrain get mixed in the crowd of the pit. Grunge/rock band L7 shares an experience of a woman who gets in the mosh pit in their song 'Everglade' (1992). In the song, a girl named 'everglade' was reclaiming back the mosh pit by defeating a masculine character who tries to dominate the pit as a man. The scene forms just one of the places that women face harassment. In the daily lives of women, harassment often occurs, whether it is sexual or physical. L7 verbalizes this situation and spill out their hatred against the harassers in their song 'Freak Magnet' (1993), stating:

Liars, losers, coming at me, what I need is sanctuary  
Minding my own business, getting in my face  
Violating my personal space

Something about you, is so not right  
Nightmare, nightmare, in the daylight  
Asking for my number, you wanna give me a call  
But I've got your message, written on the wall (Sparks & Gardner, n.d.-b)

This song forms an example of the activity of forcing unwanted sexual or physical intimacy, which is a type of sexual and psychological harassment. Sparks and Gardner use their experiences on the issue and become a spokesperson for any woman who goes through this situation.

It is usual for alternative rock bands that create feminist content to challenge the discriminative and misogynistic idioms and terms. For instance, the word 'balls' is occasionally used for the courage in vulgar language. In their song 'Fast and Frightening' L7 creates a rebellious female character. Lyrics include this statement: "Got so much clit she don't need no balls" (Sparks & Gardner, n.d.-a). Courageousness was assigned to a body part of men; therefore, it was assigned to men. At this point, it

was dictated due to women who do not have ‘balls’ physically; they might be cissy. L7 undermines the idea of being courageous is a trait that belongs to men in this song. They assign the courageousness to the clitoris in order to stand against the patriarchy in the language. According to their thought, women become equally courageous and, as a matter of fact, more courageous.

Another misogynistic thought of ‘being just a girl’ is challenged by the rock band No Doubt. Singer Gwen Stefani, and the guitarist Tom Dumont, wrote the song ‘Just a Girl.’ (1995) They criticized the gendered roles of women, such as being forced to wearing pink clothes and ribbons and needing the help and support of men. Lyrics include strong rejections of the socially constituted prototypes of women:

Cause I'm just a girl, little ol' me  
Well don't let me out of your sight  
Oh, I'm just a girl, all pretty and petite  
So don't let me have any rights  
Oh, I've had it up to here!

'Cause I'm just a girl  
I'd rather not be  
'Cause they won't let me drive  
Late at night  
Oh I'm just a girl  
Take a good look at me  
Just your typical prototype  
Oh, I've had it up to here! (Stefani & Dumont, n.d.)

These socially constituted roles of women undervalue identities and potentials of women. Whether it occurs in everyday life, professional life, and in the music scene, it generates inegalitarian social codes.

Some bands chose to empower women with their actions, except their lyrics. Kat Bjelland, singer of the grunge band ‘Babes in Toyland’ in an interview states that their band is close to feminism just in action, explains further:

Maybe just in action, because it’s all of us in the band and it’s just by what we’re doing. Just showing that women can do it by themselves. You know, we didn’t have a manager when we signed with Warner Brothers. Lori did a lot of the business at first... So I guess we do kind of represent feminist stuff, but we all have different politics, so as a whole, we’re just showing that people should

do what they want to do and have a good time and not let anything get in the way. (Schippers, 2002, p. 183)

Bjelland refrains using the label of 'feminist' for themselves and forms a neutralized stance. With all the screaming, growling, and furious rhythm of their music, the audience felt empowered as women. When women create role models for other women and ensure the progress of women in the male-dominated spaces, their actions can be respected as much as feminist actions.

Sexism is a notion which gets reproduced in a vicious cycle. Sarah Ahmed explains sexism as such:

The personal is institutional. When we talk about sexism we are often referring to something that is personal, but also in the world, reproduced by institutions; sexism as a habit, orientation, series, structure; assembly; sexism as material. When we talk about sexism as material, it is dismissed as mental, as 'in your head.'(Ahmed, 2016, p. 10)

Activity of sexism is under every human beings responsibility. Reproduction of sexism with these methods can be carried out by any person regardless of their gender. The practices of having topless dancers for their stage show is sexist due to the objectification of women. In addition to that, when the audience choose to undress for the musician's show, it is sexual objectification as well, which can be counted as an instance for sexism. As a publisher, interviewing a band which happens to consist of all-female members and creating headline as "All-female band 'x' ..." or "Women in rock: x ..." can be considered sexist.

In the book 'Rockin' out of the box: gender maneuvering' Mimi Schippers shares her interview with the rock band L7. In the book, Donita Sparks is reported to stand against the sexist genre labeling:

Gender is not a genre! You know lumping us in with Bikini Kill and Hole and Liz Phair, it's really sexist. Liz Phair is on the cover of Rolling Stone. She should be on the cover. She's really creative. She's doing really innovative

things. But they have to make it 'women in rock,' like it's some kind of special case. No. She should be on the cover regardless of her gender. It's a way to set us apart from real rock. It belittles women to lump them all together. (Schippers, 2002, p. 167)

Regarding, when there is no definition of 'all-male bands,' the definition of 'all-female band' is used due to rock performance is assigned to men, counted as men's profession and space. Expressions such as 'women in rock' also goes parallel with sexism, due to women in rock is not a genre. It is socially embraced by the society that women's existence in rock is an unusual event; therefore, when defining women who perform rock music, it is chosen to use the definition 'women in rock' such as 'alien in rock.' It is a very strong case of alienation. Lastly, just in common with the spreading of feminism, sexism also spreads in the social lives of performers, audience, and scene members, which adds up to forming sexist actions outside of the stage. Experiences and state of mind follow their way to the music. When the performers define themselves as feminists, their feminist standpoint and ideas can often be detectable from their music as well. It is the same case with sexism: when performers practice sexist acts and are close-minded on the issue, it eventually complies with their music and acts of performances.

#### **4.2.1 Subversion of the Sexist Practices in the Scene**

The concept of subversion is explained as a dominant mode of understanding in which female musicians differently interpret gender identities. (Leonard, 2007, p. 91) 'Subversion' is used by female performers in different ways. Elaborating Leonard's conception of subversion, it includes subversive images, discourses, performances in and outside of the stage.

Siouxsie Sioux created an overtly sexual image while Nina Hagen chose to use an aggressive amount of makeup and form an outstanding image. Patti Smith, who is mostly referred to as a rock legend, existed in a fierce androgynous image in the scene. Courtney Love from the band Hole, chose a 'kinderwhore' image (which was found within the 1990s alternative rock scene), rebelling to the sl\*tshaming through the instrument of babydolls, mary jane shoes and vintage and torn dresses. According to Leonard, she was rebelling against the groomed, glamorous, feminine public image.

(Leonard, 2007, p. 91) Some punk performers chose to adopt punk characteristics in their style: chains, spikes, leather jackets, and patches.

Stage performances enrich the concept of subversion as well. Leonard gives instances of two events: Firstly, Lynn Breedlove, singer of the punk band Tribe 8, took off her shirt and placed a dildo in the zip of her jeans. And in addition, while a song about gang rape, she cut the dildo and throw it to the audience. According to their explanation, the performance aimed to unleash the aggression and pain, and it was addressed to the violence. (Leibetseder, 2012, p. 177) Hence this forms a strong example of a criticism of the gender-based violence, sexism, and rape culture. Secondly, Singer of the punk rock/riot grrrl band Bikini Kill sings about incest exposes one of her breasts and shouts 'suck my left one.' (Leonard, 2007, p. 93) The idiom of 'suck my left one' is constituted as a power statement for women against the notions such as sexism, incest, harassment, rape. It is about women claiming their power back and fight back at these sexist notions and actions. It is an example of subversion of the male-power.

The opinion on 'being a woman' was created by the patriarchal society, which is based on the duality of feminine/masculine characteristics of two genders. Being a woman is interpreted as being a lady. Another subversion was created to demolish the idea of a feminine, idealized lady image of women. However, women's existence in the masculine rock scene is a rebellion all by itself, performances which subvert this notion created non-negligible feminist progress in the scene. 'Bloody tampon' incident is an example of this subversion. In 1992, L7 was announced to perform at the Reading Festival. An Incident is reported to take place during the performance of L7 in which technical difficulties in audio equipment occurred. Hence, disruption of the set annoyed the audience. When the audience started to hit the stage with muds, Donita Sparks, singer of the L7, reacted to the crowd. She is reported that she went to behind the amps, took her used tampon, then came back and stated: "I got a surprise for you all. Eat my used tampon, f\*ckers!" and threw her tampon to the crowd. (Anupama, 2015) Subsequently, tampon throwing was interpreted by rock critics as 'not ladylike.' It was an act that destroyed the lady image.

Mimi Schippers, in her book 'Rockin' Out of the Box: Gender maneuvering' she

states that she witnessed a Hole concert when Courtney Love got sexually harrassed while stage diving and punched the harasser in his face. Later, Schippers is written to be informed that it is a part of Hole's stage show, and it was not the first incident, it was a repetitive event. (Schippers, 2002, pp. 155–156) If it is a strategized plan on subversing the sexist practices and forming a protesting act against sexual harassment, the band members were certain on the fact that they will be facing sexual harassment while stage diving. And of course, this certainty comes from personal experiences of women within the band.

'Girls to the front' is a name for another approach which aimed to carry out the subversion of the male hegemony within the audience of alternative rock shows. This approach was started by the band Bikini Kill. The band encouraged other bands to follow this approach, so a safe space could be generated for women in the shows. Kathleen Hanna asks from the male crowd to move to sides or the back of the show space, and women to come in front of the performance space, by this they aimed to grant women a safe space while moshing. This is also creating a privilege to women while standing against the unjust male power performances in the mosh pit. Kathi Wilcox, the bass player from the Bikini Kill, is reported to state that:

We do encourage girls to the front. Sometimes when shows have gotten really violent, we had to ask boys to move to the side or the back because it was just too f\*cking scary for us, after several attacks and threats, to face another sea of hostile boy-faces right in the front. Especially when it was at the expense of the girl who really wanted to see us. (Bracken, 2018)

The aim of the approach was not to exclude men from shows; it was to diminish the male violence. Another subversive approach adopted by alternative rock musicians is to label themselves with red lipstick or paint on their body parts. Labels reflect the mainstream, male-centered perception. Labelization included words such as sl\*t, wh\*re, c\*nt, b\*tch, and witch. The prominent performers were Kathleen Hanna and Courtney Love. It was another action that was founded in order to speak for all of the women in the scene and in social life, who get labeled in such words. It was part of a rebellion against silencing women.

## **4.3 Cases of Riot Grrrl and Pussy Riot**

### **4.3.1 Riot Grrrl**

Riot Grrrl was a political feminist music movement that emerged at the beginning of the 1990s, mainly in Washington. Since they share the same background with grunge, the movement was associated with alternative rock subgenre, grunge music. However, since the dynamics of the music are common with punk rock (repetitive guitar riffs, no guitar solos, furious lyrics), riot grrrl was associated with punk rock as well.

The Word 'grrrl' was initially used by Kathleen Hanna, who was the lead singer of the band "Bikini Kill." The word was used as a regenerated version of 'girl.' The stress on the letter 'r' stands for power, anger, and protest. According to Ednie Kaeh Garrison, Riot Grrrl is an alternative subculture that stands against the idea that U.S. girls are interested in themselves while boys can be creative, political, and loud. (Garrison, 2000)

The underground feminist punk movement is a subcultural movement that combines feminist consciousness, punk music, and politics. Riot grrrl was home to rebellious acts against consumer culture, capitalism, and patriarchy. The lyrics of the songs challenge the patriarchal society and binary mode of thoughts in this movement. Heteronormativity and mainstream values such as gendered roles were criticized within the movement. Some of the significant bands which are associated with the movement include Bikini Kill, Bratmobile, Huggy Bear and Sleater-Kinney, Heavens to Betsy, Excuse 17, and queer-focused Riot Grrrl bands such as Team Dresch and The Third Sex.

The movement was progressing forward with their distribution of their 'Zines,' which is a kind of fanzine. Like-minded women initiated zine in order to speak against the unequal social issues. Marion Leonard explains zine as such: "Zines are self-published texts devoted to a wide variety of topics including hobbies, music, film, and politics." (Leonard, 2007, p. 138) The most prominent zine among the other zines was 'Bikini Kill,' which is stated that found by the members of the Riot Grrrl band Bikini Kill. (Hanna, n.d.-b) Zine was asserted to dwell on issues such as; "AIDS, healthcare for women, low-income housing, domestic violence, your feelings on war, racism, art

fascism, etc...” and it was open for the contributions of other women: “ make your own amendments and additions to the list.” (Hanna, Vail, et al., 1991, p. 14) Zine culture was built upon naming the social issues and validating their importance. Riot Grrrl movement aimed to stand against the “racism, able-bodieism, ageism, speciesism, classism, thinism, sexism, antisemitism and heterosexism” (Hanna, Vail, et al., 1991) With encouraging women to speak up on issues, to make statements based on their personal experiences, Bikini Kill ensures the emergence of their standpoint both in the alternative rock scene and in the feminism.

Within the Riot Grrrl Manifesto, which appears on the second volume of the Bikini Kill Zine, it is stated that: “BECAUSE us girls crave records and books and fanzines that speak to US that WE feel included in and can understand in our own ways.” (Hanna, Wilcox, et al., 1991) When examining an ordinary, popular song, it is possible to notice that the lyrics respond to the needs of a patriarchal man. In an ordinary song in an ordinary society, the target market will be the patriarchal society. Apart from the sexist lyrics, the video of the song is most likely to include sexist elements, either. The video of the product aims to promote the musical product. Therefore the elements inside of the video are determined according to that. Lyrics and the representation of women in the videos mostly exclude or degrade women. With this, the need to create the records, books, and fanzines that speak to women arose from here. While it is nearly impossible to sell an antisexist product in the patriarchal industry, it is predictable that the major companies reject these kinds of attempts under their label. As for the solution to this problem, Riot Grrrls suggest that: “BECAUSE we must take over the means of production in order to create our own moanings.” (Hanna, Wilcox, et al., 1991) The idea of Riot Grrrl record labels was born when feminist music met the punk mentality of ‘do it yourself.’ Riot Grrrls either created their music and released them with their opportunities unofficially, or they had the same process under their labels.

Riot Grrrl movement is known as an angry, aggressive movement of music. One of the primary triggers of this anger and aggressiveness is the imposed gendered roles and standards. Along with practicing gendered roles in the industry, music is being used as a tool for imposing gendered roles. Manifesto says: “BECAUSE we are angry at a society that tells us Girl = Dumb, Girl = Bad, Girl = Weak.” (Hanna, Wilcox, et al., 1991) Riot grrrl stands against the common representation of women in the society, especially in the music industry. Society constructed the gendered dichotomy based

on the differences between women and men such as taking men as rational and women emotional, while it is expected from women to be thin and graceful, men are expected to be tall and muscular, even the occupations are segregated by gender. The first issue of the zine leads us to query the socially given privileges:

Recognize privileges given to you as a member of an ‘ideal’ group. If you are on any of these categories then you get a certain amount of privilege from being: White... Male... Adult... Christian... Christian... Moneyed... Heterosexual... Meat-eating... American... Young. Learn how your behaviors or privileges affect people who do not fall into the same categories as you. Listen to people when they talk to you.” (Hanna, Vail, et al., 1991, p. 13)

The first step to the strive for an equal ground is to naming issues that cause inequality. Naming social issues that creates discrimination is a significant and initiator step of the process. Riot Grrrls often choose to speak up against privileges in their music as well.

The song White Boy from Bikini Kill starts with a male voice, which discuss about how women ‘ask for it’. The male voice represents male domination, which creates a connection between the way women act and men’s behavior, which includes harassing women and not asking for consent. The song criticizes the mentality of white, sexist men who takes the harassment for granted to them. After the male voice, Kathleen Hanna continues to sing and scream:

White boy  
Don't laugh  
Don't cry  
Just die  
I'm so sorry if I'm alienating some of you  
Your whole f\*cking culture alienates me  
I can not scream from pain down here on my knees  
I'm so sorry that I think! (Hanna, n.d.-a)

‘White boy’ identifies with the male voice at the beginning of the song and all of the sexist white male human beings. The reason choose ‘white’ male as a target is to they assert that being white is being privileged. In addition to that: being white male adds up to being even more privileged in the patriarchal society.

Bikini Kill is also known as using their sexuality to express the power of women and reverse the sexual objectification of women. Patriarchal social norms have two approaches to female sexuality. First, it gives the idea to women that their sexuality is shameful, and it should be hidden. The second approach is placed in the opposite position, and it objectifies women's bodies and transforms women into sexual objects which will serve to heterosexual men. With the narrative lyrics and stage performances, the band strengthens their assertions on the subversion of the social norms, which state women's sexuality is something to be ashamed of, and it should be hidden. With this approach band also aims to demolish the sexual objectification of women's bodies and give women back their power on their bodies. While women's sexuality is taken as a shameful notion according to gendered norms, men's sexuality is taken as something that men should be proud for. In the song 'New Radio,' Bikini Kill use narrative lyrics to stress on the emancipated sexual freedom of women.

Lyrics such as: "Come here, baby, let me kiss you like a boy does." could be interpreted as women are claiming their sexual power just as much as men. (Hanna et al., n.d.) Sexual reputation, which differs by gender, is taken as 'Double Standard' in a study which includes statements as:

One young woman captures it succinctly: "If you sleep around you're a slag if a bloke sleeps around he's lucky." This double standard of sexual reputation was taken for granted by some, resisted, or even ridiculed by others. (J. Holland et al., 1996, p. 242)

Bikini Kill adopts the position which resists and ridicules the double standardization of the sexual reputation.

Conformity to the double standard was understandable to both women and men because of the assumption that 'women want love and men want sex.' Implicit more often than explicit in the transcripts was the message that women could not afford to want sex - being rampant was off the feminine agenda. (J. Holland et al., 1996, p. 243)

Within the modernist, gendered norms: it is asserted that women are emotional, and men are reasonable. In addition to that, men are rightful owners of the lust. Bikini Kill subverts the double standardized notion and claim women's sexual power and their right to be libidinal back as well.

The notion of incest is defined by Vikki Bell as such: "it is in fact about relations of power between groups: between men and women, and between men and children, particularly in the context of the institution of the family." (V. Bell, 1993, p. 4) However, alternative rock musicians prefer to speak up to physical, psychological, and sexual violence, speaking up on incest is rarely seen in the lyrics. Disturbance of the issue leads to avoidance of the issue by many musicians. Ignoring issues adds up to overlook. Kathleen Hanna, in an interview, stated that:

I've had so many people come to me with stories of sexual abuse and being battered by their parents. People talking about sexual abuse and getting beat up and emotional abuse in their houses is so important, and making bands around that issue is, to me, the new punk rock—can be the new punk rock. And I want to encourage people to break their silence. (Marcus, 2010, p. 91)

Kathleen Hanna does not only encourage women to speak up, but she also encourages them to form a union, speak their experiences, speak their minds, share their standpoints in the alternative rock scene as well:

I'm really interested in a punk rock movement—an angry girl movement of sexual abuse survivors. I seriously believe it's the majority of people in this country have stories to tell that they aren't telling for some reason. I mean, with all of that energy and anger, if we could unify it in some way. (Marcus, 2010, p. 91)

Unifying women into the common experiences and actions against the sexism was the aim of Riot Grrrl. Musicians chose to carry out this rebellion with music, zines, and activism. Bikini Kill took every opportunity to reflect the vitalism for the unification of women. The band was reaching out to the other grrrls, with demonstration of a girl as a representative of all grrrls, within their lyrics:

When she talks, I hear the revolution  
In her hips, there's revolution

When she walks, the revolution's coming  
In her kiss, I taste the revolution  
Rebel girl, rebel girl  
Rebel girl you are the queen of my world

Bikini Kill started the fire, and their encouragements did not go unanswered. Many Riot Grrrl bands were formed and started practicing and performing at the beginning of the 1990s. Team Dresch followed Bikini Kill's suggestions and joined to the movement of the riot. They stress the solidarity with their song 'She's Amazing' (1995):

She's amazing, her words save me  
She holds her head as if it's true  
Read about her in the papers and on TV  
They say she's outspoken  
Many people will try to destroy her  
But if she were to stop, I stop, we all stop (Dresch et al., n.d.)

Other grrrl bands dwelled on the common issues Bikini Kill focuses on as well, such as physical, psychological and sexual violence, gendered roles, masculinity, body image, protection, the solidarity of women. Gendered roles are taken as the essential nature of our identities in the modern thought. Being feminine is mostly occurs as being a 'lady' or 'ladylike.' Behaving, such as ladies, is seen as compulsory due to dualist thought on feminine/masculine. Bratmobile, questioned the term 'lady' in their song 'Are You a Lady?' (2002): "Are you a lady, are you a girl, Tell me who taught you how to behave" (Wolfe, Smith, et al., n.d.) One of the significant hardships women in the scene encounters is to be criticized for their behavior, which is not 'ladylike.' First, the rock scene is taken as a masculine space, and all the behaviors that are performed in the scene are assigned to men. When women initiate to perform in the scene, it is interpreted that they act 'masculine' and they get criticized for this situation. The second, the performance methods of singing and playing instruments are also gendered in the context of the rock scene. Softer tunes were expected from women, while men can perform rock in which they can scream, growl, use fast and loud guitar riffs, and percussions.

Everyday experiences of women show that, in personal relationships, the practice of masculinity is often made under cover of the label 'love.' Riot Grrrl took a step to diminish this misconception and aimed to separate love from sexual harassment and violence. Sleater Kinney shares a narrative of a relationship in their song 'A Real Man' (1995):

Don't you wanna feel it inside?  
They say that it feels so nice  
All girls should have a real man  
Should I buy it? I don't wanna  
I don't wanna join your club  
I don't want your kind of love

In the narrative, a 'real man' tries to convince a woman to have intercourse by merely tricking her mind and labeling his actions as love actions. 'Love problem' also exists in the subject of violence as well. Regardless of the results of psychological, sexual, or physical violence, heterosexual men tend to acquit their actions with 'love.' Bikini Kill approaches to this subject with their song 'Feels Blind' (1991):

I'm the woman I was taught to always be: hungry  
Yeah women are well acquainted with thirst  
Well, I could eat just about anything  
We might even eat your hate up like love (Vail et al., n.d.)

As well as speaking about the violence which occurs under the label of love, these phrases additionally points out to societal norms on women's standardized body. Bikini Kill stresses the socially imposed beauty standards and asserts that it is a notion that is taught and socially constructed. The band aims to diminish the pressure on women, with their political lyrics on the issue.

Riot Grrrl is embracing the feminist standpoint values, such as criticizing the essentialism of women. They embrace the multiplicity of women and assert that every woman should create their own standpoints from their experiences. Bratmobile, in their song 'Do You Like Me Like That?' criticizes the perception of men, which is unifying women into one category and ignores the multiplicity of women. (2000)

“You're taking one thing that one girl does and making it represent all of us.” (Wolfe, Neuman, et al., n.d.) Behaviors of women may vary to the cultural context they live in. Women from different backgrounds will have different experiences. It is expectable that different behaviors may arise from different experiences. Therefore universalization and the essentialization of women lead the society to false outcomes.

Another significant point is to be; riot grrrl does not accept the validity of the spoken experiences of women, which are transmitted by men. Only women can share their experiences in their true meanings. Men's expressions on women are taken shape by the patriarchal, mainstream mode of thinking; therefore, it does not reflect the truth. Bratmobile expresses the significance of women's reflection on their own experiences in the same song:

The only thing you know is your rich boy world  
You're talking politics on your pedestal  
And you half-baked idea of 'what it means to be a girl'

But you can't feel how we suffer or we bleed  
You can't give us what we want, much less what we need.(Wolfe, Neuman, et al., n.d.)

The answer to these questions, what it means to be a girl, how women suffer, how women bleed can only be told by women. There will be multiple answers to these questions due to the multiplicity of women. However, Riot Grrrl is an anti-racist movement and outspoken about antiracism as well; the movement involved mostly white women in the beginning, which leads them to criticize the movement. Embracing the multiplicity while dominated as white women caused contradictions. Heavens to Betsy released a song named 'White Girl' in 1994. Lyrics of the song included statements such as:

White girl.  
I want to change the world,  
But I won't change anything,  
Unless I change my racist self.

It's a privilege, it's a background.  
It's everything that I own,  
It's thinking I'm the hero of this pretty white song.(Tucker & Tracy, n.d.)

Self-criticism is the key to progress. Just as it is with the social sciences, social movements progress can be created with self-criticism. Riot Grrrl, in that sense, was open for other women's contributions and criticisms as well as self-criticism.

#### **4.3.2 Pussy Riot**

Pussy Riot is an anarchist feminist punk rock band that is formed in Moscow in 2011. One of the band members, Nadya Tolokonnikova, states that she started the Pussy Riot with the influence of the riot grrrl band Bikini Kill: "It just gave me this beautiful feeling that probably I'm doing the right thing." (Donaldson, 2019) Pussy Riot is mostly known for its performance in Christ the Savior Cathedral of Moscow on 21 February 2012. Five young women jumped on the altar and started playing their song. The lyrics of the song criticized the following subjects: the gendered roles Christianity imposes on the society, the relation between the Orthodox church and the political acts of the Russian president Vladimir Putin, misogynist and anti-LGBTI discourse of the religion. Lyrics of their song 'Punk Prayer' which they performed at the church included statements such as:

Virgin birth-giver of God, drive away Putin!  
Drive away Putin, drive away Putin!  
Black frock, golden epaulets  
Parishioners crawl bowing [toward the priest, during the Eucharist]  
Freedom's ghost [has gone to] heaven  
A gay-pride parade [has been] sent to Siberia in shackles  
Their chief saint is the head of the KGB  
He leads a convoy of protestors to jail  
So as not to insult the Holiest One  
Woman should bear children and love  
Virgin birth-giver of God, become a feminist!  
Become a feminist, become a feminist! (Tayler, 2012)

Their criticism of the Virgin birth giver of God was pointed at the gendered politics that are carried out today in Russia with the contribution of religion. With ‘become a feminist’ statement band give voice to Russian women who suffer from the unjust practices of religion and aims to lead the Church to support egalitarian rights. However, three members were arrested after the performance; the band became very successful in raising their voices against the unequal practices and heard by masses of people around the globe. In the following days, it is announced that three members of the band were convicted of ‘hooliganism and violation of public order’ to two years of jail sentence. (*Pussy Riot members jailed for two years for hooliganism*, n.d.) Putin was reported to state that about the conviction:

Their arrest was right and their sentence was right. One must not erode moral fundamentals and undermine the country. What will be left without that? I have nothing to do with that. They got what they asked for. (*Putin deems fair Pussy Riot sentence*, n.d.)

Regarding the statement of Putin, the moral politics of the government was subverted by Pussy Riot. Protests of the government politics, which are conducted by traditional and religious values, aimed to gain women’s and LGBTI rights back. Countless people from all around the world, feminists and pro feminists, human rights advocates were united for the freedom of the members of Pussy Riot. In that sense, Pussy Riot successfully created a substantial questioning of gendered politics, raised their voices, and provided solidarity of feminists on the issue.

#### **4.4 Functionality of Feminist Practices in the Scene**

##### **4.4.1 Consciousness Raising**

When first consciousness-raising practices were emerging, they were mainly used by mostly radical feminists as a practice to stand against the patriarchy. In order to build a feminist consciousness and comprehend the phenomenon of feminist consciousness, regular meetings occurred regularly. Kathie Sarachild, who was in the initiative feminist consciousness-raising group at the beginning of 1970s, states in her article that:

Our aim in forming a women's liberation group was to start a mass movement of women to put an end to the barriers of segregation and discrimination based on sex. We knew radical thinking and radical action would be necessary to do this. (Sarachild, 1978, p. 144)

Some practices of Riot Grrrl and Pussy Riot shows some similarities with the practices of radical feminists. Radical feminists aimed to exclude men from their practices due to abstaining from their male-biased consciousness. However, radical feminists were strict on excluding men; feminists in the alternative music scene softened the exclusion. It is perceptible that men exist as a minority in their musical activities as performers and feminists in the scene were more open to contributions of pro-feminist men related to radical feminists. However, in order to maintain the egalitarian ground in the scene, Bikini Kill invented the 'girls to the front' which is mentioned in the section of 'Subversion of the Sexist Practices in the Scene.' By this practice, Bikini Kill accepts the existence of men in their performance space however in order to prevent potential disturbance which is carried out by men, and to ensure women a privileged position in the space considering their disadvantaged position in the general rock scene; they preferred to maintain their practice 'girls to the front.'

Another shared point of radical feminism and feminism in the rock scene is the movement of consciousness-raising. Riot grrrl was started with women's consciousness-raising meetings and proceeded with the zines, which are outcomes of these meetings and their musical movement. Riot Grrrl manifesto explains the goal of these meetings as such:

Help us gain the strength and sense of community that we need in order to figure out how bullsh\*t like racism, able-bodieism, ageism, speciesism, classism, thinism, sexism, antisemitism and heterosexism figures in our own lives. (Hanna, Vail, et al., 1991)

In addition to the discussion on prevalent issues on sexism, these meetings aimed to discuss the issues that were not effectively given voices before, such as the discrimination in the scene, and they aimed to strengthen the new discussions on intersectionality, queer practices.

Consciousness-raising meetings of riot grrrl supports the aim of meetings with their publications of zines and the content of their music. Ednie Kaeh Garrison, emphasizes the importance of tools such as lyrics, zines, productions of music, content on the internet, which are used to construct the feminist consciousness. (Garrison, 2000, p. 150) These tools enable women to interact with each other, share their experiences and discussions on gendered issues, and form and develop feminist consciousness. Meetings of women, zines, activism practices, and feminist contents open up an opportunity to resist to male-oriented rock scene as well as the patriarchal structure of the social world.

The role of grrrl zines on feminist consciousness was emphasized by Mary Celeste Kearney as such:

In addition to identifying certain historical women as feminist role models, many grrrl zines provide lists of books and articles considered important for the development of feminist consciousness, identity, politics, and culture. (Kearney, 2006, p. 175)

Feminist consciousness was supported by sharing sources in addition to creating sources. Within this process of sharing and creating, a collective feminist consciousness takes place. Collective feminist consciousness, which is derived from feminist practices and tools that were mentioned above, becomes related to collective feminist practices, collective feminist identities.

Stage was also used for the consciousness-raising practices by riot grrrl bands. Siegfried asserts that Kathleen Hanna, singer of the riot grrrl band Bikini Kill, practices consciousness-raising with sharing microphone with women in the audience in order to share gendered experiences such as inequality, sexism, harassment, and other multiple issues. (Siegfried, 2019, p. 25) With this practice, women do not only create a collective feminist consciousness, but they also find a platform to get together and build an inclusive solidarity.

#### 4.4.2 Solidarity

Riot Grrrl carries the characterization of the feminist solidarity for women, while Pussy Riot is evaluated as a Russian Riot Grrrl practice which aims to form a solidarity and unity for; primarily Russian women who suffer under the pressure of Russian politics and generally women from the all around the globe, who are oppressed. Women are meeting with each other under the same roof of disadvantages and unequal practices of the patriarchal social order; however, they have differences based on their background. Even though they have different experiences, the goals of women are the same; putting a stop to gendered inequality.

In the light of these informations, activist practices that are carried out by feminists, lyrics, zines both create feminist consciousness and the notion of solidarity and unity for women.

However, Riot grrrl was firstly emerged as a white movement due to it points out only white women's issues; it continued its process as an inclusive movement. Comstock asserts that:

Sabrina Sandata of Bamboo Girl began her zine in early 1995 because she couldn't find anything to read on girls like me, a mutt (Filipina/Spanish/Irish/Scottish/a little Chinese) who was in-your-face about issues within the hardcore/punk and/or queer communities. (Comstock, 2001, p. 393)

The movement was influenced by the intersectional feminist movement and studies and started being an inclusive movement in the middle of the 1990s. Today, for instance, Pussy Riot performs its activism in the name of Russian women and all of the women around the globe. In addition to that, the prison sentence of Pussy Riot members was protested by countless people with the hashtag 'FreePussyRiot' on social media. Also, women protested the sentence with the statement: 'We are all Pussy Riot.' The common point of Riot Grrrl and Pussy Riot can be explained in this concluding sentence: feminist practices in the alternative rock scene lead the way to the solidarity and unity of women.

### **4.4.3 Politics**

Riot Grrrl and Pussy Riot both qualifies politics with their feminist practices. Starting from the point of 'personal is political,' women's personal experiences determine their feminist discourses and feminist politics.

Politics of feminist practices stems from women's personal experiences, and it includes goals such as speaking up against discrimination based on sex, gender, sexual orientation, race, class. Politics enable women to accept their own identity and embrace a feminist consciousness. It also encourages women to embrace each other with their differential experiences and learn from other's experiences. Feminist politics in the scene stands against the gendered inequality with the contributions of lyrics, zines, activist practices.

### **4.5 Feminist Analysis of the Scene**

In the light of the information which is derived from the sources of interviews, song lyrics, articles in zines and actions of feminist activism within and outside of the scene, it can be concluded that alternative rock scene has shared values with feminism and Feminist Standpoint Theory.

First of all, it is perceivable that the dichotomic understanding is prevalent in the music scene. Feminist Standpoint Theory challenges dichotomy by criticizing the modernist thought. Theory used feminist methods to diminish the dichotomic understanding of the social. Information that is derived from the sources shows the dichotomy of feminine and masculine was socially built in the scene. On the one hand, feminine characterizations in the mainstream scene are identified with these elements: soft, emotional music, soft singing methods, estrogen, soft instruments.

On the other hand, masculine characterizations in the scene are identified with these elements: rock music (which is heavy and aggressive), screaming and growling methods of singing, rock instruments. Apart from the music, dichotomic thought on male and female nature stays relevant and reflects on music as well. Feminine characterizations took place as emotional, fragile, easily defeated. Approaching women as 'just a girl' and all of its meanings, which are hidden under the phrase, were criticized in the lyrics of songs due to the dichotomic understanding of 'just a girl' and

‘strong and capable men.’ Furthermore, the understanding of women aspire only love while men aspire intercourse is also criticized due to the dichotomy it creates on men and women. This dichotomic thought bears a resemblance to the recognition of women are emotional while men are rational.

Derived information of the analysis demonstrates that there is a significant distinction of the space in terms of sexism in the scene. While the mainstream rock scene is accepted as a male space, women who want to perform or exist as an audience in the stage are marginalized from the scene. Dichotomic thought on the instruments contribute to this marginalization by preventing women from playing rock instruments, performing singing with methods such as screaming and growling. In addition to that, physical spaces such as mosh pits and stages are also detected to be gendered in the scene. Mosh pit, as a male-dominated space, involves dangers of physical violence or sexual harassment for women. Also, stage diving involves a high chance of sexual harassment. Performing in the scene is a subject of gendered distinction due to performers are taken granted as men while women are pictured as girlfriends, fans of the male performers. These dualistic perceptions of the scene are also challenged by feminists in the scene, along with feminist standpoint theorists challenge it on its theoretical base. Labels and genres which state ‘all-female band’ and ‘women in rock’ degrades women’s existence in the scene and their music. In addition to assertions of the Feminist Standpoint Theory which states that the experiences of women should be expressed by women who are the owners of the specific experiences, if there is a need for labeling, creating labels or genres in terms of music, should be made by the performers and owners of the activities only. Information states that the male-dominated scene creates labels and genres for women’s activity in the mainstream rock scene, and it only reproduces and strengthens the discrimination against women.

Labeling issue is also relevant for women’s image in the mainstream rock scene as well as social life. It is perceptible that the confining women’s image in two categories, such as well-tempered and nasty, contributes to the discrimination against women. This also forms an instance for the sexual objectification on women. Within the light of the information, women in the scene challenge this idea by the method of subversion with building their sexuality only according to their own will, whether their image is

overtly sexual, non-sexual, or any type of sexuality which they embrace. Subversion also includes challenges that are pointed out to labeling women as 'lady' along with swear words that degrade women.

Feminist Standpoint Theory asserts that feminist research should start from the lives of marginalized people. By this, providing epistemic privilege, less partial and distorted reality would be obtained. (Harding, 1992, p. 56) Women constitute the marginalized part of the male-dominated rock scene. Therefore, this research starts from the lives of women within the scene.

Body politics are dwelled on by rock musicians. In the dichotomic understanding of social thought, women are taken as thin, elegant while men are taken as strong and powerful. This situation is relevant to the mainstream rock scene as well. Therefore both feminists and feminist standpoint theorists criticize this dichotomy both on a practical and theoretical basis.

Both Feminist Standpoint Theory and feminism in alternative rock embrace the multiplicity of women. It is avoided to restrict women in one category in the social and in rock music. Women deny to be labeled as 'women in rock' due to it is not a valid genre, and there are various genres that are performed. The multiplicity of women is also embraced with a non-discriminative approach in the alternative rock scene. However, women do not accept to be unified in one category; they perform against the discriminative practices in the scene in one subcultural group whose members have the same goals against the mainstream rock scene. By this means, the solidarity of women on women's benefits are assured.

Issues such as sexual harassment, sexual violence, sexual exploitation, physical violence, psychological harassment are taken as a subject by alternative rock musicians while mainstream rock ignored them. Experiences on the issues were transmitted by women who experienced them, which is in accordance with the methods of Feminist Standpoint Theory.

Social discriminations created privileged groups of people. As a white male-dominated scene, the mainstream rock scene did not take privileges as subjects either in their songs or in their discourses. While the members of the mainstream rock scene

enjoy their privileges, alternative scenes aimed to subvert their privileges by speaking up about them with the contribution of lyrics. Their experience related to sharings about the privileges and its outcomes, mostly regarding the sexism in the scene, helps the consciousness-raising both in the scene and the social life.

From the data which are derived from the literature and the examples of the cases Riot Grrrl and Pussy Riot, it becomes observable that feminism can be empowered in three approaches in the alternative rock music scene:

- Sharing women's experiences with; lyrics, interviews, zines
- Raising consciousness
- Forming solidarity between women
- Creating politics

Especially it is clear that Pussy Riot and Riot Grrrl movements became successful on sharing experiences, raising consciousness among women, forming solidarity and creating and performing politics in the scene. The effects they created on people, can be still considered as relevant in the rock scene.

In conclusion, the alternative rock scene granted a fertile space for both feminism and Feminist Standpoint Theory. With creating means of production such as records, zines, articles, and books, women found the place to share their standpoints in the scene. With the contribution of their sources of production, women subverted the image of women, which is created in the male-dominated mainstream rock scene and society. In addition to that, women found the chance to express their own experiences of their daily lives and created politics on gendering from these experiences. By this, they were able to discuss their experiences and raise consciousness among the other scene members which eventually led to a solidarity among women. This solidarity strengthened their politics on gendering in the scene. In conclusion, combining forces of the alternative rock scene and feminist approaches in the scene allowed this feminist progress on women's herstory.

## CHAPTER 5

### WOMEN IN THE TURKISH ALTERNATIVE ROCK SCENE

‘Women in the Turkish Alternative Rock Scene’ starts with a brief introduction of Turkish alternative rock scene which is analyzed from a feminist approach. This introduction aims to briefly explain the gendered structure of the Turkish rock scene. The analysis of the interviews with women musicians in the Turkish alternative rock scene starts in the following section ‘Sharing Experiences in the Scene.’ The functionality of experience sharing in the scene is discussed in this part. Subsequently, an elaborate discussion of women’s experiences were given place in the following section ‘Women’s Experiences in the Scene’. Women’s experiences were collected under the sub headings such as: Male domination, existing as a woman, sexual objectification, being selective regarding the choice of band members and stage places, gendered roles, managing administrative relations, stage dive and mosh pit, representation of women. Within this part, it is my aim to answer the overarching research question of the study: “How do women’s experiences get constituted in the alternative rock scene?”

After these discussions, feminist progress in the scene will be discussed under the sub headings of: consciousness raising, solidarity, politics. Within this part, it is my aim to answer the subquestions of the research: “How do women’s experiences contribute to the consciousness-raising, forming solidarity and creating politics in the alternative rock scene?”

Common strategies which are offered by interviewees were given place in this chapter as a last section of the research. In conclusion, chapter ends with a conclusion part.

The effects of the emergence of rock music all over the world became noticeable during the 1960s. When traditional popular Turkish music started to be influenced by rock music, and it eventually came out with its own unique subgenres of rock music, ‘Anadolu rock,’ which adds up to ‘Anatolian rock.’ The first rock music influenced bands, and musicians were identified with this term. Barış Manço, Cem Karaca, and Erkin Koray is considered as pioneers of the subgenre. (Dönmez, 2016; Özcan, 2019)

During the 1970 and 1980s, with the emergence of the pluriformity of the subgenres of rock over the world, Turkish rock music started to diversify as well. Soft rock, symphonic rock, hard rock, metal, folk-rock could be counted among these subgenres.

With the emergence of alternative rock music in the 1990s, as in the universal music world, alternative rock music started to rise rapidly in Turkey as well. Alternative rock music showed resemblance with the universal alternative rock regarding its main principles from their starting points. By getting derived from independent music scenes, taking influences from other main genres which also consists the traditional Turkish music genres, meeting people who share the same beliefs, thoughts, taste in music under the same roof of the subgenre and forming a solidarity for these people; alternative rock music could be regarded as it preserves the term’s meaning in Turkey as well.

When analyzing the limited data on Turkish rock musicians, it could be perceptible that the Turkish rock scene is composed of mostly by male musicians. Volvox, one of the first bands which are composed of women musicians only, was formed in 1988. The band, which remained as an active band until 1994, was considered as hard rock and could be interpreted as an alternative band to the mainstream scene of the era. Şebnem Ferah, who was a lead singer in the band, shares a statement about her band in an interview which took place in 1994:

From now on, we want people to acknowledge us as a normal rock band. We want them to come and have fun. We are having too much fun when we are playing.<sup>1</sup> (Çiftçi, 1994)

Women's demand on being counted as 'normal' in the conditions of their era in rock music, could be considered as a relevant demand as well within today's context of rock music scene due to the male dominance in the scene. As first known female musicians to constitute an existence in a male-dominated scene, Volvox band members could be counted as one of the first women who was exposed to the sexism in the scene. Their demand to be considered as usual can be considered as an indicator of this situation. In addition to this, it is perceptible that they were exposed to some questions in interviews, which questions their sexual preferences apart from their musical identity. Within the same interview, the interviewer ask band members a question:

Did you take advantage of being on stage? For instance, when you are playing, did you have someone on your sight and think about having your way with them?<sup>2</sup> (Çiftçi, 1994)

It could be seen that women the subject of a musician is female, they face unusual questions and inquiries which might put the musicians in a sexually objectified position rather than evaluating them on their musical positions.

Özlem Tekin, which was a band member of Volvox, continued her solo career after the disband of Volvox. Within her first solo albüm 'Kime Ne' in 1995, she give place to her song 'Duvaksız Gelin,' where she raised a voice against the child marriages in the East of Turkey. In addition to this, another song 'Dağları Deldim' appears in her album 'Tek Başıma' which was released in 2002. 'Dağları Deldim' was taken as a

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<sup>1</sup> "Artık insanların bizi normal bir rock grubu olarak kabul etmelerini istiyoruz. İnsanlar eğlenirler, gelsinler. Biz çalarken çok eğleniyoruz."

<sup>2</sup> Sahnede olmanın avantajını kullandınız mı? Mesela çalarken barın bir ucundaki çocuğu gözünüze kestirip "ben bunu götürürüm" yaptınız mı?

feminist march by many people due to the challenge it offers to gender roles in its lyrics. Lyrics were composed of statements such as:

I have pierced mountains, on my own  
I have passed the deserts, all alone  
I have defeated men, as a girl  
I won't be defeated by you<sup>3</sup> (Tekin, 2002)

In another interview which took place in 2010, Tekin interprets the rock scene during their Volvox Band era (1988-1994) stating that:

Let alone playing music; it was an odd situation for women to listen to rock music at the time. We made too much effort to play good in order to not to let them question our playing. Being a rock band is fun. Actually, it is: Cool. Yes, we were really cool! Getting together before gigs, swooping up the same mirror one by one, and apply our make up, staying at each other's place, it was fun. We played continuously for two and a half years. <sup>4</sup> (Arman, 2010)

When Tekin's interpretation is analyzed, it could be seen that the perception of both performers and the audience is assigned to men in society at the time. Women's capabilities of playing rock music are not evaluated as the same as men. In order to not be subject to a sexist approach to evaluating, women strived hard to perfect their skills on their instruments.

Şebnem Ferah, Özlem Tekin, and their bandmates in Volvox created a pathway to the fellow female rock musicians. Yasemin Mori, Aylin Aslım, Fatma Turgut, Melis Danişmend, Nilipek, Özge Fışkın, Deniz Özbey Akyüz, Ceylan Ertem, and many more musicians created their musical career in the Turkish rock scene from the 1990s to this

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<sup>3</sup>Dağları deldim, tek başıma,  
Çölleri aştım bir tek ben,  
Erleri yendim, kız başıma,  
Senden yıkılmam

<sup>4</sup> Kadınların rock dinlemesi bile tuhaftı o yıllarda, değil ki müzik yapmaları. "Ne biçim çalışıyorlar!" demesinler diye de eşek gibi çalışıyorduk. Rock grubu olmak eğlencelidir. Aslında doğru sıfat şu: Havalıdır. Evet, çok havalıydık! Konserden önce bir araya gelmeler, sırayla aynı aynayı kapıp makyaj yapmalar, birbirimizde kalmalar, eğlenceliydi. İki buçuk sene hiç durmadan çaldık.

day. Even their presence might be effective to fellow musicians and help them to build their musical careers in a more gender-egalitarian scene.

Some musicians like Aylin Aslım and Özlem Tekin chose to speak about gender issues in their songs. Aylin Aslım, tells the true story of an honor killing incident in Turkey in her song ‘Güldünya.’ In the lyrics of the song, Güldünya, who was a victim of honor killing incident, speaks to the audience:

My dear brother, please do not shoot me  
Do not spare me from this world  
How could you spill your sister’s blood?  
Didn’t we lie in the same womb  
Didn’t we born from the same mother  
Didn’t we got fed from the same breasts  
Güldünya left with many wounds and single bullet  
Who notices? Who cares? A world has been burned. <sup>5</sup> (Aslım, 2005)

Additional to Güldünya, Aylin Aslım challenges the male authority, and the oppression on women with her song, ‘Hoşuna Gitmedi mi.’ Lyrics of the song was composed of the statements of oppressional order which society forms and statements of her rebellion against it:

Don’t wear that; it will be see-through  
Don’t wear this; it will show your buttock  
You posed your masculinity  
Well encouraged indeed  
I am singing songs  
I am both playing and dancing  
The life is mine  
I will dress up if I want to  
I will undress if I want to  
Didn’t you like it, or what?  
What happened? <sup>6</sup> (Aslım, 2009)

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<sup>5</sup> Canım abim vurma beni, bu dünyadan alma beni, dökülür mü kardeş kanı, bir karında yatmadık mı, bir anadan doğmadık mı, bir memeden doymadık mı, binbir yarayla tek bir kurşunla gitti güldünya, kim farkında kimin umrunda yandı bir dünya.

<sup>6</sup> Onu giyme içini gösterir, Bunu giyme kıçını gösterir, Erkeklik tasladın ya, İyi cesaret doğrusu, Ben şarkılar söylerim, Hem çalar hem oynarım, Hayat benim hayatım, Canım ister giyiniyim, Canım ister soyunurum, Yoksa beğenmedin mi, N’oldu?

However, not all musicians prefer to combine their music with political or social subjects; there are incidents that they use their musical presence to raise consciousness on women's issues by organizing music events for women's benefits. Blues Association<sup>7</sup> in Istanbul organized a special event for international women's day on eight march 2020. The event was composed of; interview session 'Being a woman in the music market,' short movie screening 'Women are doing our neighborhoods cinema' which pertains to Women in Life and Art Association<sup>8</sup>, presentation of 'Woman in Blues Dance,' and the concert of 'Exclusive 8 March Concert with Female Blues Musicians.' Many female musicians contributed to the concert while celebrating international women's day.

In addition, 'We Will Stop Femicide Platform'<sup>9</sup> also organizes many events in order to strengthen the solidarity of women which is built against the femicide incidents in Turkey. Solidarity forming concerts were organized repeatedly from 2015 to this day. There were numerous musicians who contributed to these events such as: Melis Danişmend, Deniz Tekin, Can Güngör, Nilipek, Özge Fışkın, Kalben, Pinhani, Aylin Aslım, Birsen Tezer, Çiğdem Erken, Erkan Oğur, Gündoğarken, Güvenç Dağüstün, Hüsnü Arkan, Jehan Barbur, Redd , Ceylan Ertem, Dilara Sakpınar, Elif Çağlar, Yasemin Mori. (Bayazıt, 2019; Kadın Cinayetlerine Karşı Dayanışma Konseri Sanatçılar Kadınlar İçin Söyledi, 2016; Kadınlar Yaşasın Diye Dayanışma Konserine Çağırıyoruz, 2015) With these musicians support, tickets were sold in order to financially support the campaign of the platform which offer many assistances such as lawyer assistance to women's law cases and financial assistance to support women's families.

These songs and events played an awareness-raising role and formed a solidarity between women while forming politics against inequalities, femicides, and harmful social practices in the society.

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<sup>7</sup> <https://www.bluesdernegi.org/>

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.yasamdakadinsanat.org/>

<sup>9</sup> <http://kadincinayetlerinidurduracagiz.net/for-english>

## **5.1 Feminist Knowledge & Experience of Women in the Turkish Alternative Rock Scene**

Women in Turkey have been an indispensable part of the Turkish rock scene since the emergence of the scene. They have been contributing to the scene as an audience, musicians, writers, music industry workers, scene members. Due to the outnumbered position of male members, the knowledge of women's participation can be hard to reach. There might be two reasons which contribute to this situation: first, women exist in the scene fewer in number. Therefore the amount of knowledge which is derived from women's experiences appears fewer related to knowledge created by men; second, due to male domination in the scene, current knowledge which is created by women might not be heard as much as men's knowledge. In this part, my focal point is to reveal women's knowledge, which is derived from women's experiences.

## **5.2 Sharing Experiences in the Scene**

Women's experiences form the fundamental data for the Feminist Standpoint Theory. Within the previous part, women's experience in the Turkish alternative rock scene is revealed. The production of feminist knowledge is only possible with the revelation of women's experience. When the visibility of experiences is absent, knowledge production becomes interrupted. Dorothy Smith suggests that the researcher should start the theory with women's everyday practice and experiences. (Smith, 1997, p. 395) When there is an issue of lack of expressions of women's experience, due to the male-dominated structure of the rock scene, women's experiences are transmitted improperly and insufficiently by other individuals, and women's representation is derived from this transmission becomes incorrect.

In order to reach the knowledge, Donna Haraway's situated knowledge notion is taken as a basis. She asserts that: "Only partial perspective promises objective vision" (Haraway, 1988, p.583) With this, Haraway, links situated knowledge and limited location with the term 'feminist objectivity.' At this point, women are taken as a unit of analysis, and the Turkish alternative rock scene is taken as a location. From this viewpoint: women's experiences within the Turkish alternative rock scene reflects the true knowledge of their lives.

The production of feminist knowledge in the scene starts with women's experiences. These experiences are being transmitted through their lyrics, zines, activists inside and outside of the stage. Therefore interviewees were principally asked, if they prefer to share their gender-related experiences and thoughts through these channels. Six of the interviewees pointed out that they have shared gender-related issues through their interviews, music, and activism within the stage. Two of them separately stated that, however, they are producing and practicing, but didn't have any recordings yet.

Furthermore, they indicated that they are willing to include women's issues and feminist approaches in their music in the future. Two of the interviewees stated that their music format is not associated with gender issues. Therefore they didn't experience this approach before.

Eliz explains her band's preference on sharing:

We played at the METU festival, for instance, when it came across to the pride parade, especially, for instance, we like to talk about that issue. We are as a band all bisexuals. Therefore we are inside of this issue. To be honest, my social side is not very good, I guess, I mean it is hard for me to talk about some subjects on stage, which I don't talk about normally. Therefore probably I'm being nonsense, but at least I have a feeling like this, and I am trying to say it. Besides that, about some political issues, you know the situation of the country; we play Rage Against The Machine, for instance, in there we have to refer to Tayyip<sup>10</sup>. We are doing it willingly for sure. If I have my compositions one day and go on the stage, I would definitely like to include women's issues and feminist approaches.<sup>11</sup> (Eliz, 12 years of band experience)

Politics, LGBTI rights, and women's issues are defined as preferable subjects to speak about in their concerts. Male-dominated mainstream scene mostly does not

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<sup>10</sup> Recep Tayyip Erdoğan: President of the Republic of Turkey

<sup>11</sup> Özellikle ODTÜ şenliğinde çaldık mesela LGBTI yürüyüşüne denk geldiği zaman, özellikle mesela o konuda konuşmayı seviyoruz. Grupça biseksüel olduğumuz için biz de o şeyin içindeyiz. Açıkçası sosyal yönüm çok iyi değil sanırım, yani daha doğrusu çok konuşmadığım konularda sahnede konuşmak benim için zor oluyor, o yüzden muhtemelen saçmıyorum ama en azından böyle bir hissiyatım var ve bunu söylemeye çalışıyorum yani. Onun dışında bazı politik konularda ülkenin durumunu biliyorsunuz, RATM çalışıyoruz mesela orada Tayyip'e atıfta bulunmasak olmaz falan. Öyle isteyerek yapıyoruz tabi. Kendim bir gün bestelerim olursa ve sahnede çalarsam kesinlikle kadın meselelerini ve feminist yaklaşımları dahil etmek isterim.

involve any gender-related issues, and the mainstream scene members are seen to be refraining from speaking about politics. However, within the alternative scene, musicians create their freedom on the subjects which they will speak about.

Fulya potently stands behind the idea of sharing gender-related issues in the scene:

We are not only going on the stage to entertain the people; now, it is like that but, I think the speeches between songs are something which is involved in the performance. I have seen this a lot, Şebnem Ferah forms a perfect example for this, and she has songs which is about this. And I think she nicely draws attention to this subject in between songs. It is my dream to draw attention to some sort of social issues more, to accomplish it with this. But our genre right now, it does not provide an opportunity, and the songs which we cover are not our compositions. But I aim and dream of doing something about it in the future; I hope it happens. <sup>12</sup>Fulya

However, Fulya and her bandmates get on the same page on speaking about the gender issues; it is evident that they couldn't involve gender-related issues in their songs due to they did not compose any songs yet. While each interviewee agrees on that they are looking positive to the sharing of gender-related issues in their music, some of them such as Günce thinks that it is not possible to do it so in their genre such as Death Metal: "What separates our music as death metal is its concept and its lyrics, etc. But because it is not enmired in us, we don't have an argument as this."<sup>13</sup> Günce even though her band has a format which is not associated with gender issues, shares her thoughts on the functions of the sharing:

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<sup>12</sup> Sahneye sadece insanları eğlendirmek için çıkmıyoruz, şu an öyle ama , bence sahne aralarındaki konuşmalar da performansa dahil olan bir şey ve ben çok fazla şahit oldum. Şebnem Ferah bu konuda mükemmel bir örnek bence bunun üzerine yaptığı şarkılar da var ve şarkı aralarında da bu konuya çok güzel dikkat çektiğini düşünüyorum. Benim hayalimde bir takım toplumsal konulara daha fazla dikkat çekebilmek, bununla bunu başarmak var ama şu an yaptığımız tür çaldığımız şarkılar çok bize ait olan şeyler de yapmıyoruz hani çok imkan sağlamıyor. Ama bununla ilgili bir şeyler yapmayı hedefliyorum ve hayal ediyorum, umarım olur.

<sup>13</sup> Ama bizim biraz da bizim müziğimizi death metal olarak ayıran konseptidir, sözleridir, bilmemnedir falan. Ama bizim içimize çok girmediği için öyle bir savunumuz yok.

I mean actually, people can see this: people, music shouldn't belong to some specific groups, it is for everybody. And people who want to do this should be able to make an effort for this. I mean, there shouldn't be any obstacles in front of them. <sup>14</sup> (Günce, death metal singer)

Without any interpretation of gender, her idea simply forefronts equality for every single person in the society, which, basically, includes the equality between genders as well. From the analysis of the interviews, it is possible to state that none of the interviewees refrain from speaking about what they believe in. Whether it is politics, gender issues, and any other social issues, it is evident that they embrace the emancipatory approach of the alternative rock scene.

It is frequent for me to speak before songs, to speak about my thoughts and emotions. I've spoken about this in certain platforms. I am not a person who stays neutral, silent, who does not give volume to her emotions, who does not show her anger. Therefore I try to speak up as much as I can. <sup>15</sup> (Aysu, rock singer with more than 20 years of experience)

It is evident that both Riot Grrrls and the movement of Pussy Riot raised a consciousness through their activities, which encourages other women to speak up. Riot Grrrl Manifesto emphasizes the importance of speaking up of women with their statements in their manifesto and zines.

BECAUSE we want and need to encourage and be encouraged in the face of all our own insecurities, in the face of beergutboyrock that tells us we can't play our instruments, in the face of "authorities" who say our bands/zines/etc. are the worst in the US. (Hanna, Wilcox, et al., 1991)

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<sup>14</sup> Yani aslında şunu görebilir insanlar müzik belli bir kesimin şeyi olmamalı, müzik herkes için olan ve bunu yapmak isteyen herkes de bununla uğraşabilmeli yani önünde herhangi bir engel olmamalı.

<sup>15</sup> Sahnede şarkılardan önce konuştuğum çok oluyor, duygularımı düşüncelerimi söylediğim oluyor veya bununla ilgili bir takım platformlarda da yer aldığım konuştuğum oldu. Ben şöyle bir insan değilim yani nötr, sesini çıkartmayan, duygularını seslendirmeyen, kızgınlıklarını göstermeyen bir insan değilim o yüzden elimden geldiğince söylemeye çalışıyorum.

Starting from this point of view, women movements in the scene encourages other women to speak against the inequalities in the scene. In addition to this, another participant emphasizes the importance of sharing in the scene:

It is a way of communication, a way of making yourself understood. And I really approve of its usage in this way. I think it should be used. If you have such talent, such power to influence masses, you should do it in any case. <sup>16</sup>  
(Hale, drummer)

Sandra Harding asserts that outcomes of women's efforts can be gained through collective political struggle with the help of science and politics. (Harding, 2004, p. 8) In this sense, if a collective consciousness is raised, such as Hale's assertions, it can turn out to politics, which can enhance women's positions both in the scene and society. Hale states that musicians who have the power to influence the masses should use their power on behalf of enhancing women's issues. This resolution has a significant point in the collective consciousness of women and their collective struggle in the scene.

When the significance of this sharing was analyzed, all women agreed on sharing are necessary. However, they had different motivations behind their agreements. Aysu draws attention to the awareness which women create:

I think it is significant because they create awareness for the people who listen to them, they create awareness for the society. Today social media is a really effective area. I think it is really beneficial that when someone reflects their thoughts from their Instagram pages, from other social media platforms, and makes someone think about it. I think it ensures respect for them as well. <sup>17</sup>  
(Aysu, rock singer with more than 20 years of experience)

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<sup>16</sup> Bu bir iletişim yöntemi de, insanlara bir derdini anlatma yöntemidir ve bunun bu şekilde kullanılmasını çok doğru buluyorum. Kullanılmalı, öyle bir yeteneğin öyle bir gücün varsa kitleri etkileme gücü, yapmalısın zaten.

<sup>17</sup> Bence önemi var çünkü onları dinleyen insanları da aslında belki farkındalık yaratıyorlar, topluma farkındalık yaratıyorlar. Şimdi sosyal medya çok etkili bir alan günümüzde. İşte instagram sayfalarından sahnedeki konserlerinden başka sosyal medya platformlarından düşüncelerini dile getirdiklerinde insanlarda sadece birinde bile bir düşünmeye sevk etse bence çok faydalı bir şey. Bence o kişilere saygı duyulmasını da sağlıyordu.

As it is mentioned before, respect appears to be something that women build their way up to while moving to the professional level. In addition to this, it appears that women might earn the audience's respect with their social media sharing and their posts regarding awareness.

Hazal made a mind-opening addition to the issue of respect:

For instance, we are working with solists. They feel annoyed hearing something from me, but they do things more easily when they hear it from a man. You know the 'female manager' case. We know the reason for that from the literature, I mean because she thinks power is something that belongs to men; therefore, she finds the power which belongs to a woman, as odder. She compulsorily accepts the power which comes from men. However, she needs to find it odd as well. I mean, she needs to react to that as well.<sup>18</sup> (Hazal, acoustic guitar player with more than 30 years of experience)

From her expressions, it becomes evident that, even at the professional level, women might face the lack of respect from fellow female musicians in the scene. As Hazal explains it clearly, it is related to gendered power codes within the society. While men put less effort into gaining respect in the scene, women have to make more effort in order to gain respect, even on the professional level sometimes.

Apart from the issue of respect, Hazal makes some significant points about women's sharing of experience in the scene:

Women live similar things as well, and the situation of someone speaking about this, and they(audience) are sympathizing with this with a work of art which they identify themselves with, and the sharing of women's experience are always really valuable.

The feeling of companion which is created by the sharing of women's experience is the thing that will change the world in favor of women. I think it

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<sup>18</sup> Solistlerle çalışıyoruz mesela. Solistler benden bir şeyi duymaktan daha rahatsız oluyorlar mesela. Ama erkeklerden duyunca daha kolay şey yapabiliyorlar. Bu hani, kadın yönetici meselesi vardır ya, ama bunun nedenini biliyoruz literatürden. Hani sonuçta iktidarı erkeğe ait bişer şey olarak gördüğü için bir kadın, bir kadında olan iktidarı daha tuhaf karşılıyor. Erkekten gelen iktidarı daha mecburen kabulleniyor. Halbuki onu da tuhaf karşılaması lazım. Ya da ona da tepki göstermesi lazım.

is essential in this sense.<sup>19</sup> (Hazal, acoustic guitar player with more than 30 years of experience)

Hazal emphasizes the significance of the sharing of women's experience. With the lack of women's experience, this study can never gain an objective vision. Haraway states that: "Only partial perspective promises objective vision" (Haraway, 1988, p.583). Therefore it is only possible to reach the objective vision about the women's position within the Turkish alternative rock scene, with women's experiences.

As getting back to the issue of awareness; in addition to the emphasis on 'awareness' which Aysu assets as a significance of this sharing, Hale adds emphasizes of 'being role models' and the importance of 'more women in the scene':

This sharing must exist. Let me even say this: I was listening to punk when I was 13, 14 years old, then I got really into the Riot Grrrl Movement. They were like, introduced me to really different themes; they introduced me to feminism. It is really effective, I said like "Women are doing something like this, all bands are male, but there are really powerful women, there are really good female musicians." Some bands formed a role model for me, especially women bands, Riot Grrrl bands. Something like this and the representation of women is really important for minors or adults as well. Seeing it as a role model is significant at this point, not just only in music, but it must happen in other areas as well, I think women's representation must be visible more.<sup>20</sup> (Hale, drummer)

At this point, Mary Celeste Kearney's thoughts on role models and the development of feminist consciousness, politics, culture overlaps with interviewee's assertions:

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<sup>19</sup> Tabii ki olur, çünkü kadınlar da benzer şeyler yaşıyor ve birilerinin bunu dile getiriyor olması onların da kendilerini özdeşleştirdikleri bir sanat yapıtıyla onu dinlerken onu paylaşıyor olmaları, kadın deneyiminin paylaşılıyor olması çok kıymetli her zaman. Kadın deneyiminin paylaşımının yarattığı ortaklık duygusu zaten dünyayı değiştirecek şeylerden bi tanesi ya kadınların lehine. O anlamda bence önemli diye düşünüyorum.

<sup>20</sup> Kesinlikle olmalı. Şeyi de söyleyim hatta 13 14 yaşlarındayken punk dinliyordum sonradan riot grrrl akımına bayağı kaptırmıştım. Onlar şeydi böyle çok farklı temalarla tanıştırdılar, feminizmle tanıştırdılar, çok etkili ya kadınlar da böyle bir şey yapıyomuş, sürekli bütün gruplar erkek ama çok güçlü kadınlar var, çok iyi müzisyen kadınlar var falan. Bana çok rol model olan gruplar özellikle kadın grupları riot grrrl grupları olmuştu hani böyle bir şeyin olması çok önemli, kadın representasyonu olması çok önemli küçükler için. Ya da büyükler için de olabilir, hani rol model olarak birilerini görmek önemli bu noktada hani sırf müzik değil başka alanlarda da olması gerekli ya kadınların daha çok temsilinin daha görünür kılınması gerektiğini düşünüyorum.

In addition to identifying certain historical women as feminist role models, many grrrl zines provide lists of books and articles considered important for the development of feminist consciousness, identity, politics, and culture. (Kearney, 2006, p. 175)

Women in the Turkish alternative rock scene form an example of a role model for other people who aim to exist in the scene as musicians as well. Their role in this process becomes significant for other women. In addition, their products in the music scene, as interviewees expressed: interviews, song lyrics, statements between songs, commentations before songs, social media sharing are playing a crucial role in forming the feminist consciousness, identity, politics, and culture.

Interviewees all agree on the importance of the sharing; however, some of them criticize the method of them.

Especially this rock scene audiences involve too many men, maybe the majority of it, I don't know why. And men don't tend to think about these subjects. Therefore when you say something, it is very interesting for them, you know they would be like: "whoa, is there something like that?" Even this is very important. If you make them wonder if you can start from somewhere, it is really important, I think. But on the other side, I don't find this right (this is my political view as well): really aggressive attitudes. I think it draws people away. It is making it worse. But I don't mean this; I mean, I don't say women should lose something from her image, but when saying something maybe not use statements as: "men are all son of b\*tches" rather it should be said in a way both striking and constructive, I think. Otherwise, I think it harms more than it becomes beneficial. <sup>21</sup> (Eliz, all women band)

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<sup>21</sup> Özellikle bu rock müzik camiası dinleyicileri arasında çok fazla erkek var belki çoğunluğu erkek diyebiliriz neden zaten bilmiyorum. Ve erkekler bu konularda düşünmeye çok meyilli olmuyorlar. O yüzden herhangi bir şey söylediğin zaman onlar için ilginç yani anlatabiliyor muyum böyle, "aa böyle bir şey varmış" o bile çok önemli her şey bir tohumla başlar, bir merak ettirsen, bir yerden başlayabilirsen bu bile çok önemli diye düşünüyorum. Ama bi yandan da şeyleri de çok doğru bulmuyorum, bu benim politik görüşüm de aslında çok agresif tavırları, bu da insanları uzaklaştırıyor diye düşünüyorum. İyiden çok kötü yapıyor. Ama burada tabii ki şeyden bahsetmiyorum yani kadın kendi imajından bir şey kaybetmeli demiyorum. Ama bir şey söylerken hani ne bileyim erkekler hepimiz o\*\*\*u çocuğusunuz değil de, daha böyle hem vurucu hem yapıcı bi şekilde söylenmesi gerektiğini düşünüyorum. Aksi takdirde yarardan çok zarar verdiğini düşünüyorum.

Extreme aggressive approaches in the music scene is not well-received by women in the scene. Some interviewees find extremely aggressive attitudes as counterproductive. However, the acts of aggression which are embraced by women in the scene functions as a way of ‘subversion of the sexist practices in the scene,’ many women refrain from these acts with the concern of harmful for their collective feminist image. Most of the interviewees were worried about being classified as misandrists when they identify themselves as feminists. İnci explains this situation:

Now, I think the definition of feminism is: there shouldn’t be any crashing supremacy between genders. The idea of feminism in most people’s minds is not this. I mean what I think of, what feminism advocates is this, the equality between men and women, but I guess it is a bit misunderstood. <sup>22</sup> (İnci, bass guitar player)

Joanna Russ states that: “Feminists who want feminism to be respectable are afraid the ‘radicals’ will go ‘too far.’” (Russ, 2000, p. 168) Interviewees’ conception of feminism consists from the equality between genders. Aggressive, or more precisely, radical approaches, which might seem like a misandrist by the audience, is not approved by them. At this point, the performances such as Tribe 8 and Bikini Kill’s, which are mentioned within the ‘Subversion of the Sexist Practices in the Scene,’ might not be approved by them due to their aggressiveness towards men. İlgin expressed one of her similar experience regarding this topic as:

I recently went to a concert. It was a thrash metal band. A band which is not heard much was going to the stage as an opening band, and I knew them as like, feminist punk. They had a female vocalist, and you know the punk attitude, like spitting to the audience, constantly giving the finger. Those moves are like Sid Vicious, too masculine, how to say... Actually, it was like an imitation of something. And it didn’t feel sincere. Because being feminist shouldn’t be trying to be like men, I think. I mean being feminist is not looking masculine or aggrandizing the masculine look. Therefore it felt odd, and too many people ran away from them in front of the stage because she was constantly spitting. Really, they need to be in the music scene as a texture for

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<sup>22</sup> Şimdi burda feminizmin tanımını şeydir, ben gerçekten iki cinsiyetin birbiri karşısında bir ezici üstünlüğünün olmaması gerektiğini düşünüyorum. Çoğu insanın kafasındaki o feminizm bakış açısı değil yani hani benim düşündüğüm şey aslında feminizmin savunduğu da budur, yani kadın ve erkek eşitliğidir. Ama biraz yanlış anlaşılıyor herhalde.

sure, but I don't think that they are giving significant messages.<sup>23</sup> (Ilgın, death metal audience and solo pianist)

Ilgın criticizes the aim of being like men, which is evidently embraced by fellow musicians in the rock scene. She asserts that, in order to be a feminist, women do not have to follow the footsteps of men. Being overly masculine or mimicking masculine approaches that are defined by society is masculine, is a commonly seen situation, not only in music scenes but in the society as well. Do their 'masculine' approach represents the power of men in the scene and attach this power to women? Or, in order to become powerful in the scene, do women have to represent themselves as 'masculine'? The response to these questions is evident in the statements of interviewees such as Ilgın. It is perceptible that interviewees do not support the male power and male-domination codes in the scene. When these approaches were motivated by the only idea of 'being masculine,' they do not tell any significant messages. However, based on Feminist Standpoint Theory, the binary thought on the socially constructed feminine and masculine notions are not relevant and acknowledged in this study. Though it is possible to state that; analysis of the interviews makes it clear that women do not have to follow men's footsteps in order to prove themselves in the scene. Within the social circles in which feminist consciousness is applicable, they are well-welcomed and supported by other people who do not embrace the male domination codes in the scene, in any case.

### 5.1.2 Women's Experiences in the Scene

The aim of this part is to make women's experiences in the scene visible. Women's experiences in the Turkish alternative rock scene form the practice part of the consolidation of theory and practice within the study. To be able to reach the

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<sup>23</sup> Ben geçenlerde bir konsere gitmiştim. Bir thrash metal grubuydu. Ön grup olarak adı sanı duyulmamış bir grup çıkıyordu ve onları feminist punk diye duymuştum ben. İşte bir tane kadın vokalleri vardı ve böyle punk attitude olur ya, işte seyirciye tükürürler sürekli hareket çekerler, işte o hareketleri şeydir çok Sid Vicious gibi çok erkek. Nasıl diyim aslında bir şeyin taklidi gibiydi. Ve bana çok samimi gelmedi çünkü feminist olmak vs erkek gibi olmaya çalışmak, öyle olmamalı bence. Yani erkeksi görünmek bir kadının erkeksi görünmesinin yüceltilmesi değildir bence feminist olmak. Ve o yüzden o da bana mesela çok tuhaf gelmişti ve birçok insan kız tükürüp durduğundan sahnenin önünden kaçmıştı. Hakikaten, onlar da tabii ki müzik sahnesinde olmalı, bir tat bir doku olarak ama önemli bir mesaj verdiklerini düşünmüyorum ben.

knowledge regarding women in the scene, I aimed to reach the ‘strong objectivity,’ which is a position that helps the researcher to reach the truths which are partial and less distorted. (Harding, 1995, p. 332)

Partial and less distorted truths can only be discovered from women’s own experiences, which is transmitted to the researcher by themselves. As Smith suggests, this research starts with women’s everyday practice and experiences. At this point, their practice and experiences in the scene as musicians were used. (Smith, 1997, p. 395)

In addition to this, as Ramazanoğlu and Holland suggests, their experiences and practices are linked with gendered relations in the scene and in the society as well. (Ramazanoğlu & Holland, 2002, p. 2) As a marginalized group in music as in social life, women have many common points regarding their preferences in music. Music can offer efficient conditions to people who want to express themselves. In that sense, alternative rock music and the subgenres of rock music were chosen by women to express themselves, find their voice in music, and raise their voice against what discomforts them socially. In that sense, a woman stated that she was interested in alternative rock music, due to the fact that it helped her express herself and comforts her:

I think I was interested in this music since my childhood because I am a depressive person generally. I mean, I felt like someone else is expressing my feelings, which I couldn’t express.<sup>24</sup> (Eliz: rock audience for 16 years)

Another woman states that music functions as an escape for her, she focuses on its meditative function against the social order in life:

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<sup>24</sup> Kişilik olarak genelde depresif bir insan olduğun için bu müzik türüne ilgi duymaya başladığımı düşünüyorum küçüklükten beri. Yani benim ifade edemediğim duygularımı bi şekilde başkaları ifade etmiş gibi hissediyordum.

I mean, actually, music is an escape for me. It is more like meditative. Actually, it adapts me to life more. Because, the order that we live in, the rules we have to apply, limits us and makes us more aggressive, angrier. With the contribution of city life, you see, makes people more aggressive and angry. Maybe I could be a calm person in my social life because listening and producing this kind of extreme music rasps me.<sup>25</sup> (Günce, death metal singer)

Social boundaries that restrict women and create unequal circumstances have been a source of motivation for interest in rock music due to its expression in the music itself. Additionally, they have been a source of motivation to produce rock music in order to speak about them. Social restrictions and implementations of gender inequality have been chosen as a subject of songs and the subject of columns in the grrrl zines. Riot Grrrl Zine was explaining their subjects as such:

AIDS, healthcare for women, low-income housing, domestic violence, your feelings on war, racism, art fascism, etc. Make your own amendments and additions to the list. (Hanna, Wilcox, et al., 1991, p. 14)

One woman explained her interest in rock music by stating that she feels like she does not belong in the mainstream society:

I feel like this music identifies with me because, most of the time, I feel like I do not belong in society much, and not too many people acknowledge the kind of music which I produce.<sup>26</sup> (İnci, bass guitar player)

In that sense, her statement could be regarded as an example of a subculture that was formed in subgenres of rock music against the mainstream music & mainstream society. Hebdige's conceptualization of subculture becomes relevant at this point:

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<sup>25</sup> Yani müzik benim için aslında bir kaçış. Biraz daha meditatif aslında beni hayata daha fazla adapte ediyor. Çünkü yaşadığımız düzen, bulunduğumuz düzen, uygulamak zorunda olduğumuz kurallar, uyguladığımız kurallar bizi kısıtlıyor ve daha öfkeli, bir de şehir hayatının da getirisi işte metropol hayatı işte insanı daha agresif daha sinirli hale getiriyor. Belki bu kadar ekstrem bi müziğin dinleyicisi ve üreticisi olmak beni bu noktada daha törpülediği için sakın bir karakter olabiliyorum sosyal hayatımda.

<sup>26</sup> İcra ettiğim müzik çoğu insan tarafından benimsenmiş bir şey olmadığı için ve ben de kendimi çoğu zaman toplum içine çok ait hissetmediğim için daha bana hitap ediyor gibi geliyor. Yani çünkü fazla insan tarafından benimsenmiyor.

Like-minded individuals who are placed apart from the central culture build a consensus and build their identity. (Hebdige, 1979, p. 2) At this point, she might be placed in the oppositional subculture, which is placed in the alternative rock scene. Another woman points her motivation to start producing this music as an aim to transmit the same feelings she has as an audience and conducting this process with people who have the same feelings as her:

I was listening to the bands whose music or lyrics appeals to me, and I thought: “why don’t I play their music? This gives me pleasure; this gives me a will to hold on to life. If their music could make this, I could transmit these to someone else; I could go to practice studio with the people whom I share the same feelings with, and we could transmit our feelings; we could feed ourselves as musical and as cultural ways. On the other hand, we could introduce this music to someone else, and we could have fun.” This is how we started.<sup>27</sup> (Hale, drummer)

With starting their musical careers, women become able to give voice to their feelings and thoughts. By this, they are able to create their own representation in the rock music scene where male musicians form the majority of the people.

### **5.2.1 Male Domination**

The situation of having an advantage in numbers in the scene might lead to having an advantage in conditions as well. At this point, interviewees were asked if they have noticed any kind of domination that is carried out by any gender.

Actually, even though it is a general thing, there are some parts of it in the scene. For instance, you don’t get to see many female guitarists; I mean, you get to see female drummers; however, they are not too many. People have this point of view: “she really plays it, whoa, well done.” As if it’s an unnatural thing for women to play a guitar, in a kind of funny way, there are not many

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<sup>27</sup> Bana şarkı sözü olsun, müziği olsun, çok hitap eden grupları dinliyordum ve “onların müziğini ben neden çalmıyorum ki bu bana keyif veriyor, bu bana hayata tutunma isteği veriyor, böyle bir şey oluyorsa ben de bunu bir şekilde başkalarına yansıtabilirim benimle aynı şeyleri hisseden insanlarla stüdyoya girip bir grup oluşturup biz de aynı duyguları verebiliriz kendimizi müzikal, kültürel olarak besleyebiliriz bir yandan da başkalarına bu sevdiğimiz şeyi tanıtabiliriz, gösterebiliriz bi yandan da keyif alırız.” diye düşündüm. Yani o düşünceyle girişmiştik.

female guitarists too. I don't know. Maybe as women, we do not trust ourselves. Maybe we are saying something to ourselves like: "how am I going to go up to the stage and play guitar?" I think there is a perception, such as "She is a woman, after all." Whether or not people say this out loud, this perception exists.<sup>28</sup> (Eliz, singer in a grunge all women band)

Being few in numbers leads to the perception of abnormality. This perception leads to a different kind of alienation. Bartky forms her conceptualization of alienation by taking its basis from Marx's alienation conceptualization. She asserts that:

The cultural domination of women, for example, may be regarded as a species of alienation, for women as women are clearly alienated in cultural production. Most avenues of cultural expression high culture, popular culture, even to some extent language are instruments of male supremacy. Women have little control over the cultural apparatus itself and are often entirely absent from its products; to the extent that we are not excluded from it entirely, the images of ourselves we see reflected in the dominant culture are often truncated or demeaning. (Bartky, 1982, p. 129)

At this point, the alienation in the process of cultural production can be applied to the production of music in the rock scene as well. Women are either absent in the scene or appear very few in numbers. Therefore the dominant culture, which is the male culture in rock music, has the power to control the image of women. As can be seen in Eliz's assertion, this situation leads to the idea of a woman who can not play an instrument as good as man, because 'she is a woman, after all.' Playing drums or guitar appears to be assigned to men only. When women play these instruments, it appears to be something to be surprised or applaud because she can play her instrument well; however, women are seen as good instrument players as men. Her position constitutes an exception as a good instrument player at this point.

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<sup>28</sup> Aslında çok genel olmasına rağmen.... Şimdi parça parça var, mesela bir kadın gitarist çok fazla görmezsiniz işte kadın davulcu görürsünüz ama yine çok fazla değildir. İnsanlarda şey bakış açısı vardır, yani her şeyde olduğu gibi ya kadının işi değil bu yani, ama yapıyor vay helal olsun yani. Sanki çok anormal bir şeymiş gibi bir kadının gitar çalması, çok enteresan geliyor, yani ilginç bir şekilde yok da gerçekten demek ki. Bilmiyorum belki biz kadın olarak kendi özgüvenimizi kendimize yeterince güvenip de ya ben sahneye çıkıp gitar nasıl çalcam falan diyoruz belki içimizden o yüzden. Ama böyle bir algı var bence kadın zaten falan diye. Var yani insanlar açık açık söylemese de var.

The male domination in the Turkish rock scene was interpreted beyond the borders of genders by Umut, who is an also social scientist:

(The domination) It is a reality that can not be denied. To be able to do that, we need to redefine the term ‘masculinity,’ of course. There is such a thing as masculine, and rock music is masculine. But this does not mean that women can not produce rock music, or they can not carry out the process or involve in the process. What I mean as masculine is riot, violence. Violence always exists in our stage moves; we make really violent and sudden moves in stage. It is more like, focused to frighten the other side. Not frighten actually but think like a male animal’s usage of its stateliness. We create a stupendous image. When looking outside of the societal norms, it looks masculine to me, but on the other side, we can say it only we can acknowledge the definitions of masculine and feminine. <sup>29</sup> (Umut, singer in a hard rock all women band)

From her statements, it can be observed that she is well aware of the dichotomy based modernist definitions of masculine and feminine. However, she states that she is looking outside of the borders of these definitions, and she does not acknowledge the dichotomic classifications. She continues and elaborates her thoughts on the subject:

It is a masculine thing, but it is very much open to women’s participation. There are themes of violence, destruction, chaos. This chaotic theme is male violence. Unfortunately, there are male-based violence in rock music codes. Therefore I associate it with masculinity. And I don’t think that it is not something to be transformed. <sup>30</sup> (Umut, singer in a hard rock all women band)

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<sup>29</sup> Bu yadsınamaz bir gerçek. Erkek kavramını baştan tanımlamamız gerekiyor tabii bunun için. Ama erk denen bir şey var ve rock müzik erkek. Hani, ha bu rock müziği kadınların yapamayacağı anlamına gelmiyor, bu süreci yönetemeyeceği bu sürece dahil olamayacağı anlamına gelmiyor ama erkekten kastım rock müziğin bileşenleri isyan, şiddet. Şiddet hep vardır sahne hareketlerimizde de var, çok şiddetli, çok ani hareketler yaparız. Daha böyle karşı tarafı korkutmaya odaklı. Korkutmak değil de daha böyle doğadaki bir erkeğin erkek bir hayvanın heybetinin kullanması gibi düşünün. Sahnede heybetli bir görüntü yaratıyoruz. Bu biraz aslında toplumsal normlar dışında bakıldığı zaman bana çok erkek geliyor ama diğer yandan zaten erkek kadın diye sabit tanımlanmış kavramlar üzerinden konuşuyorsak bunu söyleyebiliriz.

<sup>30</sup> Erkeksi bir şey ama gayet kadın katılımına da açık bir şey. Şiddet yıkım kaos, kaotik bir tema var. Bu kaotik tema da zaten, erkek şiddeti, erke dayalı şiddettir. Rock müzik kodlarında da ne yazık ki erke dayalı şiddet var. Yani o yüzden ben erk ile ilişkilendiriyorum. Dönüştürülemez bir şey olduğunu da düşünüyorum.

As it can be seen in the Riot Grrrl Manifesto, grrrls constituted a riot against the dichotomic definitions of women. They included statements in their manifesto as such: “BECAUSE we are angry at a society that tells us Girl = Dumb, Girl = Bad, Girl = Weak.” (Hanna, Wilcox, et al., 1991) The acknowledged definitions in the society creates an image of men and women, as Umut expressed as well. Violence is identified with masculinity when femininity identifies with softer elements. Male dominance in the rock scene helps the maintenance of this image, and when women enter the space which is assigned to men in rock, it becomes something to be perceived as abnormal.

As speaking about the masculinity, Hazal contributes with another insight from the scene:

When I was young, at the ending of the 1980s and in the 1990s, rock was a really masculine thing. And what we call as rocker women was more of a masculine thing as well. Less delicate, for instance. More aggressive. Angrier at the world. More challenging but not in a feminine way, in a more masculine way. For instance, the case of sexual freedom. It is owned by men in rock’n roll, from what I saw. Women are supplements of this. Think about bands like The Doors etc. It definitely can not be a matter for women in there to live sexuality, love, relationship, family in an egalitarian way. It is obvious from their looks. It is looked that way to the outside as well. You see it from their stories. My biggest disappointments about the musicians which I admire were: their first wife, second wife, children from their second wife -I don’t know how many-. But there is no such thing in those women’s lives. They have spent their lives to raise those kids and continue their struggle. When I think about these musicians that I admired much and their way of relating to women, I always feel disappointed. I mean, there is one condition for a man who builds a relationship with women that way, to build a different relationship with female musicians: female musicians acting like a man in men’s world. It is like that in most professional areas as well. <sup>31</sup> (Hazal, acoustic guitar player)

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<sup>31</sup> Benim gençliğimde, yani 80lerin sonu 90lar, rock çok erkek bir şeydi. Rock’çı kadın denilen şey de daha erkek bir şeydi hani. Daha az narin mesela. Daha kavgacı. Daha sinirli dünyaya karşı. Daha meydan okuyan, ama bu meydan okumayı kadın gibi değil de eril bir meydan okuma içinde yoğrularak yapılan, hani mesela özgür seks meselesi. Erkeklerin uhtesinde bir şey bence rock’n roll içindeki. Benim gördüğüm. Kadınların buna bir şekilde supplement olduğu mesela, bildiğimiz The Doors bilmem ne, öyle grupları düşün. Ordaki kadınların kendilerinin ordaki erkekler gibi cinselliği, ilişkiyi, sevgiyi, aşkı, aileyi yaşamaları kesinlikle eşitlikçi bir şekilde söz konusu değil ve bu aslında her hallerinden akıyordu yani dışarıya da öyle gözükiyordu zaten hikayelerinde hep görürsün. Benim en büyük hayal kırıklıklarım çok sevdiğim müzisyenlerin işte birinci karısı, ikinci karısı, ikinci karısından bilmem kaç çocuğu ama kadının hayatında hiç öyle bir şey yok hani kadın kendisine kalan çocukları büyütme ve o mücadeleyi sürdürmek için geçirmiş hayatını. O müzisyenliklerine büyük hayranlık duyduğum o erkeklerin aile yaşantıları ve kadınlarla ilişkilene biçimlerini düşündükçe çok

From Hazal's statements, it is analyzed that there is a socially forced masculinization oppression on women in order to ensure an egalitarian relational approach. This masculinization aims to prevent the patriarchal codes of the society from reflecting their relations within the scene. Being feminine comes with its burden in the social life. This burden might include the dangers of sexual objectification, lack of respect, alienation, and many more social conditions. It appears that women in the scene choose to be masculinized in order to refrain from the unequal practices in the scene.

As going back to Umut's previous statements, masculinity in the scene involved the violent elements as well. Violence in rock is seen to be a prevailing theme. Another interviewee, Günce, who defines herself in the extreme rock scene, death metal, interprets the violence theme as such:

In the extreme scenes, particularly in death metal, brutal death metal, slam, and gore, they generally have the themes regarding women such as f\*cking a woman, for instance, themes such as extremely ripped women's bodies, raped women exist in the album covers. But I don't think it is directly... I am not like... What do you call? It is ordinary, actually. Such as saying f\*ck you, like actually, it lost its subtext, I mean it is verbal. Well, women use it a lot, yes it has an antifeminist stance, but I think the situation in the album covers and lyrics are like this. I mean partially, it is like this because; its literature is like this way, and the scene is 99.9% dominated by men. <sup>32</sup> (Günce, death metal singer)

Dominating groups of people have the power to normalize their norms. From Günce's expressions, it is observable that men in the extreme rock scene normalized the violent images against women in their album cover artworks and their lyrics. This

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hani hayal kırıklığına uğurdım hep. Yani kadınlarla ilişkiyi öyle kuran bir erkeğin kadın müzisyenlerle ilişkiyi başka türlü kurmasının bir tek koşulu var o kadın müzisyenin de erkekler dünyasında erkek gibi davranması. Çoğu profesyonel alanda da öyle.

<sup>32</sup> Hani ekstrem piyasada özellikle death metal, brutal death metal, slam, gore bunlar zaten ağırlıklı olarak hep kadın teması üzerine gidiyor yani işte kadın s\*kme mesela, albüm kapaklarında son derece parçalanmış kadınlar, tecavüze uğrayan kadınlar bu tür albüm kapakları mevcut. Ama bence bu direkt olarak yani bu konuda mesela çok şey değilim, ne denir, alışılmış aslında bu, biraz hani şey gibi hani a\*ına koyayım demek gibi aslında alt metnini yitirmiş ama alışılmış yani ağzının içinde, hani kadınlar da bunu çok kullanıyor evet biraz anti feminist bir duruş sergileyen bir şey ama albüm kapaklarında ve sözlerindeki durum da biraz bence bu şekilde. Yani biraz kısmen ya bunun literatürü bu şekilde olduğu için ve %99.9 erkeklerin egemenliğinde olduğu için bu şekilde.

group can be conceptualized as ‘dominating culture’ in the extreme rock scene. They are imposing their male-centric thought system, which includes violence against women, and due to their power as a dominating group, they have the opportunity to normalize this conceptualization. At this point, Hebdige’s conceptualization of ‘subculture’ becomes useful. He states that “The tensions between dominant and subordinate groups can be found reflected in the surfaces of subculture.” (Hebdige, 1979, p. 2) With the analysis of this statement, it is possible to state that groups of people who do not identify with the norms that are created by the dominant group, identify them as a subculture. At this point, a feminist rebellion against these norms creates their subculture, as it happened in the Riot Grrrl movement, Pussy Riot, and other groups of people who embrace feminist consciousness in the rock scene.

Another interviewee, İnci, interprets the male dominance in the Turkish rock scene such as:

There is a male domination thing because I heard it myself as well, such as: “They are a women band, what can they know? How good can they play? It won’t be the same as a man’s playing.” I heard too many things like these. Therefore I think there is definitely a male domination in the rock scene.<sup>33</sup>  
(İnci, bass guitar player)

These perceptions of women, and the questioning of women’s capability of playing rock music well, might naturally form a lack of self-confidence on women which can be seen in Eliz’s expression of giving an example of the questions women ask themselves such as “how am I going to go up to the stage and play guitar?” These perceptions affect women’s participation in the rock scene due to the anxiety they create on women.

İlgin, who is a pianist herself and writes a column which she analyzes bands in online music magazines, interprets the male domination in the scene as a bit diminished over

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<sup>33</sup> Biraz daha erkek egemen bir şey var çünkü, ya ben kendim de çok duydum: “ya o kadın grubu işte, onlar ne bilir ki. Kadın ne kadar çalabilir ki, bir erkek gibi olmaz.” gibi çok şey duydum, kendim de tecrübe ettim o yüzden yani bir erkek egemenliği olduğunu düşünüyorum kesinlikle.

the years with women's participation and adds that in spite of it is getting diminished it still affects women:

For sure, maybe in the last 20 years, it is a bit diminished situation. There are many female musicians, and all-women bands started to show up more, yet I still think that they are excessively under the pressure of the male hegemonia. And I see that they are constantly being criticized for instance: "If they weren't female they wouldn't be famous, they have this audience because they are women" Musicians are being exposed to nonsensical comments because men didn't completely get used to the women who make an effort in this kind of music. <sup>34</sup> (İlgin, music column writer and pianist)

The discrimination based on gender is not only relevant for musicians, but it also exists in the audience of the scene as well. In further part of her statement, she adds:

For instance, as an audience, my first concert was in Istanbul when I was 18. It was an Amorphis concert, which is a Finnish metal band. I met someone there; I was naive and quite excited. And I knew the band from only from their albums, I have never searched for the band members faces, appearances. I wouldn't recognize them if I saw them in the streets, yet I knew all of their lyrics. There was a writer guy who was much older than me. He approached me for some reason and said: "I came alone; let's watch the band together." I said, "okay." When we were watching, he asked, "Which one is more handsome in your opinion?" I said: "I don't know." Well, after that, he said: "because that you are a girl, you might have different emotions towards the band." And he was a music writer. He treated me, so to say, as a girl who came to see a boyband. And for the first time, I was beginning to understand that there is really a male domination in the scene. <sup>35</sup> (İlgin)

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<sup>34</sup> Tabii ki son zamanlarda belki son 20 yılda bu biraz kırılmış vaziyette. Bir sürü kadın müzisyen sadece kadından oluşan gruplar falan daha çok ortaya çıkmaya başladı ama ben onların da çok fazla erkek hegemonyasının baskısı altında olduklarını düşünüyorum ve sürekli kritize edildiklerini görüyorum mesela bunlar işte kadın olmasalar ünlü olmazlardı, bunlar kadın oldukları için bu kadar ilzleyici topluyorlar gibi hani saçma sapan yorumlara maruz kalıyor müzisyenler, çünkü erkekler tam olarak bence alışabilmiş değiller bir kadının hani böyle bir müzikle uğraşmasına.

<sup>35</sup> Ben mesela bir dinleyici olarak hayatımın ilk konserine İstanbul'da gitmiştim 18 yaşındayken ve o Amorphis konseriydi, Finlandiyalı bir metal grubunun konseriydi. Orda ben biriyle tanışmıştım, tabi çok safım o zaman ve çok heyecanlıyım. Ve ben o grubu sadece albümlerinden biliyordum. Hiç açıp adamların yüzüne tiplerine falan bakmamıştım. Sokakta görsem tanıyıcam adamları ama bütün şarkı sözlerini biliyorum filan. Orda yazar bir adam geldi nedense bana, benden çok çok büyük yaşı, dedi ki ben yalnız geldim hadi birlikte izleyelim. Ben de okey dedim. İzlerken şey dedi sence hangisi daha

Not only being a woman as a musician is considered as strange in the male-dominated rock scene, being a woman as an audience is also taken in different perceptions. While a man gets qualified as an audience, a woman might get treated to be not able to hold the same qualifications as men, and when she exists in the audience, her actions are forejudged for something else which is related to her sexuality, instead of only being an audience.

Being a musician, being an audience are not the only topics that are getting segregated by gender in the rock scene. Music itself is being segregated by gender as well.

For instance, in the metal scene, there is a discourse that: “do you listen to them? This band? They are making girl-metal.” Or the total opposite of this: “aah, do you listen to brutal death metal? I’ve never seen a girl like this.” As he is doing something like praising. However, it is 2020 now, and while there are many women who produce this music, even there are many women who produce this music better than men, it feels like nonsense to me that people still have this kind of discourse.<sup>36</sup> (Ilgin, death metal audience)

From these expressions, it is observable that even when men acknowledge women’s existence in the rock (or in the subgenre metal) scene, they are classifying the genre of bands such as ‘girl-metal,’ as if the genre of metal is assigned to men only.

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yakışıklı bunların falan dedi böyle. Bilmem falan dedim. İşte ondan sonra sen işte bir kız olduğun için senin duyguların gruba karşı farklı olabilir dedi ve bunu diyen insan da bir müzik yazarıydı. Yani direkt bana sanki böyle bir boyband izlemeye gelmiş bir kızcağız muamelesi yaptı orada. Ve ben ilk o zaman orada yavaş yavaş anlamaya başladım orada, demek ki gerçekten erkek egemen bir şey varmış bu piyasada diye, öyle bir şey olmuştu.

<sup>36</sup> Mesela metal scene’i örnek verirsek, işte atıyorum: “Onları mı dinliyorsun, şu grubu mu dinliyorsun, onlar zaten kız metali yapıyorlar, kızlar için yapıyorlar” Böyle bir söylem vardır. Ya da tam tersi işte “aa sen brutal death metal mi dinliyorsun, aa ben hiç böyle bir kız görmemiştim” falan diye böyle sanki övüyormuş gibi sanki kendine ait bir şeyi dinleyen bir kızmış gibi böyle saçma bir kafa yapıları var. Oysa ki artık yıl olmuş 2020 ve bu müziği icra eden hatta pek çok erkekten iyi icra eden çok çok kadın müzisyen varken hala böyle söylemlerde bulunuyor insanlar saçma geliyor bana da.

Hale, who is a drummer in the rock scene (particularly in the subgenre, metal scene) interprets the male domination while analyzing what ‘male’ adds up to in this expression:

(Rock scene) is, unfortunately, is a place which is dominated by men, as a matter of fact by cis heterosexual men. Especially in the metal scene, I hear such things; unfortunately, when someone is about to criticize someone, it happens in the situation of being gay, such as “do you listen to Manowar? You are like a gay person. They make gay music.” I encounter too many ugly discourses such as this. I see this as a sphere where cis-hetero men try to dominate and do not want to involve any other genders.<sup>37</sup> (Hale, drummer)

From the contribution of her insights from the scene, it is observed that the male domination and the dominant culture in the scene discriminates any people who are not heterosexual male. As it is seen in the example which Ilgın gives, some bands were classified as girl-metal, and in the example which Hale gives, some bands were classified as gay-metal. These classifications both discriminate against any people who are not heterosexual males and assigns this scene to heterosexual males only.

### **5.2.2 Existing as a Woman**

On the one hand, there are many differences between being a male and a female musician in the rock scene. On the other hand, there are differences regarding gendered relations between a female singer and a female instrument player in the scene as well. However, women instrument players are getting alienated in the scene; some of the evidence shows that female singers are not exposed to discrimination based on gender as much as instrument players. And their experience of discrimination is seen to be slightly different than instrument players. Aysu, who is one of the most experienced musicians between the interviewees interpreted the subject when she was asked if she observed any difference between being a woman or being a man in the rock scene:

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<sup>37</sup> Kesinlikle var malesef erkeklerin domine ettiği hatta cis heteroseksüel erkeklerin domine ettiği bir alan. Metal camiasında özellikle böyle şeyler çok duyuyorum ne yazık ki, işte gey erkekler birisini eleştirecekse geylik üzerinden işte: “gey gibisin, manowar mı dinliyorsun, gey müziği yapıyor onlar” gibi çok çirkin söylemlere malesef çok denk geliyorum. Cis hetero erkeklerin domine ettiği, domine etmeye çalıştığı ve diğer cinsiyetleri barındırmayı çok istemediği bir alan gibi görüyorum ben.

I mean like, there might be a difference on getting attention, seeing a woman in the stage might get more attention of the people. Seeing a female instrument player might be socially perceived as interesting or different in the society. Seeing a male is not something to find odd; there is a difference like this. I mean, the female singer might get more attention than a male singer. I see this as a positive situation in singing. Because in singing, if you are singing well, being a woman and singing well is an advantage. This brings positive feedback on the stage. However, I see, it creates prejudgments for women who play instruments initially. Because there is this thing like “she has a guitar but, or, she plays drums, but I wonder if she plays well? Or “She sits there because she is a girl and shows off with her instrument?” Or “Oh, you know, they put her there because she is a girl, but she can not play.” These prejudgments are being created. However, there isn’t any prejudgment such as this in singing. Musicians or audiences see singing as more equal. But playing instruments by women is rarely seen from the 1600s 1700s in the history, it (the situation) came up like this somehow. <sup>38</sup> (Aysu, rock singer with more than 20 years of experience)

Within her expressions, Aysu interprets the scene as more egalitarian for singers, due to women’s herstory in the history is much longer comparing with instrument player’s background. Ilgın interpreted a common idea previously, such as: “Musicians are being exposed to nonsensical comments because men didn’t completely get used to the women who make an effort in this kind of music.” <sup>39</sup> It is perceptible that in the rock scene, themes which the scene members feel familiar with are met with egalitarian approaches, while the unfamiliar themes are met with skeptical, critical, and negative approaches, which leads to the discrimination in the scene. In this sense, it is said that

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<sup>38</sup> Yani şöyle, ilgi çekmek anlamında bir farklılık olabilir .Sahnede bir kadın görmek insanların daha fazla ilgisini çekebilir. Enstruman çalan bir kadın görmek toplumda sosyal anlamda ilgi çekici ve değişik gelebiliyor. Bir erkek görmek yadırganacak bir şey değil günümüzde, sadece böyle bir fark var. Yani aynı şekilde bir kadın vokal de bir erkek vokalden daha fazla ilgi çekebiliyor. Solistlikte bu durumu pozitif olarak görüyorum. Çünkü solistlikte eğer iyi şarkı söylüyorsanız bu bir avantaj, hem kadın hem iyi bir vokal olmak. Sahne için çok olumlu dönüş alan bir şey ama enstruman çalan kadınlarda önce önyargı yarattığını düşünüyorum. Çünkü önce şöyle bir şey var “Elinde gitar var ama ya da davul çalıyor ama acaba iyi çalıyor mu, yoksa kız diye oraya oturdu da bunun havasını mı atıyor?” veya işte “aman işte kız olduğu için öyle koydular ama çalamıyor” gibi bu tarz önyargılar yaratıyor. Ama solistlikte böyle bir önyargı yok. Şarkı söylemeyi biraz daha eşit görüyor insanlar, dinleyiciler veya müzisyenler. Ama enstruman çalmayı nedense tarih içinden itibaren çok eskiden beri yani 1600 1700lü yıllardan itibaren kadın enstruman çalan sayısı çok az olduğu için bu artık bir şekilde gelmiş.

<sup>39</sup> Saçma sapan yorumlara maruz kalıyor müzisyenler çünkü erkekler tam olarak bence alışabilmiş değiller bir kadının hani böyle bir müzikle uğraşmasına.

being a singer as a woman in the rock scene feels familiar to the scene members while being an instrument player is taken as an unfamiliar notion by the scene members. However, even though scene members acknowledge the existence of women in the area of singing more than the instrument player women, it does not mean that women who sing do not get discriminated against. Hale gives an example from one of her observations:

Male musicians do not want to play much with women unless they are singers. Even they speak behind the people they play with, such as, well: “she sings as such, but she can not do it completely.” But actually, he tells that she had classes and so on, but then he makes statements of why she is not a good singer. I mean these are well-known names, I am not going to say who they are, but this is a conversation about a well-known person which is spoken by a well-known person.<sup>40</sup> (Hale, drummer)

Being grimly criticized is one fragment of women’s alienation in the scene. The other fragment is to being extremely canonized, which is a part of the sexual objectification in the scene.

Existing as a woman in the rock scene, they may not get a decent representation as men get. Due to the fact that women’s existence in the scene as musicians are not acknowledged as much as men, they might sometimes face an incorrect perception of representation in people’s minds. Hazal, who is a musician as well as her husband, explains this with one of her experiences:

For instance, we were going somewhere, sitting somewhere. Somebody there introduces as such as: “(Hazal ‘s husband) is the bass player for the band x, and Hazal is her wife.” Now I mean.. Okay, x is a band, and he is the bass player for the band. But (my band) is another band and I am the guitar player for that band. Do you know what I mean? Or else, there was a constant thing about him, and I was very disturbed by this. And I spoke about it, I expressed

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<sup>40</sup> Müzisyen olarak sorun yaşayabiliyoruz. Erkek müzisyenler kadın müzisyenlerle vokal hariç, kadın vokal hariç, çok çalmak istemiyorlar hatta beraber çalıştıkları insanların arkasından konuşuyorlar işte “bu da şöyle vokali yapıyor ama tam yapamıyor” falan aslında ama ders falan almış onların ders aldığını falan anlatıyor. Ama sonra onların neden iyi bir vokal olmadığını söylüyor, yani çok bilindik isimler hakkında şimdi kim olduğunu söyleyemedim de bilindik isimlerin bilindik isimler hakkında konuşması bu.

myself, showed it and made jokes about it. I was being angry and saying to the boys like: “you really are making a ‘groupie’ talk to me,” etc. <sup>41</sup> (Hazel, acoustic guitar player with more than 30 years of experience)

As it is mentioned in the literature research, it was perceptible that female musicians were asked that if they are with the band, if they came to see their boyfriend perform or their capability of playing in the rock scene have been questioned. (Hopper, 2015) Kevin Petty shares examples for the situation as this:

Following the logic of patriarchy, successful female musicians are generally pigeonholed in this manner to prevent them from threatening the masculine privileges of musicianship, creativity, talent, genius: Hazel O'Connor and Amanda Lear tied to David Bowie, Nina Hagen tied to a dissident East German poet, Kate Bush tied to David Gilmour, Courtney Love tied to Kurt Cobain, ad Infinitum. Female performers are restricted to the roles of chanteuse or dancer. (Petty, 1995)

As it can be seen in both Hazel’s expressions and Kevin Petty’s examples, women are being represented with men, despite they have musical skills and positions in the rock scene just as much as men they were being represented with.

### **5.2.3 Sexual Objectification**

The action of canonizing comes from the general understanding of playing instruments or singing in rock music mostly seen as a male’s feature. When women accomplish these actions, it is seen as an extraordinary notion which people applaud. Günce, explains this situation as this:

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<sup>41</sup> Gidiyorum ve mesela bir yerde oturuyoruz. Birileri tanıştıyor işte: “... abi de ... grubunun başçısı ... de onun eşi.” Şimdi ya tamam ... bir grup ve o onun başçısı, e ... (benim grubum) da bir başka grup ve ben de onun gitarçısıyım. Anlatabildim mi? Ya da işte sürekli muratla ilgili bir muhabbet vardı ve ben bundan çok rahatsız olurdum. Söylordim de yani ifade ederdim gösterirdim esprisini yapardım. “groupie” muhabbeti yapıyorsunuz iyice bana diye çocuklara kızardım falan.

Apart from the obvious discriminations that I live through, generally, I see this situation from the audience: They are shocked for the first time, interestingly they react such as: “Aah! There is a woman singing!” Further to that, they are not criticizing you as musically because you are a woman, but they are sparing you to another place, saying: “oh man, there is a woman!” However I am not happy to be a part of this, I mean if you are going to criticize me, you should criticize me for my music as good or bad. But generally, you know, roughly, they are separating you by saying that: “Oh man, a woman is making this music, awesome, woahh!”<sup>42</sup> (Günce, death metal singer)

Woman in the rock scene is observed to be not happy about getting praised more than the qualifications of their music, due to their gender. At this point, the situation involves acts of sexual objectification of women. In addition, in most cases, women’s sexuality overshadows their capabilities on their instruments in the perception of the society. This perception creates prejudices that they look successful, or they get attention just because of their sexual stance, and they will not consider or analyze their actual abilities in music. İlgin gives an example of this situation:

There was a Turkish female guitarist on Youtube, and she was playing a really difficult song with a major success. I mean guitar solos and everything. It really is too hard to play like that. I showed this to my boyfriend at the time, he looked and said: “This has too many views because she shows her breasts.” He made a nonsense comment like this, but after he watched, he was like: “whoa, I can’t even play like this.” I mean, (it is a) prejudice because there is a perception in people’s heads such as men plays the instruments best.<sup>43</sup> (İlgin)

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<sup>42</sup> Benim bariz yaşadığım birkaç ayrımcılık haricinde genelde izleyiciden gördüğüm şey şu, çoğu kişi ilk etapta neye uğradığını şaşırıyor. İlginç bir şekilde aaaa bir kadın söylüyor falan gibi bir tepki veriyor. Onun ötesinde kadın söylediği için müzikal olarak seni eleştirmiyor aabiiii kadın var diyerek seni bir kulvara koyuyor. Halbuki ben bunun içerisinde olmaktan çok mutlu değilim, yani beni eleştireceksen müziğimi iyi ya da kötü olarak eleştirmen gerektiğini düşünüyorum ama genelde hani çok kaba tabirle abi kadın yapıyor süper voahh diyerek bir kenara ayrılıyor.

<sup>43</sup> Youtube’da çok iyi bir kadın gitarist vardı Türk, ve çok zor bir şarkıyı çok başarılı bir şekilde çalıyor yani sololar bilmemneler ya gerçekten zor o şekilde çalmak. Ve ben bunu o zamanki erkek arkadaşıma göstermiştim, kendisi çok ünlü bir müzik grubunda çalışıyordu Alman, baktı şey dedi ya bu çok izlenmiş çünkü kız memesini açmış filan saçma sapan bir yorum yaptı. Sonra tabii izledikçe aa ben bile böyle çalamam filan olmuştu böyle yani önyargı. Çünkü o enstrumanı en iyi erkek çalabilir gibi bir önyargı var insanlarda.

Interviewees' expressions are overlapping with each other at this point. As it is seen in the expression of Aysu's, the understanding of: "Oh, you know, they put her there because she is a girl, but she can not play" is relevant in the rock scene. Women are treated as an object which is used to attract more audience. Hale forms an example of this understanding in the rock scene as:

There is this thing, for example, in men, you know: "let there be one woman in my band, and she attracts more audience, the band becomes more interesting. It does not matter how good she plays; let her just visually stand there as a trinket." They have this point of view as well. <sup>44</sup> (Hale, drummer)

It is seen that some of the musicians developed this strategy in order to raise the attention they get and gather more audience and sell more records. They are including women in their bands only for their physical appearances.

Women becomes an object regardless of their capability of playing instruments or singing at this point. Another interviewee, Filiz, shares one of her experience regarding the sexual objectification:

The employees of the practice studios which we go with our band, would add me on the social media, contact me over my phone number which I was using to make a reservation. My other male bandmates, of course, didn't live such things. When these are mentioned, they were only making fun of it. Apart from these, unfortunately, I felt too many times that they approached me as a woman rather than a guitarist. One time, a person who played with us said to me: "Do you know, this woman from the band ... has intercourse with all men in her band?" As if he was demanding something. It made me sick to my stomach. The same person was constantly fantasizing about other women in bands and trying to talk about it. <sup>45</sup> (Filiz, electronic guitar player)

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<sup>44</sup> Ya da şey var mesela erkeklerde işte ya grubumda en azından bir tane kadın olsun da işte seyirci gelir, ilgi çeker, işte nasıl çaldığı önemli değil. Görsel olarak o sadece sahnede biblo olarak dursun bakış açısı da var.

<sup>45</sup> Gittiğimiz stüdyolarda çalışan insanlar sosyal medyadan ekliyordu, rezervasyon yapmak için kullandığım telefon numaram üzerinden ulaşmaya çalışıyorlardı. Erkek olan grup arkadaşlarım tabii ki böyle bir durum yaşamadı. Bunların konusu geçtiği zaman da sadece dalga geçiyorlardı. Bunun haricinde bana bir gitarist olarak değil kadın olarak yaklaşıldığımı malesef çok kez hissetmek zorunda

What Filiz mentions, can be classified as an absolute example of a sexual objectification practice, which might include sexual harassment as well. Bartky explains the sexual objectification as this:

A person is sexually objectified when her sexual parts or sexual functions are separated from the rest of her personality and reduced to the status of mere instruments or else regarded as if they were capable of representing her. (Bartky, 1990, p. 26)

From this viewpoint, women's abilities in music becomes invisible, and their sexual appearances are taken as their representations. These acts form an example of the sexual objectification of women in the rock scene. At some points, sexual objectification is associated with the clothing style in the stage. Some of the interviewees explain their stance and attitude in the stage with involving their clothing style:

I think women are being criticized over their clothing styles more; I mean, I see this. I mostly go to the stage with camouflage boots and band t-shirts and apply some warrior style make up, because of this I did not hear anything about me, myself. But you know in some punk concerts, they are talking about women's clothing styles.<sup>46</sup> (Günce, death metal singer)

It is perceptible that women's qualifications as musicians are being reduced to their clothing styles as they become some sort of sexual objects. On the one hand, some of the musicians handle this discriminating approach to embracing gender-neutral clothing styles. At most points, the meaning between their genders and their music becomes nonsensical, and it does not reflect on their clothing styles. Their only

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kaldım. Bir seferinde grubumuzda yer alan biri "biliyor musun ... grubundaki kadın gruptaki bütün erkeklerle birlikte olmuş" dedi. Sanki bir şey talep ediyormuş gibi. Bu midemi aşırı derecede bulandırmıştı. Aynı kişi başka gruplardaki kadınlar hakkında da sürekli olarak fantezi kuruyor ve dile getirmeye çalışıyordu.

<sup>46</sup> Daha çok sanırsam giyiniş tarzları üzerinden eleştiriliyor yani izlerken görüyorum. Yani ben sahneye genelde kamuflaj bot işte grup tişörtüyle çıkıp, biraz da savaşçı makyajı gibi yaptığım için, yani onunla çıktığım için benim cephemde herhangi bir şey duymadım. Ama işte bazı punk konserlerinde kadınların giyinişleri üzerinden hani konuşmalar yapılıyor.

concern becomes to reflect their identities through their music and their clothing styles; by this, they are freely express their identities as persons and identities as the scene members with their styles in the stage. They do not feel under pressure of the beauty standards in the mainstream rock scene. On the other hand, some of the musicians choose to challenge this understanding by embracing attractive clothing styles as following through the gender subversion in the scene. Yet again, they are freely expressing their identities apart from the pressure of the fear of being objectified or being harassed.

Umut is explaining their challenging attitude towards the objectification as:

Of course, it (the objectification) happened because we are doing this in Turkey. Because we wear challenging clothes in the stage, more different cleavages, etc., and our moves get bigger, and when we look inside the basis of the relationship between men and women in Turkey, a sexual perception appears on even the women who see our stage. But it forms a challenge; you challenge the audience. When you intuit it somewhere too much, you challenge it, actually at some point, you don't care much as well. But, I mean, all of us ran across this.<sup>47</sup> (Umut, singer in a hard rock all women band)

Women in the Turkish alternative rock scene choose their own ways to handle the objectification approaches such as either expressing their identities with their styles as a rebellion with just existing and standing against to their intimidating approaches or wearing challenging clothes regardless of getting affected by the opinion of society on what they should wear. However, many of the interviewees expressed that they did not experience harassment in the scene; some of the interviewees expressed that other scene members sexually harassed them.

There was this thing; I do not remember if it was after a metal concert or after some bands rehearsal, maybe a friend of mine rehearsal: we went somewhere

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<sup>47</sup> Ya aslında Türkiye'de bu işi yaptığımız için tabii ki oldu, sahnede daha iddialı kıyafetler giyiyoruz daha farklı dekolterler vs. Dikkat çekici şeyler giydiğimiz için ve hareketler büyüdüğü için ve Türkiye'deki kadın erkek ilişkilerinin temeline baktığımız zaman sahnede, kadınların bile izleyenlerden yüzde sekseninde seksüel algı oluşuyor. Ama hani bir challenge oluşuyor bir meydan okuma, seyirciye meydan okuyorsunuz. bir yerde bunu fazlasıyla sezdiğiniz zaman bazen meydan da okuyorsunuz. Bir yerden sonra da çok da umursamıyorsunuz da aslında ama buna çok fazla hepimiz rastlamışızdır yani.

as a crowded group of metalheads, we are sitting in someplace. I was sitting next to a singer of a well-known band. It was their recording period, or they were going to go on a tour or something, I do not remember much. I just listened to their records, I was saying something related about to this to him, I mean I was saying something about their music, and he waited and waited, and as if he did not listen to anything that I said, he said to me: “You have nice boobs.” I mean... I don’t want to tell the rest of it. <sup>48</sup> (Hale, drummer)

Some scene members perceive women who are both musicians and audience as a sexual object. As it is seen in the musician's part, women’s qualifications as an audience is reduced to their sexual appearances as well.

This perception leads to harassment in some cases. Fulya, who plays in a band which consists of female musicians, shares one of their experience:

When we are in the stage, they are catcalling, but there were no bad words or physical contact, thank god. But we saw a thing like this: we went to Mersin for a concert, after the concert we were chased to our hotel and they sat in the hotel lobby, and we were so tensed and depressed. It was a serious harassment. Moreover, it was traumatizing. <sup>49</sup> (Fulya, bass guitar player)

The places where rock concerts occur are most likely to be pubs where alcohol gets served. Therefore the chances of the audience who are having alcohol during the concert is quite high. There is a general view between the interviewees that audience who consume alcohol, might be likely to cross the borders of personal space. However,

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<sup>48</sup> Şu oldu, bir metal konseri sonrası mıydı ya da birilerinin provası sonrası mıydı hatırlamıyorum. Ya bir arkadaşımın provası sonrası da olabilir. Kalabalık bir grup metalciler gittik bir yere oturuyoruz falan. Bilindik bir grubun vokalistiyle de yan yana oturmuştuk. O aralar kayıt dönemleri falan vardı sanırım çok hatırlamıyorum ya da konsere mi turneye mi ne gideceklerdi bir şey olacaktı, ben de bununla ilgili bir şeyler söylüyordum yeni kayıtlarını mı dinlemiştim. Bu konuyla ilgili yani yaptıkları müzikle ilgili bir şeyler söylüyordum adam durdu durdu sonra şey dedi , dediklerimin hiçbirini dinlememiş. Memelerin çok güzelmiş gibi bir şey söyledi. Yani... geri kalanını anlatmak istemiyorum.

<sup>49</sup> Sahnedeyken diyalog kurmak için laf atıyorlar, ama kötü bir söz fiziksel bir temas olmadı şimdiye kadar. Allah’tan olmadı. Ama şöyle bir şey yaşadık; Mersin’e konsere gitmiştik, konserden sonra otelimize kadar takip edildik ve lobide oturdular yani ve bu bizi çok germişti çok canımızı sıkıyordu. Bu ciddi bir tacizdi, bu travmatikti hatta.

due to their concerns on the issue, they are choosing the places that they arrange their concerts, or they choose their bandmates considering their characterizations.

#### **5.2.4 Being Selective Regarding The Choice of Band Members and Stage Places**

Interviewees shared their undesirable experiences due to the discrimination, sexist approaches, sexual objectification. While speaking about these, there is one common point which most of them share; being selective of their choices. In order to prevent any kind of undesirable situation, they were analyzing their band members and choose their band members according to their analyzes, and they scrutinized the places where they have the possibility of arranging their concerts. At this point, Aysu explains how she avoids this kind of undesirable situations:

I am very selective of the people who I play with or of the places that I work with; they are all decent good places. Because I do not work with these people and in these places, I did not see such things.<sup>50</sup> (Aysu, rock singer with more than 20 years of experience)

Aysu is not the only musician who is selective on her band members. When speaking about the possible pressure of the gender roles on musicians, she states that she does not feel the pressure: “Personally, I don’t think (I feel the pressure), because I do not work with people who will put that pressure on me.”<sup>51</sup> İnci From the statements of interviewees, it becomes perceptible that women are not only selective of the people due to the concern of harassment, they are also separating the people who embrace the gendered roles and puts these role’s pressure on them. Hale elaborates this approach as this:

I do not recall if anyone directly came to me and said “you can not play because you are a woman, not because you do not practice enough but because of you

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<sup>50</sup> Yok ben çok seçiciyim, çalıştığım arkadaşlarım da çalıştığım yerler de hep düzgün iyi yerler oldu. O tarz insanlarla o tarz mekanlarda bulunmadığım için yaşamadım böyle bir şey.

<sup>51</sup> Ben kendi adıma düşünmüyorum çünkü ben bana o baskıyı yapacak insanlarla çalışmadım.

are a woman” etc., but even if they said it, I don’t remember, in this case, I did not take it seriously. Generally, I do not like to involve this kind of people in my circle. If I run into a person like this, I say “all right” and part ways. I prefer to make music with people who attach importance to the work they do regardless of the gender of their bandmates, and people who I can get along well. Therefore even if I did experience such a thing, I did not take it too seriously. <sup>52</sup> (Hale, drummer)

It is evident that being selective is a result of the coping mechanism with gendered discrimination in the scene.

Women are choosing this method in order to overcome the discriminative approaches, and by this, they are interacting with people who embrace more egalitarian approaches in the scene.

### **5.2.5 Gendered Roles**

However, women use to be selective as a method to overcome the inequalities in the rock scene; despite their effort, they are still being exposed to sexist approaches that are carried out by the audience, other musicians, and scene members.

It is evident that society, especially the mainstream rock scene, attempts to put some pressure on women, such as: being thin, being duty-bound to apply makeup, clothing according to the structure of the mainstream scene. These pressures also reflects the structure of general society. At this point, it is seen that general societal norms are applied to the mainstream rock scene as well. Nevertheless, women in the alternative rock scene choose to object to this understanding.

Eliz, who has a variety of stage experience, shares her experience on this subject:

People feel like they have the right to do this type of comment. For example, I have always been a woman with overweight. I have never been thin in my life.

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<sup>52</sup> Yüzüme gelip birisi işte sen çalamazsın edemezsin falan, yani kadın olduğun için çalamazsın, hani yeterince çalışmadığın için değil de kadın olduğun için çalamazsın falan bir şeyler söyledi mi hatırlamıyorum. Söylediyse de çok ciddiye almamışım demek ki. Genelde o tür insanları ben çevremde çok barındırmakta haz etmiyorum. Öyle biriyle karşılaşırsak hadi eyvallah diyorum, yolları ayırıyorum. Cinsiyetten çok icra edilen işe önem veren, iyi anlaşabildiğim insanlarla birlikte müzik yapmayı tercih ettiğim için bu şeyi deneyimlediysen de çok ciddiye almamışımdır.

Even though how much I have wanted and made an effort for it, at some point, I came back to this situation. Finally, I made peace with this and went on to the stage and showed myself. I go on the stage to show myself, but people have an urge to say things like that: “actually if you lose weight, you will get more audience.” I mean as a woman, I have to be 90-60-90 in there, I need to look beautiful, I need to apply makeup before going on to the stage, for example when I don’t apply makeup, it is taken as strange. And maybe they don’t expect from me to sit there properly or wear a mini skirt, but no one tells a man to such things as “Bro, your belly got too big, it doesn’t look good in the stage.” But I encounter this kind of behavior as a woman.<sup>53</sup> (Eliz, singer in a grunge band)

As it is seen in the Eliz’s expressions, body-shaming and body politics is relevant in the rock scene. Women’s gendered roles involve being thin, applying makeup, and elements like this. Societal norms on women’s standardized body, as it is discussed in the previous chapter, were mentioned in songs such as Feels Blind by Bikini Kill. Lyrics involved statements such as:

I’m the woman I was taught always to be: hungry  
Yeah women are well acquainted with thirst  
Well, I could eat just about anything  
We might even eat your hate up like love (Vail et al., n.d.)

Standardized body image in the society, raises the amount of anxiety of women. Rock scene, in one sense, by embracing this image and imposing this image on women, is pumping this anxiety on women. Women who feel the pressure of these gendered norms regarding their body, express themselves with their lyrics and create a rebellion against this understanding with the social power of their music as it is in the example

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<sup>53</sup> İnsanlar şey yorumu yapmaya çok hak görüyorlar kendilerinde. Mesela ben hep kilolu bir kadın oldum. Hiç zayıf olmadım hayatımda. Her ne kadar istesem de çabalıyorum bir noktada geri dönüyorum bu noktaya falan. En sonunda bununla barıştım ve sahneye çıkıyorum, yani kendimi gösteriyorum, kendimi göstermek için çıkmıyorum sahneye ama kendimi gösteriyorum ve insanlar şöyle yorum yapma ihtiyacı hissedebiliyorlar “ya aslında kilo versen daha çok izleyicin olur.” Yani bir kadın olarak benim orda 90 60 90 görünmem gerekiyor, güzel görünmem gerekiyor, sahneye çıkarken makyaj yapmam gerekiyor mesela makyaj yapmayınca da garipseniyor. Ondan sonra evet yani belki bir kadın gibi hanım hanımcık oturmam beklenmiyor ya da işte mini etek giymem beklenmiyor ama bir erkeğe gidip kimse işte abi senin de göbek çok büyümüş yani sahnede hiç hoş durmuyor demezken, bir kadın olarak onunla karşılaşıyorum mesela.

of the song 'Feels Blind.' Ilgın associates the body politics with the mainstream rock scene codes and states that there are examples regarding the pressure on body in the scene:

There are examples that stay out of this, but in mainstream bands, in the mainstream metal or rock scenes, we see such things. I think women are being pushed to look too sexy, too feminine. Or on the contrary, it is seen that women look masculine and play upon to that specific crowd of people.<sup>54</sup>  
(Ilgın, solo pianist, music column writer)

She, basically, detects a strategy which is carried on by musicians or pushed by market forces upon women in the scene. As it is mentioned previously, Joan Jett, a professional rock musician, shared her thoughts regarding this situation in one of her interviews as:

What you're saying is society doesn't allow women to access their sexuality in relationship to music. They have to be a certain thing, and that's it. Once they do that, they're w-----, they're s-----, they're d-----. (Nolasco, 2019)

At this point, there is a paradox within the scene. It is seen that one part of the scene thinks there is a pressure on women to wear more challenging clothes, but when they wear this style of clothing, they are being shamed for it. Eliz shares one of her experience on the subject:

I had another band. It was a Pink Floyd tribute band. As three women, we were doing back vocals. I normally don't like vanity in clothing; I mean, I don't like getting much attention. Let it be beautiful, but I don't need the eyes to turn on me. I wear my usual jeans and some cool blacktop and go on the stage. One of my friends was wearing too much for the stage. I mean she can wear them if she wants, but I heard comments on this subject from my friends. "What was she wearing? Is her wearing style is connected with the band's thing? (/or "is it compatible with the band's thing?") I don't know, such comments as "red skirt is something to wear when you go to honky-tonk, lacey things and so

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<sup>54</sup> Yani onun dışında kalan örnekler olmakla beraber, mainstream gruplar, mainstream metal ya da rock sahnesinde böyle şeyler görüyoruz. Kadınların ya çok seksi, kadınsı görünmeye zorlandıklarını düşünüyorum ya da tam tersi çok erkekse görünüp, biraz o kitleye oynaması falan gibi şeyler görülüyor evet.

on...” It is perceived like this. For me, it does not matter for me, I didn’t say anything when I look at her, you know I didn’t say things such as “what kind of wearing is this?” but I heard comments like this. Actually, on the contrary, even though she was wearing a mini skirt, my clothing style was found to be more compatible because it is a rock concert.<sup>55</sup> (Eliz, singer in an all women band )

Also, it is evident that there are multiple issues that are interbedded in this situation. From the expression of interviewees, it is seen that gendered roles puts pressure on women’s clothing style while it leads to the sexual objectification of women. As it is mentioned before, the clothing style of women looks like to gain more importance than their abilities in music. While their bodies, sexualities come to the forefront, it overshadows their musician identities.

While most women indicate that the gender roles do not affect their performance in music, it is seen that these musicians have raised their consciousness on the topic and have high self-esteem. Even though they all acknowledge the negative pressure of gendered roles, they do not let it affect them on purpose due to their consciousness.

Umut indicates that there are gendered roles in the scene, but she preserves her free will on the subject:

I think there is a pressure of gender roles in the scene because, as I said, I am approaching being on the stage as focusing on pleasure. I have associated it with sex previously; I do not think much about what I should do on the stage. I just put my pleasure sense there, and I want to act according to it. It reflects on my stage energy; everyone has a different reflection. When I take the sense of pleasure as a basis, a perception which is not compatible with the idea of

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<sup>55</sup> Başka bir grubum daha vardı benim. Pink Floyd tribute grubuydu. Üç kadın back vokal yapıyoduk. Giyim olarak genelde çok böyle gösteriş sevmem yani çok dikkat çekmekten hoşlanmam. Güzel olsun ama gözlerin bana dönmesine gerek yok yani. Ben normal kotumu işte üstüme siyah cool bir şeyimi giyiyorum, çıkıyorum sahneye. Diğer kadın arkadaşlardan biri böyle çok abartılı giyiniyordu sahnede. Ya giyinebilir istiyorsa da bu konuda yorum duydum mesela arkadaşlarımdan. Ya işte “o kız ne giymişti öyle ne alaka yani grubun şeyiyle alakası var mı”, ne bileyim atıyorum “kırmızı etek işte böyle pavyona giderken giyebileceğin dantelli bilmemne” falan gibi yani bir şeyler. Böyle algılanıyor filan. Bana kalsa önemi yok, ben hani kızın tipine bakıp da işte ne biçim giyinmişsin demedim ama böyle yorumlar duydum. Tam aksi aslında yani kız mini etek giymiş olmasına rağmen benim giyimim daha uygun bulundu oraya çünkü işte rock konseri falan.

women in the society arises. You know, sometimes there is a move that I don't plan, but it can show up as too sexy or exhibitory. Or it is perceived like that. Hence, I come across prejudices of perceptions of being pure-sexy regarding the moves in the stage. However, the aim here is to live my own pleasure rather than to look sexy. But you can not make the audience think this way; this is another subject.<sup>56</sup> (Umut, singer in a hard rock all women band)

In spite of the prejudices that other people create, women prefer to challenge this kind of thought by focusing on their own motivation, dressing in the style they would like, and continue to exist on the stage. It is seen that they are well-aware of the gendered structure of the scene, and with their consciousness, they do not let these negative features of this structure come on their way.

Another contribution came from Fulya, who shared one of her experience which disturbed her:

We had this experience: I did feel any pressure on me then; besides this, I am how I like to be on stage if I want to wear feminine clothes that day I wear. Sometimes I go on the stage with a little less groomed. For instance, it is not something that bothers me much, but at some concerts, there are 80% men and 20% women ratio in the audience. And in front of the stage, an extreme smell of men appears. And we were like, "hmm??" In one or two concerts, we felt really bad, as if they (audience) did not come to listen to us, but they have different aims. Their energy reflects on us, and in two concerts, it made us sick; at that moment, no one talked about it, but after the stage, everyone shared how they felt disgusted. I never forget this. This is one of the rare times I feel the pressure. When it becomes something that occurs more (women in stage) and see more, I think there will be less people who come to concerts with that aim.<sup>57</sup> (Fulya, bass guitar player)

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<sup>56</sup> Düşünüyorum çünkü dediğim gibi ben haz odaklı yaklaşıyorum sahnede olmaya. Az önce de seksle ilişkilendirmiştim, ben sahnede çok düşünmüyorum nerede ne yapmam gerektiğini dolayısıyla orada haz duygumu ortaya koyup öyle hareket etmek istiyorum sahne enerjime bu yansıyor. Herkese farklı bir şey yansır. Haz duygusunu baz aldığım zaman haliyle toplumdaki kadın algısına yakışmayan bir algı oluyor işte bazen bir hareket ben onu planlayarak yapmıyorum ama gereğinden fazla seksi veya teşhirci kaçabiliyor ya da her neyse hani böyle algılanabiliyor dolayısıyla sahnedeki hareketlerin safi seksi algılanması noktasında bir önyargıyla karşılaşıyorum. Aslında orada amaç seksi görünmekten ziyade kendi hazzımı yaşamak oluyor ama bunu tabi dışarda seyirciye bu şekilde düşündürtemiyorsun, bu başka bir şey

<sup>57</sup> Şöyle bir deneyimimiz olmuştu, o zaman üstümde bir baskı hissetmiştim onun dışında ben sahnede nasıl olmak istiyorsam, o gün daha kadınsı giyinmek istiyorum, öyle giyiniyorum. Bazen daha az bakımlı şekilde çıkıyorum. Mesela çok takıldığım bir nokta değil ama bazı konserlerde yüzde seksene yirmi oranında falan böyle erkek kadın oranı falan oluyor ve sahnenin onun önünde böyle inanılmaz bir erkek kokusu oluyor ve şey oluyor "hmm??" Bir iki konserde biz çok kötü hissettik

Even though musicians are well-aware of the gendered codes in the scene and sexual objectification, it is not possible for them to control the incidents as this completely. Therefore even though they have consciousness on the subject and they are not willing to make the gendered roles affect them, it is evident that there are counted times that they were affected by this.

In addition, it should be considered that interviewees were all consisted of musicians who got the chance to start and progress on their musical careers. Therefore, there might be candidates among the women who were willing to be a musician in the rock scene and disappointed with the gendered codes in the scene and eventually gave up on their aims. At this point, female musicians' existence becomes even more meaningful due to their success stories and their image of role models to the other musician candidates.

### **5.2.6 Managing Administrative Relations**

Musicians form relationships with their bandmates, authorities in the record companies and concert venues, people in the practice studios, technicians, tonmeisters, and many more scene members. While forming the relations with these people, gender might be a notion which differentiate their approaches to musicians. Musicians shared their experience on this subject regarding the gendered relations in their administrative process. It is seen that there are instances of discrimination based on gender and reverse discrimination based on gender, as well. Günce described the hardships she went through while elaborating the issue on the aspect of being in an amateur and professional phase: “I did not see any hardships, at least in the current period. However, before that, when I was amateur interested in music, I have seen the hardships of being the only woman in the band.”<sup>58</sup> Günce After this expression, she answered the question, “what kind of hardships you see within the amateur period?”:

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oraya sanki dinlemeye gelinmemiş de, başka bir amaçla gelinmiş. Onun enerjisi geçiyor ve iki konser de böyle mide bulantısı çektiğimizi hatırlıyorum ve o an kimse sahnede onu konuşmadı ama sahneden sonra herkes o mide bulantısını yaşadığını birbiriyle paylaşmıştı onu hiç unutmuyorum genel hani benim baskı hissi yaşadığım ender anlardan. Bu daha fazla görülen daha fazla yaşanan bir şey olduğu zaman oraya o amaçla gelen insanların sayısının azalacağını düşünüyorum.

<sup>58</sup> Yaşamadım en azından şu anki süreçte yaşamadım ama daha öncesinde amatör olarak ilgilendiğim dönemde grubun içerisinde tek kadın olmanın zorluklarını yaşadım.

The man made a move on me! I'm damned if I do accept and damned if I don't accept. In one of my band, I accepted the relationship, and it went to a nonsense situation. In one of my other bands, I did not, and it went to a nonsense situation as well. I mean, it is up to the man you are facing, I guess, I don't know. <sup>59</sup> (Günce, death metal singer)

On the one hand, this expression forms an instance for the hardships, which is derived from the demand of the romantical relationship between band members. On the other hand, it points out to a significant inference: While men respect women and respect their boundaries in the professional phase, this respect is not applied in the amateur phase of the musicians. Aysu, who is in her professional phase, interprets her administrative relations with other people as this:

I do not experience any hardships when I contact the concert venues; on the contrary, the owners of the venues sometimes might have to be more kind. However, when managing the other band members, if you don't have a strong personality, you will get a hard time. Because for example, I do not have an all-women band as with my other friends, all of the band members beside me are men, and they are all people of a certain age, and they all have their egos. Because art is something like this, it creates an ego in a human's structure. In order to manage them, you really have to stand strong. You will see hardships like this during band practices or while you are expressing your thoughts while managing the band. Male musicians do not easily like getting advice from women or a woman's saying, "let's do this and that." It is just like the other relationships between men and women in the society. <sup>60</sup> (Aysu, rock singer with more than 20 years of experience)

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<sup>59</sup> Adam yürüyordu. İlişkiyi kabul etsen ayrı, etmesen ayrı. Bir grubumda etmiştim, saçma sapan oldu, bir grubumda etmemiştim o da saçma sapan oldu. Yani o biraz karşıdaki adamla alakalı heralde bilemiyorum.

<sup>60</sup> Yani şöyle mekanlarla görüşmeler yaparken bir zorluk yaşamıyorum, aksine kadın olduğum için biraz daha kibar davranışlar sergilemek durumunda kalabiliyor mekan sahipleri, ancak grup üyelerini idare ederken güçlü bir karakter değilseniz çok zorlanırsınız. Çünkü örneğin benim bir kadın grubum yok başka arkadaşlarım gibi, benim haricimdeki bütün arkadaşlarım erkek, hepsi belli bir yaşın üstünde erkekler ve egolu erkekler. Çünkü sanat öyle bir şey egolu bir durum yaratıyor insan bünyesinde, onları idare etmek için gerçekten çok güçlü durmanız lazım. Öyle bir zorluğunu yaşıyorsunuz yani provalar esnasında, veya işte bir takım fikirlerinizi beyan etme esnasında veya grubu yönetme esnasında. Erkek müzisyenler kolay kolay bir kadından tavsiye almak veya bir kadının onlara şöyle yapalım böyle yapalım demesinden çok hoşnut olmuyorlar. Ya tıpkı toplumdaki diğer erkeklerle kadın ilişkileri gibi.

Aysu indicates that the relationship between a female band member and a male band member is a reflection of the societal relationship codes. In that sense, it is seen that mainstream rock music preserves its patriarchal codes in its structure. The examples of not ‘taking advise from women’ can be seen in the family structure or workplace structures as well. However, women build their way up to the respect they deserve by moving to the professional level:

In my current band, thank god, there is no situation like this. But in many of my previous bands, I have observed this. The biggest reason that I don’t experience a situation like this now is, I think, they understood that I understand this work well, I am a person of a certain age, their respect to me, their respect to me because I am a teacher. But if I was a too young friend who is in her 20’s, I am sure we would have massive conflicts. <sup>61</sup> (Aysu, rock singer with more than 20 years of experience)

This expressions of Aysu overlaps with the expressions of Günce. Women get more respect when they move to the professional phase from the amateur phase. It seems as, in order to reach the respect, they need to be a professional, and they need to prove their abilities in music. They need to earn the basic respect which they should be getting in the first place in egalitarian circumstances.

Another comparison between the amount of respect which is received in the amateur phase and professional phase is expressed by Filiz as this:

One of my bands consisted of two other male members apart from me. Because that one of them was more experienced, with forefronting his experience, he was trying to dictate the decisions about the band. But this approach was shown to me more. He wasn’t act like that to another amateur

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<sup>61</sup> Şu anki grubumda mesela çok şükür öyle bir şey yok, ama bugüne kadar çalıştığım birçok grupta bunu çok gözlemledim. Şu an olmamasının en büyük nedeni de şöyle düşünüyorum, benim de işten iyi anladığımı fark etmeleri, belli bir yaşın üstünde olmam, saygı duymaları, öğretmen olduğum için saygı duymaları, bundan dolayı ama ben çok genç bir arkadaş olsaydım, 20’li yaşlarda birisi olsaydım eminim ki çok büyük çatışmalar yaşardık.

level male member, and he was listening to him more. I've felt that there was gender discrimination there. <sup>62</sup> (Filiz, electronic guitar player)

As seen from her expressions, the amount of the respect differ by the professionalism phase. However, it becomes perceptible that, apart from the phase, it differs according to gender as well. Another part of the managing administrative relations in the scene consists of the issues, which is about the concert venues and touring. All of the interviews show that venue owners mostly act more kind to the women. Even one of the interviewee, defined them as generally to be more like, fatherly. However, she added that their good behavior is relevant only when it suits their book:

Normally (when touring) we don't take a tour manager with us, we have a sound technician, but we don't bring him as well. We travel as five women. Therefore, there is a situation like this: when we meet the venue managers, they are like fatherly, they are perceived as fatherly in the society, and they say things such as "our daughters," they have protecting attitudes in a traditional sense of view. But when it doesn't suit their book financially, many managers do not hire a car and bring five women from İstanbul. We are groveling in trains and planes, whatever. I mean, many managements do not involve transportation. When there is a matter of money, you won't be their daughters, actually. <sup>63</sup> (Umut, singer in a hard rock all women band)

However, including the transportation expenses to their payment plan is a method that can be followed in the music industry; venue owners choose to organize their plans according to their benefit, such as their ticket selling, etc. When the market necessitates to include the transportation they have to be including. However, these circumstances are rarely seen in the amateur phase, and it is seen more in the professional phase. At

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<sup>62</sup> Bir grubumda benden başka iki erkek vardı. Biri daha tecrübeli olduğu için, tecrübesini öne çıkararak grupla ilgili kararları dikte etmeye çalışıyordu. Ama bu tavrı en çok bana gösterirken, diğer amatör level olan erkek arkadaşına göstermiyordu ve onu daha çok dinliyordu. Burada bir cinsiyet ayrımcılığı olduğunu hissetmişim.

<sup>63</sup> Normal şartlarda biz yanımızda tur menajeri götürmüyoruz, her zaman bir sesçimiz var o erkek onu da götürmüyoruz. Ha beş kadın yolculuk yapıyoruz dolayısıyla işte. Şimdi aslında şöyle bir durum var, bu işletmecilerin çoğu tanıştığımız zaman çok babacan tabir edilen toplumca babacan kabul edilen adamlar ve hani işte kızlarımız hani koruma kollama tavırları var geleneksel bir bakış açısıyla. Ama işlerine maddi olarak gelmediği zaman 5 tane kadını istanbuldan bir araba tutup getiremeyen çok fazla işletmeci var. Trenlerde sürünüyorsunuz, işte uçaklarda bilmemne hani o organizasyona birçok işletme ulaşımı dahil etmiyor. Merkezi bir yerden alıp merkezi bir yere bırakmayı birçok yer para söz konusu olduğu için orda çok kızları olmuysun yani aslında.

this point, the situation of being double-dealer is derived from their ‘fatherly approach.’

Women sometimes come across dangerous situations regarding the communication with the venue owners. Fulya gives a brief example of this event:

One time we went to Hatay, to give a concert in a venue. And managers had a little more different intention. I remember this. This put us in a difficult situation, and right after the concert, we left the venue. Maybe there is a perception such as this: Because we came from Istanbul, therefore, as if; we are more open to everything, we are more free and limitless... Because we experienced such things, we demand security, especially in some places. After the concerts sometimes we live in these difficult situations, there are some people who come to the backstage, etc. <sup>64</sup> (Fulya, bass guitar player)

At this point, the concern of security appears. The worry of someone broking into the backstage, being followed by people after the concert, different intentions of the venue owners are relevant among the women in the Turkish rock scene. But only in two cases, they mention that they demand security.

### **5.2.7 Stage Dive and Mosh Pit**

Rock scene is perceived as a male space by the society. Stage, which is a significant part of the scene, has its share from the distinction of gendered spaces. Practices which happen during the stage shows and concerts might have outcomes of this situation in terms of gender practices. Stage diving and moshing in the mosh pit are among these practices of the rock concerts. These practices might lead to women’s marginalization in the scene. The situation of being sexually harassed becomes a common concern among the women in the scene. Some of the women choose to challenge this situation and realize their own practices in stage diving and

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<sup>64</sup> Bunun dışında bir keresinde bundan birkaç sene önce Hatay’a gitmiştik. Bir mekana konsere. Ve işletmecilerin niyeti farklıydı biraz daha. Böyle bir şey hatırlıyorum. Biraz zor durumda kalmıştık ve konserden hemen sonra topuklamıştık mekandan. Belki şöyle bir algı olabilir İstanbul’dan geldiğimiz için her şeye daha açık olduğumuz ve daha serbest daha sınırsız olduğumuz. Biz böyle şeyler deneyimlediğimiz için özellikle bazı yerlerde güvenlik talep ediyoruz. Konserden sonra da böyle bazen zor durumlar yaşayabiliyoruz, işte kulise bir şekilde girenler falan.

moshing. However, some of the women seem to refrain from these acts due to their concern of violation of their personal spaces and harassment.

One interviewee states that if you are going to realize these practices, you need to face up to being touched:

Haha, no (I don't experience it), being as an overweight woman, haha. I mean in order to do that, firstly you need to organize a big concert. I mean you will be a famous band, and you will organize big concerts. You need to be sure that your audience is ready for it. And if you are going to do it, you need to face up to being touched. It is the nature of it, not because someone wants to harass you, but it (being touched) is going to happen. I mean, you need to think about it, and you should not be disturbed by this. <sup>65</sup> (Eliz, singer)

It is perceptible that she does not relate the gendered notion with the negative sides of the stage diving and moshpit, but regardless of your gender, she indicates that being touched is a nature of these practices.

However, in the literature analysis, it is seen that the concerns of the stage diving and moshpit becomes highly related with the issue of gender. Some of the interviewee's expressions overlap with this information. One of the experienced interviewees express her way of dealing with the negative outcomes of her experience as this:

I've too much experience on this. Even within one period of time, I was the only one to do it in the extreme scene. Besides that, I've done stage dive from the stage as well. One time when I was in high school ages, I was in pogo, and I got touched. But I punched him against being touched. This is self-defense. But this didn't happen in stage diving. <sup>66</sup> (Günce, death metal singer)

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<sup>65</sup> Haha yok, kilolu bir kadın olmanın hahah. Yani öyle şeyler yapabilmek için öncelikle çok büyük konserler vermemiz lazım. Yani çok ünlü bir grup olacaksın büyük konserler vereceksin. Seyircinin buna hazır olduğundan emin olacaksın. E yani öyle bir şey yapıyorsan ellenmeyi göze alacaksın. O zaten işin gereği öyle, belki kimse özellikle taciz etmek için olmayacak ama olacak yani bu. Hani bunu düşünmen bundan rahatsız olmuyor olman lazım.

<sup>66</sup> Oldu fazlasıyla. Hatta bir dönem hani pogolara katılan yani kendi çağdaşlarım arasında mı diyim, tek kadın bendim ekstrem piyasa içerisinde. Onun dışında da sahneden de stage dive yaptığım oldu. Bir kere pogo içerisindeyken lise çağlarında ellendim. Ama ellenmeye karşılık yumruk attım. Bu bir öz savunusu. Stage dive'da böyle bir şey başıma gelmedi.

This forms an example of the gender subversion in the rock scene. Leonard defines the concept of subversion as this:

The concept of subversion is explained as a dominant mode of understanding which gender identities are differently interpreted by female musicians. (Leonard, 2007, p. 91)

As taking her definition as a basis, punching someone against their sexist actions is not seen to be something compatible with women's image in the societal norms. However, in order to cope with the sexist actions, women in the scene prefer to respond to the people with their actions, which can not be defined within the usual gender roles. Within the literature analysis, it is seen that Courtney Love repetitively uses her own unique gender subversion methods against being harassed during the stage diving by simply punching them on their faces. (Schippers, 2002, pp. 155–156)

In addition, it is perceptible that many of the interviewees are concerned about the security threats which might happen within these actions. İnci mentions about the perception of the minds of the people in society and the possible outcomes of it:

I didn't have experience with this. I think I wouldn't want it in the circumstances of Turkey. There is a perception of this a little: "female musicians hang out till the late night in pubs; they must be freer." You know, it comes automatically. Therefore if you get assaulted there, I don't think anyone will support you. <sup>67</sup> (İnci, bass guitar player)

Images of women in the scene as 'freer, more limitless' is also a part of the gendered roles in the scene. At some points, it overlaps with the sexual objectification of women as well due to their being extremely sexualized in the perceptions of men as if they do not have any other functions in the scene. The lack of support within a possible scenario of getting assaulted might also point out to the solidarity between the scene

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<sup>67</sup> Yok. Bilmiyorum. Türkiye şartlarında istemezdim sanırım. Biraz şey algısı var Türkiye'de kadın müzisyen geç saatte barda takılıyor, daha rahat olmalı. Hani otomatik olarak böyle bir şey geliyor. Dolayısıyla orada bir saldırıya uğrarsam kesinlikle bir destek göreceğimi düşünmüyorum.

members who carry out sexist actions in the scene. Due to these scene members share the same understanding, women fear to be not getting any help when something happens to them.

The understanding of ‘You need to think about it, and you should not be disturbed by getting touched.’ is relevant between the interviewees. Musicians who do not like the idea of being touched in these spaces, do not prefer to follow through these practices. Aysu elaborates her thoughts on this:

Getting this close is not something that I like. Others may prefer it, but I really attach importance to body thing as a woman. For instance; If I jump on the audience, I wouldn’t like them to touch my body, but this might be easier for men. Men may not care too much. Here there is another thing; your audience is generally intoxicated. You may have unpleasant situations. I don’t want to experience such a thing.<sup>68</sup> (Aysu, rock singer with more than 20 years of experience)

As a woman, Aysu indicates that she wants to preserve her personal space with the audience regarding the unpleasant touches. However, she detects a possible difference between men and women: While she does not like being touched by strangers, she indicates that men may not care about this. Due to the audience is formed mostly by heterosexual men, heterosexual men may not see any harm from getting touched by their fellow heterosexual scene members and does not care about their personal spaces in the stage-diving area or moshpit. However, it should be questioned that, if they were touched in a sexual way, would their regardless stay the same?

Refraining from the stage diving is relevant for other interviewees as well. Two concerns were mentioned: Fear of being harassed and fear of falling to the ground. Hale transmits one of her observation on the issue:

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<sup>68</sup> Yani o derece yakınlaşmak benim çok hoşlanacağım bir şey değil. Başkaları tercih edebilir ama beden şeyine çok önem veriyorum bir kadın olarak. Örneğin seyircinin üzerine atsam tanımadığım insanların benim bedenime dokunmalarından çok hoşlanmayabilirim yani, ama erkekler için bu biraz daha kolay olabilir. Erkekler çok umursamayabilir. Bir de şöyle de bir şey var sizi izleyen kitle çoğunlukla çok alkollü. Hiç hoş olmayan tatsız şeyler de yaşayabilirsiniz. Öyle bir şeyi tecrübe etmek istemem ben.

This is not my experience, but one incident about stage diving came into my mind, someone else's experience. In a metal concert, a woman which I don't know was going to do stage diving. There were already many people constantly stage diving. There wasn't any person who fell; you know someone holds them. I didn't understand what happened but, when she was doing it, They couldn't hold her, there was one or two-person, but they couldn't hold her. She fell and hit her head. After this incident, I have seen her couple of times; she is okay but, I heard something from someone else like: "This person slanders too much to everyone by saying that they harassed her, that's why nobody wants to hold her." A man said this. His speech raised too many question marks in my head. Why would she do that? Why, all of a sudden, she slanders people? I mean I don't know I guess men have this kind of concern, saying that "what if she slanders me, I don't want to take responsibility for this" You know, they have these acts which require not interfering the things which can cause stage divers mutilation or death.<sup>69</sup> (Hale, drummer)

When an incident of harassment appears, the solidarity between the scene members who carry out practices or the scene members who embrace the sexist structure of the scene comes into sigh once again. This example of an incident overlaps with the İnci's expression, which is mentioned previously as well:

I didn't have experience with this. I think I wouldn't want it in the circumstances of Turkey. There is a perception of this a little: "female musicians hang out till the late night in pubs; they must be freer." You know, it comes automatically. Therefore if you get assaulted there, I don't think anyone will support you."<sup>70</sup> (İnci, bass guitar player)

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<sup>69</sup> Çok benim deneyimim değil ama stage diving'le ilgili bir olay aklıma geldi, başka birisinin yaşadığı bir olay. Bir metal festivalinde tanıdığım birisi değil, bir kadın stage diving yapıcaktı. Sürekli zaten birileri stage dive yapıyor ortada bir kitle var. Düşen olmadı sürekli birisi tutuyor işte. Nolduysa anlamadım kadın arkadaş yaparken tutamadılar, bir iki kişi oradaydı tutamadılar yere düştü kafasını çarptı falan. Neyse bir şey yok hani birkaç sene sonradan tekrar tekrar gördüm bir şey olmamış da. Ama sonradan başka birisinden bir şey duydum. "ya işte bu kişi çok iftira atıyor herkese işte taciz ediyor falan diye o yüzden kimse tutmak istememiştir onu" bir erkek bunu söylüyor. Onun bu konuşması benim kafamda birçok soru işareti uyandırdı. Ya neden öyle bir şey yapsın ki neden durup dururken insanlara iftira atsın ki. Yani bilmiyorum böyle erkeklerin böyle bir çekincesi var sanırım ay bana iftira atılırsa ben bu sorumluluğu almak istemiyorum diye hani bu stage diving yapan kişinin sakatlanmasına veya ölümüne sebep olacak şeylere durumlara müdahale etmemeyi gerektiren eylemlerde bulunabiliyorlar.

<sup>70</sup> Yok. Bilmiyorum Türkiye şartlarında istemezdim sanırım. Biraz şey algısı var Türkiye'de: kadın müzisyen geç saatte barda takılıyor, daha rahat olmalı. Hani otomatik olarak böyle bir şey geliyor.

While there is no visible solidarity between women against these practices, the solidarity between the carrier of sexist implementations makes itself evident. Besides the stage diving, the moshpit looks like preferable space for women in the Turkish alternative rock scene.

I generally go into the mosh pit. When I go to a concert, I go in. I didn't experience any harassment till these days. There is a really beautiful community in mosh pit. If someone falls, we are picking them up. If I am next to them, I am picking them up. Everyone is constantly being checked if they are okay and checking in case if they have any trouble and if anyone breaks their parts.<sup>71</sup> (Hale, drummer)

It is seen that regardless of their gender, mosh pit creates more egalitarian space for scene members due to the genderless solidarity their community build.

### 5.2.8 Representation of Women

As being a part of women's alienation in the scene, musicians and their bands are often referred to as "female rock star, female-fronted band, women band, girls band, all-girl band, women in rock." There are many variations of these phrases, which are used to define women's presence in rock music. These definitions indicate that as if the rock is a male space and women are contributing to it, in their subtext. Donita Sparks from the rock band L7 shared her thoughts in an interview which is shared in the book: 'Rockin' out of the box: gender maneuvering':

Gender is not a genre! You know lumping us in with Bikini Kill and Hole and Liz Phair, it's really sexist. Liz Phair is on the cover of Rolling Stone. She should be on the cover. She's really creative. She's doing really innovative things. But they have to make it 'women in rock,' like it's some kind of special case. No. She should be on the cover regardless of her gender. It's a way to set us apart from real rock. It belittles women to lump them all together. (Schippers, 2002, p. 167)

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Dolayısıyla orda bir saldırıya uğrarsam kesinlikle bir destek göreceğimi düşünmüyorum.

<sup>71</sup> Moshpit'e de giriyorum genelde. Konsere gittiğimde girerim. Taciz gibi bir durum yaşamadım şu ana kadar. Çok güzel bir kominite oluşuyor moshpit'te yani yere düşen biri olursa hemen kaldırıyoruz. Ben de yanındaysam kaldırıyorum, herkes iyi mi diye kontrol ediliyor sürekli, birinin bir sıkıntısı var mı, kırıldı mı çıktı mı diye.

This perception, yet again diminishes the actual capability of women in rock, and puts their sexual identity forward. Despite the musical differences in all of the bands, putting every band into one category due to they have a female musician in them forms a sexist approach in the scene. When interviewees' bands and their music is analyzed, it is evident that they are all unique and have different styles in different subgenres of rock music. In spite of all of their unique styles, lumping them with other women in a specific genre just because of their gender identities forms an incorrect classification in genres and a sexist approach in the scene.

Fulya, who is in a band which is formed by only women express her thoughts on the issue as this:

When we were forming this band, we intentionally formed it from only women. On the one hand, do we alienate ourselves? But it is a method which is focused on normalizing something that is unusual. The reason for my efforts to form this band was this. I mean, it is a thing that I want to see, but it does not exist around much, I mean I had this motivation (for doing this). Well, I find this funny, using 'female drummer, female something' hashtags on Instagram. It's okay but from the view of men then, 'male drummer, etc.'? I mean, it is trying to come to the forefront with your gender, not with your music. I don't judge people who do it, but I find it funny. I won't do it myself. I think it is against what we do in our band as well. <sup>72</sup> (Fulya, bass guitar player)

Most of the women, just as Fulya, mentioned that they want their music to be discussed, not their gender. They find the emphasis on 'women' as unnecessary. According to their comments, music should be the element that comes to the forefront; however, their gender comes to the forefront in practice within the Turkish rock scene. İnci indicates that she does not understand why there is a gendered discrimination in the representation of musicians:

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<sup>72</sup> Biz bu grubu kurarken kasti olarak kadınlardan oluşturduk, bir yandan söylediğin şeye çıkıyor: biz mi kendimizi ötekileştiriyoruz? Ama bu alışılmamış bir şeyi alıştırmaya yönelik bir yöntem. Benim bu grubun kurulmasına bu kadar uğraşmamın nedeni buydu yani, benim görmek istediğim ama pek de ortalıkta olmadığı için hani böyle bir şeye motivasyonum vardı. Ha ben şeyi komik buluyorum. Instagramdaki female drummer female... hashtagleri. Okey ama bunu erkek açısından male drummer o zaman, yani bu cinsiyetle bir şekilde öne çıkmaya çalışmak, yaptığın müzikle değil, yapmanı çok yargılamıyorum ama ben komik buluyorum, ben kendim de yapmam. Bizim grupça yaptığımız şeye de biraz aykırı olduğunu düşünüyorum.

I mean, I don't understand this thing: Why do we need to specify that we are women. There is no saying like men's band; they say, music band. But when it's a women's band, they say women's band. I mean like 'gün grubu'.<sup>73</sup> <sup>74</sup> (İnci, bass guitar player)

However, the emphasis on female musicians' gender is relevant in the rock scene; another interview points out the emphasis on 'mother' as well. Regardless of being a woman and being a mother has no specific link with being musicians, due to women's alienation in the scene, these emphases are being carried out by scene members who embrace a patriarchal approach.

I find it wrong. Why they say there are women or mothers, you know the adjective of the mother is something which is said frequently. I mean why they do not tell 'guitarist dad, but they tell 'guitarist mom,' or I don't know 'pianist chef mom' or 'female chef' etc. I find it wrong.<sup>75</sup> (Hale, drummer)

All of the participants' shared point on this issue was to question why there is no equality between genders. It is evident that they seek equality in the representation of musicians as well. Sexist approach on the representation does not only exist in the music scene; it exists in almost every type of occupation, which is regarded as a male space by the society. Therefore due to the reflection of the sexist approach in the society, this situation appears in the music scene as well.

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<sup>73</sup> 'Gün grubu': A social event which is organized by women in a regular basis. Women host these events in their homes in a row. In these events, women get together in one of their homes, the woman who is host at that time, presents her homemade desert and foods to other women and they eat and chat altogether.

<sup>74</sup> Yani orda ben de şeyi anlamıyorum neden özellikle kadın olduğumuzu vurgulamamız gerektiğini. Çünkü erkek grubu denmiyor, yani müzik grubu deniyor ama kadın grubu olduğu zaman hepsi, kadın grubu deniyor. Yani gün grubu gibi.

<sup>75</sup> Evet yanlış buluyorum, neden kadın olduğu söyleniyor ya da anne, işte anne sıfatı da çok söylenen bir şey yani neden baba gitarist değil de anne gitarist ya da ne bileyim anne piyanist anne şef ya da kadın şef falan filan. Yanlış olduğunu düşünüyorum.

### **5.3 Feminist Progress in the Scene**

Rock scene, in contrast with its male-dominated structure, forms a fertile space for feminist approaches within its alternative part. As is the opposite of the mainstream scene, the alternative rock scene presents a more free platform for musicians who want to speak their minds. The efforts for an egalitarian scene and egalitarian world positions within the scene, specifically in; lyrics, zines, interviews, statements between or before songs, social media posts of musicians, special events, and activism within and outside of the stage. These productions functions as raising consciousness, forming solidarity, creating politics. In this part, analysis is positioned around these three functions.

#### **5.3.1 Consciousness Raising**

Within the alternative rock scene, there were many practices that aimed to raise consciousness on gendering. Riot Grrrl meetings were one of them. Consciousness, identity, politics, and culture were questioned from the scope of gendering within the regular meetings of riot grrrls within song lyrics, interviews, and activism. Ednie Kaeh Garrison, explains the importance of tools such as lyrics, zines, productions of music, content on the internet, which is used to construct the feminist consciousness. (Garrison, 2000, p. 150) The efforts were made to raise a feminist consciousness in the society and to form a collective feminist consciousness.

In Fulya's expressions, a link is formed between a collective consciousness and awareness:

As a band, we played in many aid concerts, and some of them were themed as violence against women, and the donations went to the associations such as 'Mor Çatı'<sup>76</sup>. I don't know all of the names of the associations by the way. In addition, because the things we say there have such a high frequency if it can touch any of the people's sore spot there, that her/his life can change. My life changed when I went to a concert as well. I mean, all of the speeches there are involved with the performance because what we say between songs, even a sentence, has the power to change somebody's life. Therefore while we created this power area and we continue to grow it more, we should really utilize it.

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<sup>76</sup> Mor Çatı is a women's shelter association in Turkey.

Therefore, one of the things that I want most is that as well: drawing attention to discrimination based on gender, double standards. I hope we accomplish it.  
<sup>77</sup> (Fulya, bass guitar player)

Fulya mentions that women, finally, have the power to influence their audience with music, and they should make the best of it. The method of using this power field to form a feminist consciousness appears to be beneficial to the case. While aiming to form a feminist consciousness, one question appears: ‘In order to form a feminist consciousness, how can we reach to the audience?’ By analyzing this question within the context of the rock scene, the answer is expressed as ‘art’ by interviewees. Ilgın, while discussing the importance of women’s sharing in the scene, interprets the subject like this:

Art is the most significant tool to be used in these kinds of things anyway. I mean, in this way, everything you do is going to make an impact. Therefore it is very important for sure. If the musicians who are doing these were much more, I guess there wouldn’t be male dominance as monotype too much.  
<sup>78</sup> (Ilgın, music column writer)

As it is seen in the instances of Riot Grrrl and Pussy Riot, music as an art form is used as a tool to raise consciousness and create awareness. Riot Grrrl’s call for women regarding the subject appeared on their zines as this:

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<sup>77</sup> Grupça biz yardım konserlerinde de çok yer aldık bunların bazıları kadına şiddet temalıydı ve konserin geliri mor çatı gibi kurumlara falan gitti tam bilmiyorum kurumların isimlerini bu arada. Bir de o gün orada söylediğimiz bir şey daha yüksek frekansta olduğu için oradaki insanlarda herhangi birinin bam teline dokunabilirse o gün onun hayatı değişebilir. Benim de hayatım bir konsere gittim değişti yani. Yani bütün o performans o konuşmalar da dahil, çünkü o şarkı arasında söylediğimiz bir şey bir cümle dahi orda bulunan bir kişinin hayatını değiştirebilecek güçte olduğunu düşünüyorum. O yüzden de biz böyle bir güç alanı yaratmış ve onu büyütüyorken bunu çok iyi değerlendirmemiz gerektiğini düşünüyorum. O yüzden de benim en çok yapmak istediğim şeylerden biri de zaten bu: cinsiyet ayrımcılığı, çifte standart bu konulara dikkat çekmek, umarım başarırız.

<sup>78</sup> Sanat zaten bu tip şeylerde kullanılacak en önemli araçtır, yani bu yolla yapacağınız her şey ses getirecektir. Yani tabii ki çok önemli, bunu yapan müzisyenler daha çok olsa belli müzik türlerinde bu kadar çok erkek egemenliği, bu kadar çok tek tiplik olmazdı herhalde.

Help us gain the strength and sense of community that we need in order to figure out how bullsh\*t like racism, able-bodieism, ageism, speciesism, classism, thinism, sexism, antisemitism and heterosexism figures in our own lives. (Hanna, Vail, et al., 1991)

Aysu, one of the interviewees who has the most experience in the scene, forms a direct link between women's sharing of experiences and thoughts in lyrics, interviews, statements with consciousness-raising.

This might happen (this sharing) might let women think I mean if her perception is open a little bit, she might say: "yes, what she says is true. Why did I do this until this day?" She could think this way. Because sometimes, when we sit and talk with someone unexpectedly and when we said a sentence to them, it creates a shocking effect on them, and they question how they never thought like this. Just like this, maybe an audience who likes you so much or who admires you so much could be affected by the things you said.<sup>79</sup> (Aysu, rock singer with more than 20 years of experience)

The musician's effect on their audience is made clear by Aysu. This thought overlaps with the assertions of Fulya, who defined a power area as a women's created place for influencing other women. Hale adds a different addition to the issue while agreeing on the effect of awareness:

I think it makes problems visible. It creates awareness. The awareness is raised as these are given voice to, these are reinforced. You start to think like: 'there is a problem like this,' you start to see it, and eventually you start to take action.<sup>80</sup> (Hale, drummer)

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<sup>79</sup> Şöyle bir şey olabilir o kadını düşünmeye sevk edebilir yani eğer birazcık algısı açıklığa müsaitse şey diyebilir: "ya evet doğru söylüyor, ben niye bugüne kadar böyle yaptım" diye düşünebilir. Çünkü bazen hani hiç ummadığımız bir insanla oturup sohbet ettiğimizde bile ona bir cümle söyleriz ve onda bir şok etkisi yaratır ve "aa nasıl böyle düşünemedim" der, onun gibi belki o sizi çok seven bir dinleyici, size çok hayran biri, söylediğiniz sözden çok etkilenebilir.

<sup>80</sup> Bu sorunları daha çok görünür kılıyor, farkındalık yaratıyor. Bunların ne kadar çok dile getirilirse, ne kadar reinforce edilirse hani farkındalığı artırıyor. Böyle bir sorun varmış diye düşünmeye başlıyorsunuz, bunu görmeye başlıyorsunuz, sonunda harekete geçmeye başlıyorsunuz, eyleme geçiyorsunuz.

Hale's interpretation gives a hint of how the cycle of feminist progress works. At first, women experience incidents regarding the gender inequality. Then they start to give voice to their experiences and speak about them in their song lyrics, interviews, statements in the stage, and other areas. These actions lead the way to awareness-raising and help to form a collective feminist consciousness. After these achievements, solidarity between women might be formed. Eventually, the effects of feminist consciousness and awareness-raising, encourage women to take action. These actions' actualizes as politics regarding women's rights in the scene. As a result, it is evident that consciousness-raising is possible through women's practice in the scene.

### **5.3.2 Solidarity**

When analyzing the rock scene abroad, it is perceptible that through the practices of Riot Grrrl and Pussy Riot, a bond between women in the scene is formed. Even they affected other women by crossing the borders of their countries. However, most of the interviewees are familiar with these movements; only Hale and İnci directly expressed that Riot Grrrl influenced them. While considering all of the interviewee's experiences in the scene, the current situation of 'solidarity' between women is questioned.

Eight of the interviewees expressed that they are in contact with fellow female musicians. However, they are all agreed on they didn't observe any solid form of solidarity based on women. Some of them were inspired and influenced by the movements, which include solidarity between women. However, it is not actualized in the Turkish alternative rock scene.

However, one exclusion leaps to the eye. Fulya, Umut, Aysu expressed that they have been in the organizations such as concerts that are organized to support women. This might be included in the practices of solidarity. However, besides these organizations, a powerful incident of solidarity is not observed.

When it is asked to interviewees, many of them stated the situation was quite the opposite of solidarity. They emphasize a negative competition between women in the scene. Eliz elaborates this such as:

Solidarity does not exist; even there is an opposite situation of the solidarity. Not everyone is the same, I don't want to generalize it, but there are too many criticisms of women. Too many. I do it sometimes, as well. I never heard anything said to my face, though. Generally, it is (the criticism) is musical but not just musical, you know women might look at the other women and say: "Oh she wears this? There is no need for it," etc. Sometimes there are feminist fights like this: "you are against women's sexual objectification, so to say, but you go on the stage and show your boobs and legs" there are commentation like this. <sup>81</sup> (Eliz, singer in an all women band)

As from her expressions, it is evident that feminist consciousness is not settled in the scene as it is settled in the scene where Riot Grrrl movements emerged. Women criticizing other women is seen in the society as well as it is seen in the rock scene. It forms a reflection of the male-dominated codes in the society. As women, we are reproducing these codes with practices such as harshly criticizing each other on our physical looks, our clothing preferences, and our ways of forming our sexual standpoints. However, when the emergence of Riot Grrrl and Pussy Riot is analyzed, they were all started in a society and scene which embrace patriarchal codes. Their difference becomes forming their knowledge at this point. As starting from the knowledge, they have worked their way up to the solidarity. The lack of knowledge and feminist consciousness at this point affects the formation of solidarity.

İnci draws attention to the competition between women and their usage of femininity: "I think, on the contrary, there is a competition. Generally, there is this effort to come to the forefront. In order to do this, I think femininity is being used a little." <sup>82</sup> A negative competition mentioned by Günce as well, she shares her experience on this issue:

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<sup>81</sup> Yok tam tersi hatta. Herkes aynı değil, genellemek istemem ama çok fazla kadın yermesi olayı var yani. Çok fazla. Ben de yapıyorum bazen bunu. Ben yüzüme karşı böyle bir şey dendiğini duymadım. Genelde müziksel yani ya sadece müzik değil işte kadın kadına bakıp: "aman şunu giymiş ne gerek vardı" bilmem ne diyebiliyor, şöyle feminist kavgaları oluyor bazen işte: "güya kadının nesneleştirilmesine karşı çıkıyosun ama çıkıyosun sahneye memeni açıyosun bacağına açıyosun" böyle yorumlar oluyor.

<sup>82</sup> Bence tam tersine bir rekabet var. Ya genelde bir ön plana çıkma şeyi var, birazcık da bunun için dışılığın kullanıldığını düşünüyorum ben.

There is an odd thing, it doesn't exist now, but in my high school years, there were more female musicians. From what I remember, there was an intolerance between them. I don't know if it's related to being flattered. I mean, they say they are unique, and they make the definition of being unique in their womanhood. Therefore it deviate from the aim. There is a semantic shift. <sup>83</sup> (Günce, death metal singer)

As it is mentioned before, within the scene, female musicians' bodies, sexualities come to the forefront, and it overshadows their musician identities. However, as a part of the patriarchal system within the scene, it doesn't only show a forced situation. Looking into the statement of Günce, it is seen that some musicians prefer to define themselves on their womanhood first as well. However, without there is any direct questions asked for it, six of the interviewees directly stated that they want to be known with their musician identities, rather than their sexualities. They expressed that they only want their music to be criticized. Eliz shares her feelings about this issue:

It is a reality; I mean, you draw more audience when you wear less. I don't know; we never had a style like that. Even especially when we were forming this band, we talked about that we wanted to be listened because we are a good band, not that because we are women. Therefore, for the first concert, we decided not to wear shorts, etc. We decided to protect our image. Actually, how bad it is to say this or even think about this. But you are obliged to think about this. <sup>84</sup> (Eliz, singer in an all women band)

The patriarchal segmentation in the scene consists of two segments regarding this issue. The first segment consists of the mentality and the perception of people who evaluates female musicians with their genders and sexualities first and underestimate

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<sup>83</sup> Ama tuhaf bir şey var şu anda mevcut değil ama lise yıllarımda daha fazla kadın müzidsyen vardı. Hatırladığım onlar arasında böyle bir çekememezlik söz konusuydu. O da işte pohpohlanmalarıyla alakalı mı demeliyim. Yani unique olduklarını belirtip ama unique'liklerini tamamıyla kadınlık üzerinden sunduklarından amacının dışına sapıyor yani. Anlam kayması var.

<sup>84</sup> Şey de bir gerçek yani, biraz daha açık giyinip daha çok seyirci çekiyorsun ya ne bileyim bizim hiçbir zaman öyle bir tarzımız olmadı. Özellikle hatta baştan grubu kurarken şey konuştuk; biz kadın olduğumuz için değil de iyi bir grup olduğumuz için bizi dinlesinler. O yüzden ilk konserden böyle sortlar bilmemeler yapmayalım önce o imajı koruyalım dedik, ya aslında ne kadar kötü bir şey bunu söylemek, düşünmek bile yani ama insan düşünmek zorunda kalıyor.

and overshadow their musical identities. The second segment consists of the practices of women who seem to carry out practices that might have outcomes as reproducing gendered codes. What Eliz expresses, situates itself in the second segment. However, there is a fine line between the freedom of wearing the clothes we want and reproducing the gendered codes. At this point, the distinction appears such as, only coming to the forefront with the characteristics of our sexuality, within the music scene as musicians reproduce gendered roles, and it leads people in the scene to perceive musicians with their sexualities only and underestimate their musical capabilities. However, this situation leads women to limit their sexuality as well. Therefore this approach of restraint limits women's free choices. From this viewpoint, it is evident that it has a negative outcome for women. As a consequence of this evaluation, the only significant point here is to respect women no matter what their preferences on their clothing. When women do not carry out the criticisms on clothing, they might be freer within the scene. A lack of solidarity between women in the scene is observed at this point. In conclusion, reproducers of the gendered codes in the scene are not clothes, patriarchal mentality is.

However, it appears to be that there is a lack of solidarity in the scene. Hale explains that it does not mean that there is a hostility. She express her thoughts as this:

There is not much attracts the attention (regarding the solidarity), but when I say there is no solidarity, it does not mean the situation is on the contrary. It is not something like women step on each other and move on like this. I didn't observe a strong bond, there is no structure to support each other, but there is no structure to pose an obstacle either. It's neutral.<sup>85</sup> (Hale, drummer)

According to these expressions, it is perceptible that, however, the scene is weak regarding the solidarity between women, there isn't any hostility between each other either. Hale simply explains it as 'neutral.'

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<sup>85</sup> Çok göze çarpan bir şey olmadı ama dayanışma yok desem bu tam tersi olduğu anlamına da gelmiyor. Hani kadınlar birbirinin üstüne basarak ilerliyor gibi bir şey de değil, güçlü bir bağ gözlemedim ben, çok birbirini destekleyen bir yapı yok, engel olan bir yapı da yok, nötr.

Despite the lack of solidarity, women expressed that if there were a solidarity, they would be willing to join. İnci expressed her thoughts as this:

Of course, I would like to join if there would be a solidarity like this. I hope it helps. Because we are not much in numbers. And I think, not only with the instrumental education, I think there is a family pressure, neighborhood pressure as well because many families don't let them to do this or else they directly say no. They are using classes in school as an excuse or saying: "You are a girl, sit like a girl. What are you doing there?" Therefore while we are few in numbers already, there should be something to support this and something to show that this is not a bad thing.<sup>86</sup> (İnci, bass guitar player)

İnci indicates the hardships of being a woman in the scene and shows that it is not the same with men due to the gendered codes in the society, including the pressure of families and neighborhoods. Therefore there is a need for solidarity, and women appear to be willing to join it.

On the other side, there are undoubtedly other forms of solidarity in the scene. However, they are not verbalized as solidarity much; they are being effective in supporting other women. Aysu explains the March 8 concert organizations, where she gave concerts as well:

We are probably organizing a concert which includes female musicians only, in the March 8 or a date within the march. As an association of Blues, there is a Blues Association in Istanbul. And our aim here is to be only women in the stage. Who plays the drums, guitars, bass guitars, keyboards, sings, there would be all women. We have a target like that. If we can achieve this, it would be the first in Turkey.<sup>87</sup> (Aysu, rock singer with more than 20 years of experience)

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<sup>86</sup> Tabii ki katılmak isterim yani hani böyle bir dayanışma olsa. Umarım faydası olur. Çünkü gerçekten sayıca çok fazla değiliz biraz da şey olduğunu düşünüyorum; tek başına enstrumental eğitim değil, işte aile baskısı mahalle baskısı gibi şeyler olduğunu da düşünüyorum, çünkü çoğu aile izin vermiyor işte ya direkt olmaz diyor ya dersleri bir şeyleri bahane ediyor ya da işte "sen kızsın otur oturduğun yerde senin orda burda ne işin var" gibi şeyler olabiliyor. O yüzden hali hazırda sayımız azken bunu destekleyen bunun aslında kötü bir şey olmadığını anlatan bir şeyler olmalı.

<sup>87</sup> Biz Muhtemelen 8 martta veya mart ayı içinde bir tarihte sadece kadın müzisyenlerden oluşan İstanbul'da bir konser vericez. Bir blues derneği olarak, bir blues derneği var İstanbul'da. Mart ayı içinde olacak. Ve oradaki hedefimiz, sahnede sadece kadın müzisyen olması. Davulu çalan da kadın olacak, gitarı çalan da kadın olacak, bası çalan da, klavyeyi çalan da, şarkı söyleyen de, böyle bir hedefimiz var. Eğer böyle bir şey yaparsak bence bu Türkiye'de bir ilk olacak.

In addition to the some positive examples of solidarity such as Aysu mentions within the scene, all of the participants shared that they are willing to join one. Hazal, express her feelings about the solidarity within the scene as this:

There weren't much of a solidarity in my time in the 2000s. There weren't many female musicians as well on the stage. And there is a 'share of the cake,' al in all this is a market. You know everybody wants to get a share of the cake. Hence, there was an environment like that. Besides, I guess when female musicians do not develop something about being a female musician in a male musician's world, they might reproduce the definitions in men's world, or they might shoulder them or impose them on another woman. There can be tension like that. I believe this: if the market gets out of the way, and a female musician lives something because she is a 'female' musician when she snaps her finger, all of the female musicians get behind her. I'm not like, not thinking that there is a deep relation like that. <sup>88</sup> (Hazal, acoustic guitar player with more than 30 years of experience)

Hazal expresses her faith in women's solidarity in the scene. However, the majority of women meet in the idea of 'solidarity,' unlike Hazal, most of them are not aware of other women also express and think that they would like to join as well. In that sense, the lack does not only exists for solidarity; it exists in the awareness either. There isn't enough formation of a ground (which could be awareness or a collective consciousness) that enables women to get together and make an action. In addition, if women's experiences are not shared and spread, these formations and solidarity appears to be hard to achieve.

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<sup>88</sup> Yani işte çok yoktu benim zamanımda. 2000'ler. O civarda. Çok yoktu böyle bir dayanışma. Çok fazla kadın müzisyen de yoktu sahnede ortada falan. Bir de pasta da oluyor ya, sonuçta bu bir piyasa. Hani pastadan pay almaya çalışıyor ya herkes. Dolayısıyla öyle bir ortam da vardı. Bir de galiba kadın müzisyen olmakla ilgili, kendileri bir şey geliştirmeyince kadınlar, erkeklerin dünyasında kadın müzisyen olmakla ilgili bir şey geliştirmeyince, o erkeklerin dünyasındaki tanımlamaları bazen kadınlar da üretebiliyor, yeniden üstlenebiliyor ve onları diğer kadın müzisyenlere de dayatabiliyor. Öyle bir gerilim olabiliyor. Ben şuna inanıyorum; piyasa aradan çıkarsa, bir kadın müzisyen kadın müzisyen olduğu için bir şey yaşasa, şöyle bir parmağını şıklatsa, bütün kadın müzisyenler de arkasına düşer yani . Öyle de bir derinden ilişki olduğunu da düşünmüyor değilim yani.

### 5.3.3 Politics

Feminist standpoint, theorists Hartsock, proposes to use women's knowledge to create politics. (N. Hartsock, 1987, p. 189) The aim of this part is to analyze the process of women's knowledge turning into politics in the Turkish alternative rock scene.

When the examples of women's movements in the alternative rock scene is analyzed, it becomes perceptible that solidarity between women in the scene functions as a women's rights politics in the scene as well. For instance, Schilt explains Riot Grrrl regarding this subject as this:

It was about making connections with other girls and women and starting to build a feminist and political consciousness. Riot Grrrl gave girls ideas on how to make their own music. It was a realistic assumption that girls inspired by Bikini Kill could and would start their own bands. (Schilt, 2003, p. 10)

The examples of Riot Grrrl and Pussy Riot was directly connected with the politics on women's rights both within the scene and society. Riot Grrrl encouraged women to start their own bands and regain their place in the rock scene. Pussy Riot used music as a tool and fought for women's rights with their activist practices. They both aimed to build a feminist knowledge, collective feminist consciousness, form a solidarity and eventually carry out politics. Their process was developed in this order as well. In this study, feminist knowledge, consciousness, and politics in the scene is analyzed. Within this part, political acts and thoughts on politics are analyzed.

İnci thinks activism in the scene would be found strange at first due to people approach the things they are not familiar with, with their biases:

It should be carried out. (activism) However, I don't think there is an active group. Besides Femen, we don't see the ones who carry out feminist things, or they are not shared. They stay repressed. I think it would be found strange at first, people approach to the things they are not familiar with, with bias. But when it is progressed in time, they will slowly see that it is not a bad thing, it should part of our life. I'm sure there will be more embraced and positive

approach then, I think. But at first, education is necessary. <sup>89</sup> (İnci, bass guitar player)

People's reaction to the unknown in the society creates a source of concern for women in the scene. Especially when it is about women's rights in a male-dominated scene, women think that they will be facing negative reflections at first. The repressing İnci mentions overlaps with her thought on censorship as well:

We can connect music with politics because politics exists in every point of our lives; it exists in music as well. Especially in our country, there is heavy censorship, and we can not reach many contents easily. Because they would be censored beforehand. <sup>90</sup> (İnci, bass guitar player)

Censorship and repressing on women's activity, products, activism, and politics in the scene, indicates to the male dominance in the scene. The oppression exists from the very beginning step in the scene, existing. Some women take their very existence in the scene as a rebellious act against the male dominance. By existing, they would be basically proving that it is doable, to other women. As it is mentioned previously, Kat Bjelland, the singer of the band Babes in Toyland, expressed her thoughts on this issue by stating that they are close to feminism in action:

Maybe just in action, because it's all of us in the band and it's just by what we're doing. Just showing that women can do it by themselves. You know, we didn't have a manager when we signed with Warner Brothers. Lori did a lot of the business at first... So I guess we do kind of represent feminist stuff, but we all have different politics, so as a whole, we're just showing that people should

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<sup>89</sup> Yürütülmeli. Ama çok aktif bir grup olduğumu düşünmüyorum şu anda. Femen haricinde feminist şeyler yapan duymuyoruz, görmüyoruz, ya da paylaşılmıyor. Daha bastırılmış kalıyor işte. En son bir Şili'de yapılan protesto vardı. O güzeldi ve bütün dünyada benimsendi. Her ülkede bir benzeri yapıldı. Güzeldi, işin içinde müzik de vardı, dans da vardı. İlk etapta insanların yadırgayacağını düşünüyorum. İnsanlar bilmedikleri şeylere karşı çok önyargılı yaklaşıyorlar ama aslında bunun kötü bir şey olmadığını hatta hayatımızın bir parçası olması gerektiğini yavaş yavaş şey yaptığı zaman eminim ki daha olumlu daha güzel daha benimseyici bir yaklaşım olacaktır diye düşünüyorum ama tabii onun için eğitim şart.

<sup>90</sup> Politika ve müziği bağlayabiliriz çünkü politika aslında siyaset hayatımızın her noktasında var müzikte de var. Özellikle ülkemizde çok ciddi sansür var ve birçok içeriğe rahat rahat erişemiyoruz. Belki yapılan çok güzel işler var ama bize kadar ulaşmıyor çünkü önceden sansürlenmiş oluyor.

do what they want to do and have a good time and not let anything get in the way. (Schippers, 2002, p. 183)

Existing in the scene adds up to being a role model or simply, hope for other women in the scene. Interviewees shared similar thoughts on being a role model with existing in the scene. Günce gives an example for this with starting that she thinks there is a link between music and politics:

I think so, yes. Maybe it does not exist in my discourse, but as a woman, it exists in my presence in the stage, in a man's place, while making a good fist of it. And this gives some sort of message. Also, I would like to add this: three years ago we gave a concert in Izmir. After the concert, we were drinking beer, etc., a girl approached me. She was in her high school ages, maybe just finished or in her first year of the college. She said to me: "I couldn't believe a woman could do this, especially in Turkey." And it really honored me. She said: "I want to do this just like you. I want to follow this way, as well." I was very happy. You can touch somebody's heart this way. <sup>91</sup> (Günce, death metal singer)

Beng on the stage, being role models, influencing and encouraging other women also can be counted in the politics within the scene. They do not only form an example for other women, but they can also make women question their lives and eventually raise awareness for them at some points as well.

Aysu also finds a link between women's rights and existing in the stage. According to her thought, a woman's stance on the stage encourages other women and it is an act of politics:

If I am on the stage, it means that I am making an effort for women's lives. Because a woman's existence on the stage, especially in a country like

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<sup>91</sup> Düşünüyorum evet, yani evet söylemlerimde belki barınmasa bile bir kadın olarak o sahnede var olup, bir erkeğin yerinde var olup, bunu da hakkıyla yaparak var olduğumu düşünüyorum ve bu da bir çeşit mesaj veriyor. Bunu da eklemeyi istemem, üç sene önce İzmir'de bir konser verdik. Konserden sonra çıktık işte bira içiyoruz falan bir kız geldi yanıma. Lise çağlarında, belki yeni bitti üniversite bir falan, şey demişti bana: "bir kadının özellikle Türkiye'de bunu yapabileceğine inanmadım." Bu beni çok onore etti. Ve "ben de senin yaptığın gibi yapmak istiyorum, ben de bu yolda gitmek istiyorum" demişti. Ve çok mutlu olmuştum. Bir şekilde birinin kalbine şu ya da bu şekilde dokunabiliyorsun.

Turkey, and continuing the existence for long years are indications of a serious stance. <sup>92</sup> (Aysu, rock singer with more than 20 years of experience)

In conclusion, it appears to be; there are no strict politics aimed at practices in the scene. However, with resisting the patriarchal practices and order in the scene, supporting other women, creating role models for other women, and simply by creating hope and encouraging them, women's rights politics finds its place in the Turkish alternative rock scene.

### **5.3.4 Common Strategies Offered By Women**

By this point, it has become evident that there is a serious gender inequality within the Turkish alternative rock scene. However, women, as a disadvantaged group, are aware of the inequality; men, advantaged groups in the scene do not appear to make an effort to prevent inequality. However, women who embrace the gender awareness in the scene offered their solutions to solve the gender inequality of the scene. The one point which all of the interviewees mention is to keep making their music. All of them offered to stay in the scene and raise the number of women in the scene. By this, they aim to prevent the alienation of women in the scene by normalizing their existence. Common themes were: keep playing music, raising the numbers, being on the factory floor of the scene as well, being brave, and resisting to the male codes in the scene.

Günce specifies her suggestions as this:

Making more music, forming more bands, playing more instruments. I mean, trying something unattempted before. By showing they can exist and they can exist with making good music, putting the sexy image aside and existing in the scene, I think. Günce <sup>93</sup>

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<sup>92</sup> Ben sahnedeysem, demek ki kadın hakları için uğraşıyorum. Çünkü bir kadının sahnede olması bile, hele ki Türkiye gibi bir yerde ve bunu uzun yıllar devam ettirmesi bile çok ciddi bir duruş simgesidir.

<sup>93</sup> Daha fazla müzik yapmaları, daha fazla grup kurmaları, daha fazla enstruman çalmaları. Denenmemiş şeyleri deneyebilmeleri yani. Yani burada varolabileceklerini ve iyi müzik yaparak varolabileceklerini göstermeleri, seksi imajı bir kenara bırakıp varolmaları bence.

Women's thought in the scene overlaps with the motivation of Riot Grrrl, which states this in their manifesto: "Because we want and need to encourage and be encouraged." (Hanna, Vail, et al., 1991) Their idea of more women in the scene adds up to equalizing the rights by this means. Fulya, confirms this idea in her expression:

I think that people get used to things that they see. Therefore the more we equalize this gender case, the more we see more female musicians around; the fewer people will find it strange. And this will be normalized; I think this is the only way to ensure equality. <sup>94</sup> (Fulya, bass guitar player)

While speaking about the numbers of women in the scene, women's involvement size gains importance for the bands which are looking for band members as well. Fewer numbers in the scene adds up to the hardships that bands faced when they were looking for other members to form their band. İnci, who experienced this situation, express her thoughts on the issue as this:

Primarily, there must be more women to make an effort for music, because we... When we were searching for a female guitarist, we really searched for a guitarist for two months. I mean, she must be playing guitar, be able to play the guitar and be interested in this music as well. Finding a woman who has all these elements is harder than finding a man. Therefore it is necessary to raise women who like this music in this scene. I mean with courses, practices, etc. I don't know. İnci <sup>95</sup>

While emphasizing the need for more women in the scene, İnci also points out the importance of encouragement and education for women in the scene. From the points which are made from interviewees, it appears that; these practices can be ensured with

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<sup>94</sup> İnsanın Gördüğü şeye alıştığını düşünüyorum o yüzden ne kadar çok bu cinsiyet olayını eşitler ne kadar çok daha fazla kadın müzisyen görürsek ortalıkta, insanlar da buna daha az yadırgar hale gelir ve bu da normalleşir. Ancak bu şekilde eşitlik sağlanır diye düşünüyorum.

<sup>95</sup> Öncelikle daha fazla kadının müzikle uğraşması gerekir bunun için çünkü biz ... grubuna kadın gitarist aradığımız dönemde gerçekten sadece iki ay falan sadece gitarist aradık. Yani gitar çalması, gitar çalabilmesi bunun yanında bu müzikle de ilgilenmesi gerekiyor. Hepsinin bileşeni olan kadın bulmak erkek bulmaktan daha zor, o nedenle önce kadınları bu müziği seven kadınları bu alanda yetiştirmek gerekiyor. Yani işte kurslar artık etütler bir şeyler, bilmiyorum.

a solidarity between women once the collective consciousness is achieved. Ilgın also mentions educational purposes aimed at women. She approaches the issue by contributing to the distinction based on the preferences of instruments:

I mean, of course, starting from the lyrics, maybe there can be things that transmit messages. Or steps might be taken, or else, when raising girls, they can prompt them to different instruments rather than performing ballet or playing the piano. <sup>96</sup> (Ilgın, music column writer, solo pianist and death metal audience)

What Ilgın expresses at this point is about the gendered roles within families. According to gendered roles in society, families prefer to draw a path for their daughters for more 'feminine' occupations such as performing ballet and playing pianos. The occupations of playing electronic guitar, drums, and other professions in the rock scene is seen as masculine occupations. Therefore a gendered distinctions appear in the sense of preferences. It comes the insight that, with diminishing these distinctions, an equal platform in the scene can be ensured.

However, these distinctions do not exist in preferences on instruments only. There are more gendered dimensions within the rock scene.

Aysu explains this while mentioning there are plenty of women in the scene, but there is a lack within the 'factory floor of the scene':

They must be more on the factory floor of this, but of course, this is something about the interest. What does the factory floor means: being in the recording technologies of this, recording companies like maybe having a financial power and owning a recording company and putting more women on the music market, they can carry out something like this. They can take part as arrangers, sound technicians, who build the infrastructure of this work because I think there are musicians. It's arguable that if it's enough, but there are more musicians now. It's not like my times in high school, college years. In the past, there were no women bands in Turkey. Now there are plenty. Plenty of women sing in the stage, play instruments. So, there is a rise. But they have to be more

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<sup>96</sup> Yani tabii ki şarkı sözlerinden yola çıkarak daha böyle mesaj verici şeyler olabilir belki, adimler atılabilir ya da insanlar işte kız çocuklarını yetiştirirken bale yapsın piyano çalsın diye değil de, işte başka enstrümanlara yöneltilbilir, öyle şeyler olabilir mesela.

on the factory floor of this. In that case, there really will be a difference.<sup>97</sup>  
(Aysu, rock singer with more than 20 years of experience)

When the translation for ‘ses teknisyeni’ is searched, it shows up as ‘sound man.’<sup>98</sup>  
(*Ses Teknisyeni - Türkçe İngilizce Sözlük*, n.d.) It becomes clear that if one occupation is defined with the ‘... man’, it is a male-dominated occupation. However, as Aysu mentions, it is up to women to change this unequal position by contributing more to the factory floor of the scene as female sound technicians, record company owners or employees, and other workers in the music industry.

Hale emphasizes the importance of ‘visibility’ and the ‘support’ between women:

Being brave is important, but it doesn’t come itself. When I say being brave: I am here too, I exist too, you can not ignore me. We should say these, but in order to say this, the support of women becomes important. “Look, I am here too, she is here, and she is here as well!” the visibility is important. There can be some thoughts like: “Women exist too, they do this, there is nothing to fear. I must be here as well.” This happens too much: when in a social environment, when the topic comes to me playing drums; I heard too many people say that “How nice, I want to play as well” I say: “Why don’t you do that, there is no visible obstacle for it? Don’t let it stay as a wish; continue to do this. There are female musicians as well, see them. You can do it, look, a lot of people are doing it!” this is maybe happening with seeing role models or examples and with the support. Women’s support for each other is really important. Rather than breaking the structure which we want to form, saying things from behind of the women such as: “she is playing really bad, why did them let her be in the band?”, it is important to say things like: “It’s okay if you couldn’t play there is no big deal. Look, other people couldn’t play as well; you are not the only one. You will develop your abilities; you can do it!” Supports as these are important, I think.<sup>99</sup> (Hale, drummer)

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<sup>97</sup> Bu işin mutfağında daha fazla olmaları yani ama tabii bu da sonuçta ilgiyle alakalı bir şey. Bu işin mutfağı ne demek, bu işin işte kayıt teknolojileri kısmında, plak firmalarının belki ekonomik anlamda ciddi anlamda ekonomik gücü olup bir plak firması sahibi olup kadın müzisyenleri daha fazla piyasaya çıkartmak gibi böyle bir şey yürütebilirler. İşin altyapısını oluşturan işte aranjörler gibi ses teknisyenleri gibi alanlarda daha fazla yer alabilirler çünkü müzisyenler zaten var bence. Ha yeterli midir, tartışılabilir ama artık daha fazla. Benim lisedeki üniversitedeki zamanlarım gibi değil. Eskiden kadın grupları yoktu Türkiye’de. Şimdi bir sürü var bir sürü kadın sahnede enstrüman çalıyor, şarkı söylüyor. Demek ki bir artış var. Ama işin mutfağında da çok olmaları gerekiyor. O zaman bir fark doğar gerçekten.

<sup>98</sup> <https://tureng.com/tr/turkce-ingilizce/ses%20teknisyeni>

<sup>99</sup> Cesur olmak önemli ama cesaret bir anda kendiliğinden gelmiyor. Cesur olmak derken ben de burdayım ben de varım sen beni yok sayamazsın diyebilmeliyiz ama bunu diyebilmek için de belki

With her expressions, Hale actually defines the support system between women and emphasizes the importance of it. Her supporting approach encourages other women to be in the scene. Negative approaches will break the confidence of the candidate musicians; therefore, eventually, women’s criticizing of each other might take part in the decreasing numbers of women in the scene. On the contrary of the negative approaches, musicians like Hale, with showing their supports and encouraging other musicians, they will contribute to the increase of the women’s activity in the scene, and eventually take part in the turning the Turkish alternative rock scene into more egalitarian ground.

Umut and Fulya mentioned the women who are currently active in the scene have effects on other women as well. Umut explains that with the increase of all-women bands, there will be more mixed bands as well:

The bands which are formed by women is not the solution, but for now, the increase of women bands comes with the increase of women who are musicians. Because they are the structures that young girls, especially teenage girls, might really like, take role models as. It looks so cool to them; there is an enthusiasm like this. On the other hand, when the orchestras formed by women are increased, it leads the way to the forming more mixed orchestras regarding gender, I think. For me, the orchestra’s being mixed is the solution. Female musicians make a big contribution to the next level. Therefore as a band which is formed by women, we make contributions to the next level. Because when we were being known a little, especially in Istanbul, when we started to organize concerts in other cities, there were lots of girls who started to play an instrument. There were girls who messaged us. I think we have a contribution even if it’s a certain amount. Umut<sup>100</sup>

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kadınların desteği önemli. “Bakın ben de burdayım, şu da burda, bu da burda” gibi, görünürlüğü önemli. “Ha, kadınlar var, yapıyor tamam korkulacak bir şey yok, ben de burda olmalıyım”, olabilir. Çok şey geliyor mesela yeni bir sosyal ortamda bir kadınla tanıştığında konu açılır da davul çaldığıma gelirse aa ne güzel ben de davul çalmak istiyorum diyen çok kişiyi duydum ama hani “neden yani çalmana herhangi bir engel gördüğüm kadarıyla yok neden yapmıyorsun istekte kalmasın bu devamını getir” şeklinde, “kadın müzisyenler de var bunları da gör sen de yapabilirsin bak bir sürü kişi yapıyor”, belki bu hani daha önce de dediğim gibi rol modelleri görünce ya da işte örnekleri görünce yapılabildiğini görünce ve kadınların birbirini desteklemesi de çok önemli aslında yani işte ay “şu da çok kötü çalıyor niye onu da almışlar gruba” diye arkasından konuşmak.. Bu oluşturmaya çalıştığımız yapıyı yerle bir etmektense hani “ya tamam işte orda çalamadıysan çalamadın önemli değil bak yani kimler kimler çalamıyor tek çalamayan sen değilsin geliştirirsin yaparsın edersin” gibi desteğin önemli olduğunu düşünüyorum.

<sup>100</sup> Kadın grupları da aslında çözüm değil ama şu an için kadın gruplarının sayısının artması kadın

Fulya also stated a similar experience and made an important point as well:

Some people messaged us, who formed bands which are consisted of women as well, who said such things as: “We were encouraged by you, and we formed this band!” But it must not be turned into a competition, so there can be bands which are formed by mixed gendered musicians.<sup>101</sup> (Fulya, bass guitar player)

Umut and Fulya, associate the importance of the increase of the numbers of female musicians in bands which are formed only by women, with the contribution to leading the way to forming more mixed bands. According to them, an egalitarian ground will be ensured when there are more mixed bands, and women’s existence in the scene will be normalized in this way.

#### 5.4 Conclusion

Women form a crucial part of the alternative rock scene in Turkey. As audience, musicians, writers, and scene members, their social contributions transform the unequal structure of the scene. Both pieces of evidence, which are derived from the literature research and interview research, confirm each other regarding how the cycle of feminist progress works in the scene.

According to the outcomes, the initiating step is to share women’s experience and knowledge. Taking the Feminist Standpoint Theory as a basis, it is crucial for women to share their experiences in order to form a knowledge that is not distorted. According to Harding, marginalized groups can create knowledge that is not distorted from their privileged positions. (Harding, 1992, p. 56) Accordingly, women as a marginalized group in the scene should share their own experiences from their privileged positions.

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müziyenlerin artışını da getiriyor. Çünkü çok böyle genç kızların özellikle ergen kızların çok sevebileceği yapılar bunlar, çok örnek alabileceği yapılar, onlara çok havalı görünüyor falan böyle bir heves var. Bu da bir yandan kadın orkestralarını arttırdıktan sonra, diğer orkestraların daha karma olmanın da yolunu açıyor. Bence zaten çözüm orkestraların karma olması, sonraki aşamaya büyük katkıda bulunuyor kadın müzisyen. Dolayısıyla biz bir kadın grubu olarak bir sonraki aşamaya büyük katkıda bulunuyoruz bence, çünkü bizim diğer şehirlerde konser verip sosyal medyada minik minik tanınmaya başladığımız dönem, en azından İstanbul’da tanınmaya başladığımız dönem, enstrumana başlayan çok fazla kız oldu, mesaj atanlar oldu bir miktar da olsa etkimiz olduğunu düşünüyorum.<sup>101</sup> Mesaj atanlar oldu, kız grubu kurmak isteyenler oldu, bunu söyleyenler, başka kız grupları kuranlar ve işte biz de sizden gaza gelip kız grubu kurduk diyenler. Ama bunun da rekabete dönüşmemesi lazım ki, o karma gruplar o karma cinsiyetler oluşabilin.

With experience sharing, they become visible. In order to share their experiences, women choose various means such as interviews, song lyrics, statements between and before songs, statements on their social media platforms. Women in the scene approaches music as a way of communicating, as a way of speaking your mind. Therefore they assert that if you have such power in music, you should use it to communicate, speak your mind. And with sharing their experiences, they follow this order as well. 60% of the interviewees stated that they included gender-related discourses within their song lyrics, music, interviews, social media pages, and acts of activism in the stage. 20% of them stated; however, they were willing to include gender-related statements in their music, they couldn't find a chance, due to that they do not have any recordings yet. The rest of the interviewees, which adds up to 20%, shared feminist statements within their interview; however, they expressed that the format of their music is not associated with gender issues.

General preferred topics regarding the experience sharing appear to be: politics, LGBTI rights, women's social issues. While the discussion of gender issues is rarely seen in the mainstream rock scene, it seems to be more relevant within the alternative rock scene in the context of Turkey.

All of the interviewees confirms the significance of experience sharing within the scene. However, they attached multiple motivations to experience sharing. Experience sharing is defined as a way of; making communication and expressing feelings. It also functions as a tool; to create awareness, to draw attention to social issues, to build a feeling of companion and solidarity in a sense, to create role models, to influence and encourage each other.

The idea of 'power of musicians' as influencing masses is relevant among interviewees. They believe that when musicians acquire such power, they should use it to speak about social issues. In this way, they might create role models for other women and a collective consciousness, which might turn into politics in the scene.

Significance of the experience sharing is also associated with creating role models for other women. Creating role models for women eventuates more women in the scene due to its encouragement effect.

'Respect' is among the most discussed topics of experiences in the scene. According to the information which is derived from the interview, respect seems to be a notion which is needed to be earned by women while it is easier to reach by men in the scene. The amount of respect which is received by musicians is compared between the amateur and the professional phase. It is experienced that while at the amateur level, women do not receive the same amount of respect comparing with men, which is placed at the amateur level as well. It becomes perceptible that, when women reach the professional level, the respect gap between women and men becomes more narrow than at the amateur level. It appears that women in the scene are making more effort than men to gain the respect of the audience, professionals, and other scene members.

30% of the interviewees shared their concerns regarding the style of the sharing experiences. They criticized the overly aggressive approach, which they interpret as counterproductive. It is seen that two arguments explain their avoidance of the overly aggressive approach. First: the overly aggressive idea is seen as a masculine trait. Therefore women do not accept to follow men's footsteps in the scene in order to be approved within the scene. Second: they were concerned that the overly aggressive approach harms their collective feminist image by getting mistaken as taking women as supreme over men.

While the majority of women expressed that the idea of feminism is 'misunderstood' within the scene. 60% percent defined herself as a feminist who believes in equality, which does not advocate any supremacy of a gender. 40% of them directly defined themselves as feminists without needing further explanation. The common concern among the interviewees is identified as 'being misunderstood, which as supporting women's rights over men's rights:' They clearly stated that they believe in the equality of genders.

From the literature research, it is seen that feminist progress starts with sharing experiences. Other components of the progress were searched out as; collective feminist consciousness, solidarity and politics. When one of the most significant women's rights movements, Riot Grrrl is analyzed, it is seen that it followed a certain pathway from sharing experiences to building a collective feminist consciousness, forming a solidarity between women and creating politics, in order. This pathway and

the validity of its steps in the context of Turkey were interrogated within the interview analysis. However, it seems disconnected from each other; women's activity of experience sharing as the first step of the feminist progress appears to be relevant within the scene. Yet, there is a lack of platform to connect the experiences. Women's solidarity has the power to function as this platform; however, there is no evidence of a powerful solidarity within the scene. This leads to the research to interrogate the second step of the progress, consciousness-raising, and forming a collective feminist consciousness.

The common idea among the interviewees was; music functions as a way to raise consciousness. It could be an instrument to change someone's life, envision them, and raise awareness on social issues. Most of the interviewees directly stated that; music has the power to change their life and change their way of thinking. According to their statements, song lyrics, sorts of activism, speeches before and between songs occupies a significant place in this process. Relevant idea on the power of music appears to be as; women have the power to influence their audience with music, and they should make the best of it. According to their statements, by this, the inequality between genders might be diminished. Therefore using musicians' influencing power is beneficial to feminist progress within the scene.

The link between the sharing experiences and forming a feminist consciousness appears to be that: experience sharing directs women to question social norms, which creates inequality both in the scene and society. When a musician uses her power to share her social experience on gendering; it creates a direct consciousness-raising effect on the audience who admire and follow her music. It leads the way to raise the visibility of problems and to start to question the reasons for the problems. It is seen that all of the interviewees developed a feminist consciousness. However, it appears to be a more of an individual progress rather than a collective progress within the scene. They are aware of the social issues which women are exposed to within the society, and they developed a consciousness about it. However, due to the disconnection of experience sharing within the scene, feminist consciousness does not appear to be developed as a collective consciousness in the scene.

Lack of the collective feminist consciousness within the scene weakens the solidarity within the scene as well. Collective feminist consciousness in the society supports the solidarity aimed at activities in the scene. International women's days form a significant example of these activities. 80% of the interviewees stated that they are in contact with other women in the scene. 20% of them stated they were disconnected from the scene in recent times. 30% of them directly stated that they have been in concert organizations that are organized to support women, which forms an example for the women's solidarity in the scene.

60% of the interviewees expressed their complaints about severe and destructive criticism made by women against other women in the scene. It is asserted that it harms the solidarity between women and as the opposite of solidarity; it constructs a destructive competition. It appears that these destructive criticism are carried out by reproducing gendered norms in the scene. Therefore it becomes a harmful practice to feminist progress in the scene.

Destructive criticism and competition between women is criticized and not approved by the interviewees. All of the interviewees expressed their emotions as they would be willing to join a solidarity between women in the scene if it existed.

In theory, as it is in the Riot Grrrl example as well, building a feminist consciousness also prepares a productive ground for feminist politics within the scene. Politics, as a last step of feminist progress, consists of the relatively weakest part of the feminist progress in the scene. It is seen that, even when they think about creating politics, they feel concerned that their work would be censored in the Turkish context. However, the majority of the interviewees agreed that there should be a feminist politics within the scene; there are hardly strong examples other than the international women's day organizations. Women who contributed to women's day organizations with their music interprets their practice as feminist politics in the scene. Also creating role models is seen as an important part of the feminist politics in the scene

Consequently, one of the main functions which are aimed in this research was to contribute to the first step of the feminist progress in the scene; sharing experiences. By disseminating the experiences of women in the scene, it was aimed to make the gender-related issues more visible. This might function as a contribution to

consciousness-raising, forming a solidarity between women and creating feminist politics eventually.

In conclusion, women's disadvantaged status can be transformed with the efforts of sharing experiences, making gendered issues visible, forming a collective feminist consciousness and solidarity between women, and conducting feminist politics in the scene. Within the context of Turkey, it is seen that the experience sharing and consciousness-raising were more relevant rather than the solidarity and politics. As taking the international women's rights movements in the music scene as a basis, it is projected that if the intensity of the first two steps becomes more powerful than others, they might have a powerful effect on forming solidarity and creating politics as well. Consequently, it is seen that, however, there is a lack of solidarity and politics in the scene, all of the envisaged steps of feminist progress in the scene, should be supported in order to ensure an egalitarian ground within the scene. In order to achieve this progress in success, sharing experiences and building a collective feminist consciousness can be supported initially.

## **CHAPTER 6**

### **CONCLUSION**

#### **6.1 Introduction**

The last chapter of the study includes the overview of the study, which consists of concluding thoughts on feminist analysis of the alternative rock scene combining with Feminist Standpoint Theory. Additional to the overview, research contributions of the study are analyzed in three categories such as; methodological contributions, theoretical contributions and practical contributions. Lastly, research limitations and recommendations for future studies are briefly discussed in this chapter.

As an individual who studies in the social sciences, it is my primary purpose to contribute to the social studies with this thesis. In addition, as an individual who embraces a feminist standpoint for herself, my second purpose is to contribute to the alternative rock music scene with harmonizing theory with the scene and eventually contribute to the progress on the gendering of the scene. While following my research question and subquestions, I expected to be successful in creating methodological, theoretical, and practical contributions.

#### **6.2 Methodological Contributions of the Study**

The primary sources of study are all based on women's experiences. Experiences are derived from the social relationships of their daily lives and their lives within the scene. They are reflected through their interviews, their songs, their acts of activism both within and outside of the stage. Alongside their experiences in the scene, experiences

from daily lives are essential in the study as well, due to they have a major reflection on the output of their music. The alternative rock scene enables the production of feminist knowledge with women's shared experiences.

Mainstream rock music lacks women's own perspective and everyday experience. Alternative rock scene forms a productive ground to women for sharing their perspective, standpoints, everyday experience. Adopting mostly values from the genre punk rock within the alternative rock, women stood against the patriarchal values, hence against the values of the mainstream rock scene as well. Women used the opportunity which alternative rock values creates for them, to speak about their lives as women both in and outside of the scene. This sharing of women indicates their socio-historical position and struggle within the scene and social world.

Feminist knowledge and women's experiences are linked with gendered social relations. This, forms an instance for feminism in the alternative rock scene, due to women link their feminist knowledge and their multiple experiences with gendered social relations in their social lives and the rock scene. By this, they stand against the mainstream rock scene and gendered norms.

Women's experiences are constituted in the alternative rock scene with the help of zines, lyrics, interviews, statements between songs and before songs, social media posts. They support their knowledge production with meetings that function as consciousness-raising. However, in the context of Turkey, it is seen that consciousness-raising oriented meetings do not occur. Instead, women organize concert events for international women's day and transmit their thoughts to politics in this way.

It is perceptible from the sharings of women's experiences in the rock scene that they are highly related to gender norms. At this point, it is seen in the literature review, that the constitution of women's experience can build a feminist consciousness. As in the context of Turkey, women's experiences create a feminist consciousness that is relevant for the women in the alternative rock scene as well. However, the intensity of the experience sharing is seen to be weak for forming a strong solidarity between women. Due to the lack of experience sharing, there is a lack of feminist knowledge in the scene as well. However, all of the interviewees stated that they would like to be

in a solidarity of women in the scene, it is seen that they are unaware of the other women's positive opinions regarding the solidarity.

In addition, 'multiple experiences' is worthy of taking into consideration due to women's experience may differ by the background of women. In this thesis, women in the rock scene are analyzed, and the thesis reflects the experience of women in the alternative rock scene. It is observed that women's experiences differ by their backgrounds, their level of professionalism, and the subgenres of alternative rock music they perform. Sexist practices differ by these elements as well. It is discovered that sexist practices were all of their common point, regardless of all their differences.

In that sense, if women are taken into one category, such as the instance of 'women in rock,' it might ignore the multiplicity of women and add up to essentialism; therefore, modernist values might be embraced. In that sense, 'women in rock' and one woman category should be rejected. Women from different cultural, economic, social backgrounds might be more likely to create different knowledge and truths. Therefore multiple women in the alternative rock scene create their discourses with their activism and music and create different knowledge and truths. Research of the thesis indicates that every rock band which creates feminist content might dwell on different issues. As it is derived from the interviews, their focus of criticism on the sexism might differentiate by their different experiences as well.

Feminist approaches in the alternative rock scene does not include universalistic approaches due to they focus on transmitting their own personal experiences. Some of the women in the rock scene aim to realize feminist activism through their personal experiences and avoid making universalistic definitions.

Due to Feminist Standpoint Theory links the knowledge with social position directly, social situatedness of knowledge is embraced within this thesis. Knowledge that is created by a person can only be interpreted according to that person's social position. This method helps feminist musicians to understand the knowledge and interpret it better. It also helps others to interpret the knowledge better, which is created by feminist musicians. By this, feminist activities in the rock scene might gain strength.

The starting point of the study is women's everyday practice and experiences. Feminist analysis and feminist activities within alternative rock is mainly influenced by women's everyday practice and experiences as well. Women's standpoint in the scene reflected their gendered struggle.

It can be perceptible that using the feminist method to analyze reality in order to justify the truth claims of feminism is also an approach that is followed by feminists in the alternative rock scene. With the feminist lens, the gendered social relations were examined, and outcomes were reflected mostly in feminist songs, which confirms the truth claims of feminism.

Feminist Standpoint Theory fills the void in the social studies which modernity leave behind: everyday experience and perspective of women. The feminist standpoint in the alternative rock scene developed out of this gap. Male domination in the scene exists just as it exists in the modern social studies. Women, both as individuals and musicians, initiated their feminist standpoints to fill the void. Aims of this initiative are expressing their own experiences and their own perspectives. Male-dominated scene generated dichotomy of feminine and masculine, gender-based discriminations in terms of instruments, genres, methods of rock performances. Male domination was relevant in all of the spaces of the scene. Women in the scene created a rebellious statements against the modernist dichotomy, which asserted the discrimination of feminine and masculine characterizations.

Truth can be derived from their song lyrics, interviews, and statements of experiences. When men in the mainstream rock scene attempt to express the experiences of women and define women, outcomes of the expressions do not reflect the truth and form patriarchal relations. An instance of this situation would be: the understanding that women can not play rock instruments is proved as wrong by women in the rock scene. Women showed they are capable of performing rock music, expressing their experiences, and making politics with it, and they do not have to be 'lady-like' within the process. If women did not speak from their standpoints, real power relations could not be reached completely.

### **6.3 Theoretical and Practical Contributions of the Study**

From the analysis, it is perceivable that within the mainstream rock scene, discussions on the issue of gendering are not prevalent. Feminist approaches in the scene aim to start the discussions on gendering, and by this, they aim to gain progress on; diminishing the dichotomy on gendered norms, gendered distinctions of space, sexist approaches, oppression on women's sexuality, male-biased definitions on women, alienation of women both in the scene and in the social life and women, harassment, objectification, exploitation. Additionally, they aim to provide the solidarity of women in the scene, in terms of standing against injustice without essentialism that puts women into a single category. Simply by following these goals, women create a place to discuss these notions, speak their own experiences, create politics that they do not have the chance to do so in the mainstream rock scene. This situation shows common points with Feminist Standpoint Theory, which criticizes modernist values and creates their own place to speak about their experiences and create their politics from their standpoints in the contemporary modernity thought.

While doing my research, one of the main questions that preoccupied my mind appeared to be: Why is there a need for feminism in the rock scene? When I go forward within the research, I have found some outcomes which might help us to comprehend the answers to the question. Firstly, current feminist discussions are carried out both in academia and in the social lives of people, which include activism as well. In order to increase the volume of the discussions, adding place, music scene, which also embodies the gendered relations, might be productive. Secondly, it is perceivable that feminism in the alternative rock scene stand against the mainstream rock values. It aims to ensure equality in the scene, and some of their actions conclude in perceptible positive. Therefore it might be sensible to think that feminism in the scene strengthens the equality within the scene. Considering the impact of feminism in music on women, it mediately affects equality in the social lives of women as well.

It can be perceptible that some of the women who perform in rock bands prefer to stay neutral to the gendering issues. They aim to realize a feminist stance with their existence in the scene, and they do not tend to speak about gendering in their songs and perform activism in the stage or their social lives. And some musicians, regardless

of their identity, aims to contribute to the gendering issue with only their anti-sexist attitudes. This is helpful on the point of not reproducing sexism, yet, there are sexist activities in the mainstream rock scene, and their anti-sexist attitudes do not affect them. Therefore, the mainstream rock scene continues to perform gendered relations. In that sense, analyzing the impact of their music and activities, it might be sensible to state that feminist musicians who create feminist discussions became more successful in raising voices and taking a step against the gendered norms, as it can be seen on the example of the case of Riot Grrrl and Pussy Riot. Smaller-scale movements such as women's day organizations are also relevant in the context of Turkey. By this, as women states as well, their alternative position becomes more meaningful with using their power in music to stand against the inequality and influence other women. Evidence of feminist movements, activist practices, and the amount of the discussions feminist women in the scene create, supports this suggestion.

For this reason, women in the scene who embrace anti-sexist neutral attitudes toward gendering, yet, do not involve feminist content in their performances in the scene, lacks alternativity in the scene. They do not effectively address the gendering issues. Women who embrace neutral position regarding the gendered issues might only perform as role models for the women who will become musicians or feminist activists after them, which is a significant contribution as well. Yet, in order to initiate a 'revolution' like riot grrrls aimed to do so, only performing as role models is not sufficient. It is seen in the context of Turkey as well; staying neutral becomes insufficient to form a strong solidarity bond between women. Therefore their neutral standpoints might be considered as an alternative; however, they do not accommodate a stance of **powerful alternativity**. The position of powerful alternativity includes women who embody an alternative feminist position in the rock scene, and within the feminist alternativity, they embrace the powerful feminist approach. Their position is derived from their personal experience regarding their standpoints, which their 'strong objectivity' position helps them to reach the truths which are partial and less distorted. An alternative position in the rock scene can be given support with a feminist strong objectivity approach.

Standpoints of women who do not create feminist content but stays anti-sexist might be considered as an alternative; however, it might be weak alternativity, due to they

only do not reproduce mainstream, modernist, patriarchal values. But it appears to stay insufficient to raise awareness and form a solidarity.

The contributions of 'Riot Grrrl' to the rock scene become quite meaningful considering their impact on the scene, literature, movements, and activist actions that get influenced by them, and lastly, the everyday lives of women. Therefore it is possible to say that, on the contrary of some thoughts asserts that Riot Grrrl is a trend, it protects its status as a movement because its impacts are still alive within the activist and political actions such as 'Pussy Riot.'

Just as in the example of Pussy Riot, when women place themselves in the alternative rock scene and within the alternativity, create powerful feminist discourses and perform their feminist activism, embrace powerful alternativity standpoint and eventually have the chance for ensuring progress in the women's herstory in the scene. Examples of Pussy Riot and Riot Grrrl demonstrate that women's created knowledge paves the way to feminist politics, such as the activism of these two examples. In this way, women's created knowledge turns into politics in rock music.

In the light of the information which is collected in this study, it is perceivable that feminist practices in the scene aim to create women's knowledge and contributes to the progress of feminism with three directions: consciousness-raising, creating an inclusive unity and solidarity for women, creating politics. The discussions in their music and zines, activist practices, and consciousness-raising practices are significant tools to form the politics of feminism in the scene.

When the case of Turkey is analyzed, it is seen that the most powerful steps of the feminist progress, appears to be sharing experiences and forming feminist consciousness. However, due to the intensity of these activities is not enough to form solidarity and carry out politics, feminist progress could not be improved. As interviewees' suggestions, the most relevant common strategy is to improve the progress that comes in view that, increasing the number of women in the scene. The ways of achieving this appear to be; creating more role models for women in the scene, encouraging them to play more instruments, being in the male-dominated areas of the scene such as sound technicians, and record label owners.

As a practical contribution of the study: when researching the contributions of feminist actions in music, I have detected that, when music is enriched by the feminist content and when performers embrace a feminist standpoint, progress on gendering becomes possible. Without feminist content and feminist standpoint, only by not supporting gendered norms, alternativity of the music weakens. The power of the discourses weakens. As women suggest in their interviews: musicians should use their social power to influence other women and encourage them to fight against the patriarchy in the scene. Therefore, I appreciate the significance of feminist rock musicians and their work, even more than I did before the study.

#### **6.4 Research Limitations of the Study**

While doing my research, I have noticed that it was quite difficult to reach the formal sources of information about rock bands. However, there are academic studies on the rock scene, in order to not repeat the issues that are studied before, I aimed to reach current interviews, books, articles and any sources which involve information on the rock scene. It was even harder when analyzing the context of Turkey. Due to musical studies goes parallel with the media sharing on the internet, it was difficult to find confidential sources with valid names, dates, information.

Another limitation would be the outbreak of Coronavirus while conducting interviews. However, thankfully, interviewees (who we couldn't meet face to face), agreed to conduct the interviews with the opportunities of video calls on the internet.

#### **6.5 Recommendations for the Future Studies**

It was one of my aims to form a theoretical basis for a feminist analysis in the alternative rock scene. The conceptualization of 'powerful alternativity' might contribute to the social analysis of the rock scene. The term is aimed to add up to embracing a standpoint to use their influential power to speak their minds. I have used the term, in terms of a feminist approach in the alternative rock scene. Apart from the sexism, all of the discrimination types in the rock scene might be analyzed while adding 'powerful alternativity' to the theoretical basis of the following researches and studies.

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## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX A: METU HUMAN SUBJECTS ETHICS COMMITTEE APPROVAL

UYGULAMALI ETİK ARAŞTIRMA MERKEZİ  
APPLIED ETHICS RESEARCH CENTER



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20 Şubat 2020

Konu: Değerlendirme Sonucu

Gönderen: ODTÜ İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu (IAEK)

İlgi: İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu Başvurusu

Sayın Prof.Dr. Fatma Yıldız ECEVİT

Danışmanlığını yaptığınız Elif Ceren BOSTANCI'nın "Alternatif Rock Sahnesinde Feminist Duruş Noktası" başlıklı araştırması İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu tarafından uygun görülmüş ve 052-ODTU-2020 protokol numarası ile onaylanmıştır.

Saygılarımızla bilgilerinize sunarız.

Prof.Dr. Mine MISIRLISOY

Başkan

Prof. Dr. Tolga CAN

Üye

Doç.Dr. Pınar KAYGAN

Üye

Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Ali Emre TURGUT

Üye

Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Şerife SEVİNÇ

Üye

Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Müge GÜNDÜZ

Üye

Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Süreyya Özcan KABASAKAL

Üye

## APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS / MÜLAKAT SORULARI

### 1. Kişisel Sorular

- 1.1. Doğum yılınız nedir?
- 1.2. Hangi şehirde yaşamaktasınız?
- 1.3. Kaç yıldır rock müzik ile ilgileniyorsunuz?
- 1.4. Kaç yıldır müzik yapıyorsunuz?
- 1.5. Rock müzik içinde ilgilendiğiniz alt tür nedir?

### 2. Alternatif Rock Alanında Kadın Deneyimine Dair Sorular

- 2.1 Yaptığınız müzik sizin için ne ifade ediyor?
- 2.2 Alternatif rock müzik piyasası sizin için ne ifade ediyor?
- 2.3 Sahnede herhangi bir cinsiyetin baskınlığı olduğunu düşünüyor musunuz?
- 2.4 Sizce rock müzik içinde erkek veya kadın olarak var olma noktasında herhangi bir farklılık var mı? Varsa ne gibi farklılıklar olduğunu düşünüyorsunuz?
- 2.5 Cinsiyet rollerinin sahne içerisinde üzerinizde herhangi bir baskı yarattığını düşünüyor musunuz?
- 2.6 Sahnede idari işlerinizi yürütmede herhangi bir zorluk yaşadınız mı? Yaşadıysanız ne gibi zorluklar yaşıyorsunuz?
- 2.7 Stage dive / moshpit deneyiminiz oldu mu? Deneyiminizden bahsedebilir misiniz?
- 2.8 Kadın vokal / kadın grubu / kadın müzisyen / rock müzikte kadın gibi tanımlamak için kullanılan ifadeler hakkında ne düşünüyorsunuz? Bu ifadelerin sizi tanımladığını düşünür müsünüz?
- 2.9 Bir kadının sahne içerisinde cinselliğini ifade etmesi veya duruşu üzerinde herhangi bir baskı olduğunu düşünüyor musunuz?
- 2.10 Beden politikalarının rock sahnesine yansıdığını düşünüyor musunuz?

- 2.11 Müziğinizde, söylemlerinizde, sahnenizde toplumsal cinsiyet içerikleri paylaşıyor musunuz?
  - 2.12 Paylaşan kişiler/gruplar hakkında ne düşünüyorsunuz? Sizce bu paylaşımlar önemli mi?
  - 2.13 Alternatif rock alanında kadınların deneyimlerini paylaşmalarının, diğer kadınların hayatlarına katkısı olabileceğini düşünüyor musunuz?
3. Alternatif Rock Alanında Feminist İlerlemeye Dair Sorular
    - 3.1. Alternatif rock alanında kadın meseleleri ile ilgili paylaşımlar ve organizasyonlar yürütülüyor mu?
    - 3.2. Bu paylaşım ve organizasyonların yürütülmesi gerektiğini düşünüyor musunuz?
    - 3.3. Sizce alternatif rock alanında kadınların deneyimlerini paylaşmaları ile kadın haklarıyla ilgili yürütülen politikalar arasında bir bağlantı olabilir mi?
    - 3.4. Kendinizi feminist olarak tanımlıyor musunuz?
    - 3.5. Tanımlıyorsanız bunun müziğinize, sahnenize nasıl yansıdığını düşünüyorsunuz?
    - 3.6. Bu alanda diğer kadın müzisyenlerle iletişiminiz var mı?
    - 3.7. Bu alanda faaliyet gösteren diğer kadınlarla aranızda bir dayanışma olduğunu düşünüyor musunuz?
    - 3.8. Kadın haklarını iyileştirebilmek adına müziğin bir araç olarak kullanılabileceğini düşünüyor musunuz? Nasıl kullanılabilir?
    - 3.9. Kadınların alternatif rock müzik alanında eşitliği sağlama adına atabileceği adımlar sizce nelerdir?
    - 3.10. Ekleme istediğiniz herhangi bir şey var mı?

## APPENDIX C: TURKISH SUMMARY / TÜRKE ÖZET

Bu tez, Feminist Duruş Kuramının temel prensiplerinden faydalanarak alternatif rock alanında feminist bir analiz yapmayı amaçlamaktadır. Çalışmada; kadınların alternatif rock alanındaki konumlarına ve alandaki kadın deneyimlerine odaklanılmıştır. Müzikle cinsiyet kavramlarının iç içe geçtiği bu çalışmada; müziğin müzikal teknik anlamından ziyade sosyal anlamı ele alınmış olup, sosyal müzik alanı ana akım ve alternatif olarak ikiye ayrılmıştır. Toplumun genel değerlerini yansıtan ve yeniden üretimine olanak sağlayan ana akım müziğe karşı gelişmiş olan alternatif müziğin bir alt türü olarak alternatif rock müzik alanı, sosyal anlamı içerisinde, feminist bakış açısından incelenmiştir. Toplumdaki cinsiyetçi pratiklerin ve cinsiyet ayrımcılığının örneklerinin içinde sık sık rastlandığı ana akım müziği eleştirmek için verimli bir alan sunan alternatif rock alanında, kadın deneyimleri ve toplumsal cinsiyet pratikleri araştırılmıştır. Toplumsal cinsiyete dair kadın deneyimlerinin alternatif rock alanında nasıl oluştuğu sorgusu, çalışmanın temel sorgusudur.

Araştırma “Giriş, Sosyal Teori ve Feminist Duruş Kuramı, Müzik ve Alternatif Rock Alanı, Alternatif Rock Alanının Feminist Duruş Kuramı Çerçevesinde Analizi, Alternatif Türk Rock Alanında Kadınlar, Sonuç” olmak üzere altı bölümden oluşmaktadır.

Sosyal bir kavram olarak müzik, toplumdaki sosyal ilişkileri yansıtmakta bir ayna işlevi görmektedir. İnsanlar tarafından kurulmuş bu kavram, toplumdaki sosyal dinamiklerimizden esinlenmekte ve etkilenmektedir. Bu çalışmada müzik bir sosyal ilişkilene biçimi olarak ele alınmıştır. Toplumdaki süregelen pratikler ve sosyal konuların yansımalarını, sosyal bir alan olan müzikte de görmek mümkündür. Toplumsal cinsiyet, bunlar arasında en kritik konulardan birini oluşturmaktadır. Toplumdaki cinsiyetçi pratikler ve cinsiyet ayrımcılığının müzik alanına da yansıdığı, yadsınamaz bir gerçektir. Ana akım müziğin içinde de sık sık rastlanan bu pratikleri eleştirebilen bir konuma sahip olan alternatif rock alanında, kadın deneyimlerinin,

toplumsal cinsiyet temelli bilincin, dayanışma ve politikanın nasıl oluşabileceği incelenmiştir. Alternatif rock alanını tanımlamak için kullanılan ‘alan’ kelimesi; sanatçıları, dinleyicileri, ve müzik alanındaki diğer bütün bireyleri tanımlayabilen bir şemsiye terim olarak kullanılmıştır.

Cinsiyetçi pratikleri eleştiren alternatif rock alanında dahi kadın deneyimlerine dair doğru bilgiye ulaşmanın, konuyla ilgili kaynakların yetersiz olmasından dolayı çok güç olduğu görülmektedir. Sosyal alanda ve müziğin kendi içindeki söylemlerde ise kadın deneyimlerinin oldukça zayıf ve bazı durumlarda da yanlış aktarıldığı görülmektedir. Bu nedenle bu alandaki boşluğu doldurmak adına bir katkı girişimi olarak, bu alandaki kadın deneyimleri bu çalışma ile aktarılmaya çalışılacaktır.

Çalışmanın temelini ‘kadın deneyimleri’ oluşturmaktadır. Bundan dolayı çalışma alanı olan alternatif rock alanında kadın deneyimlerinin nasıl oluştuğu, çalışmanın temel sorgusunu oluşturmuştur. Buna ek olarak, alternatif rock alanında kadın deneyimlerinin; bilinç yükseltme, dayanışma ve politikaya olan katkılarının nasıl olduğu alt sorular içerisinde işlenmiştir. Bilinç yükseltme, dayanışma ve politika alternatif rock alanındaki feminist gelişmenin öğeleri olarak ele alınmıştır.

Bu çalışma ile rock müzik alanına dair toplumsal cinsiyet tartışmalarının sayısının artırılması amaçlanmıştır. Gerçek ve saptırılmamış kadın deneyimlerinin paylaşımı ile kadın deneyimlerine dair yanlış bilgilerin düzeltilmesi amaçlanmıştır. Feminist Duruş Kuramı içerisinde Harding’in de ifade ettiği gibi; toplumda marjinalize edilen gruplar saptırılmamış bilgiyi kendi ayrıcalıklı alanlarından üretebilirler. (Harding, 1992, p. 56) Bu düşünceden yola çıkarak, toplumda ve müzikte marjinalize edilen grup olarak kadınlar, kendilerine dair bilgileri, kendi ayrıcalıklı alanlarından üretebilirler. Kadınların kendi deneyimlerini paylaşmasıyla birlikte, rock alanındaki kadınların hayatlarına dair saptırılmamış bilgiye ulaşmak mümkün olacaktır.

Bireylerin ana akım değerlere karşı benimsediği alternatif pozisyonlarından güçlü söylemler üretmesi ‘güçlü alternatiflik’ kavramı olarak oluşturulmuştur. Bu kavrama göre, müzik veya genel olarak toplum içinde, alternatif bir pozisyon benimseyip, ana akım değerleri güçlü bir şekilde eleştiren bir kişi pozisyonunu ‘güçlü alternatif’ olarak tanımlayabilmektedir. Bu tanıma örnek olarak; literatürde, müzik içinde, toplumsal cinsiyet perspektifinden incelendiği zaman, ciddi anlamda feminist gelişme ve kolektif

feminist bilincin yükselmesini sağlayan Riot Grrrl ve Pussy Riot gibi akımların içinde yer alan bireylerin pozisyonlarının da ‘güçlü alternatif’ olarak yer alabileceği görülmektedir.

Bu çalışmada, literatür ve mülakat temelli iki araştırma bulunmaktadır. Öncelikle; ‘Alternatif Rock Alanının Feminist Duruş Kuramı Çerçevesinde Analizi’ bölümünde yer alan literatür araştırmasında; uluslararası alternatif rock alanında üretilen şarkı sözleri, sanatçılarla yapılan mülakatlar ve alandaki kadınların aktivitelerine dair içerikleri içeren kitaplar, makaleler, kadınların kendi deneyimlerini aktarma ve politika üretme amacıyla yayınladıkları fanzinler gibi metinsel kaynaklardan faydalanılmıştır. Bu literatür araştırmasında, araştırma metodu olarak döküman analizi tercih edilmiştir. ‘Alternatif Türk Rock Alanında Kadınlar’ bölümü ise çalışmanın ana araştırması olup; Alternatif Türk rock alanında faaliyet gösteren müzisyen kadınlarla yarı yapılandırılmış mülakatlar yürütülmüştür. Yarı yapılandırılmış mülakat metodu, nitel araştırma metodu olarak tercih edilmiştir. Alternatif Türk rock alanında kadınlara dair yeterli yazılı bilgi/kaynak bulunamaması nedeniyle, bu çalışmanın bir amacı da bu yönde mevcut bilgileri zenginleştirebilmek olmuştur. Bu araştırmayı yürütürken, alandaki cinsiyet ilişkileri sorgulandığından dolayı, mülakat soruları da bu çerçevede oluşturulmuştur. Mülakatlar ile birlikte, alandaki cinsiyet ilişkilerinin ortaya çıkarılması ve elde edilen çıktılarının feminist bir bakış açısından analizinin yapılması amaçlanmıştır.

Mülakatların yürütüldüğü grup, Alternatif Türk rock alanında faaliyet gösteren veya göstermiş olan 10 müzisyen kadından oluşmaktadır. Görüşmecilere ulaşabilmek için sosyal medya üzerinden ilanlar oluşturulmuş olup, ulaşılan potansiyel görüşmecilerin de bağlantılarını dahil etmesiyle birlikte kar topu yöntemi izlenmiştir. Görüşmecilerin kişisel bilgilerini korumak adına, gerçek isimleri takma isimlerle değiştirilmiştir.

Görüşmecilerin yaş aralığı 26 ile 48 arasında değişkenlik göstermektedir. Görüşmecilerin rock müzik ile dinleyici olarak deneyimlerinin 11 ile 30 yıl arasında değişkenlik gösterdiği, müzisyen olarak deneyimlerinin ise 8 ile 30 yıl arasında değişkenlik gösterdiği gözlemlenmiştir. Görüşmecilerin müzisyen olarak deneyimlerini amatör ve profesyonel olarak ikiye ayırma eğilimlerinin olduğu ve tecrübelerinin de buna göre değişiklik gösterdiği görülmüştür.

Çalışmanın teorik çerçevesinin merkezinde ‘Feminist Duruş Kuramı’ bulunmaktadır. Bu kuram yalnızca bir bakış açısı olarak değil, bir deneyim tartışması olarak da ele alınmıştır. Kadınların deneyimleri; sosyo-tarihsel olarak konumları ve sosyal dünyadaki kolektif mücadeleleri ile doğrudan ilgilidir. Harding’e göre bu mücadele hem bilim dünyasında hem de politikada yer almaktadır. (Harding, 2004) Bu düşünceden de faydalanarak bu mücadelenin müzik içerisinde yer alan politikada da yer alabileceğini söylemek mümkündür. Bu kuram, Ramazanoğlu ve Holland’a göre; feminist bilgi ve çeşitli kadın deneyimlerinin cinsiyetlendirilmiş sosyal ilişkiler ile ilişkilendirildiği bir kuramdır. (Ramazanoğlu & Holland, 2002, p. 2) Çalışmada da, eksikliğin gözlemlendiği feminist bilgiye ulaşabilmek adına çeşitli kadın deneyimleri ile alternatif rock alanındaki cinsiyetlendirilmiş sosyal ilişkiler incelenecektir. Çalışmanın ana teorik savunusu; Feminist Duruş Kuramının da öne sürdüğü gibi, çalışmanın birincil kaynağı ve temelini kadınların deneyimleri olması gerektiğidir. Çalışmalar, kadınların gündelik deneyimini içermediğinde, kadınlarla ilgili yanlış ve saptırılmış bilgilerin üretimine sebebiyet verebilir. Bu nedenle ‘doğru’ olarak kabul edilen düşünceler, sosyal olarak üretilmiş ve saptırılmış düşünceleri ifade edebilir. Bu noktada doğru bilgiye ulaşmak adına kuram, marjinalize edilen gruplar kendi ayrıcalıklı konumlarından saptırılmamış bilgiler üretebileceğine işaret etmektedir. (Harding, 1992, p. 56) Ek olarak, bu konumdan üretilen bilgiler, her birey için geçerli olmayacaktır. Hartsock, sabit, katı doğruluk kavramlarına karşı çıkmıştır. (N. C. M. Hartsock, 1997, p. 371) Herkes için geçerli olacak bir doğru kavramının kabulü evrensellik ilkesine işaret etmektedir. Bu çalışmada alternatif rock müzik içinde yer alan müzisyen kadınların deneyimleri incelenmiş olup, çalışmadan üretilmiş olan bilgi bu araştırma grubuyla ilişkilendirilebilir. İlişkilendirme esnasında ise, özcülük ve evrenselcilikten kaçınılmış, bu bilgilerin çeşitli deneyimlere dayanabileceği ve çeşitli deneyimlerden yola çıkarak kendi içinde farklılaşabileceği kabul edilmiştir.

Kurama göre, araştırma grubundan elde edilen verilerden üretilmiş olan bilgiler direkt olarak kişilerin sosyal konumlarıyla ilgilidir. Kültürel, politik gibi arkaplanların yanı sıra, görüşmecilerin müzik içerisindeki konumu da sosyal konum içerisine dahil edilmektedir. Alternatif rock alanı altında müzisyen olarak konumlanmış olan görüşmeci grubunun kendi içinde de sosyal anlamda farklılıklar içermesinden dolayı,

çeşitli deneyimlere dair çıktılarını elde edileceği öngörüşmüştür. Kendi konumlarından elde edilen bilgi Feminist Duruş Kuramı düşünürleri tarafından ‘situated knowledge’ (konumlanmış bilgi) olarak adlandırılır. (Stoetzler and Yuval-Davis 2002, p.315)

‘Doğru’nun arayışında olan bireyler veya insan grupları, kendi duruş noktalarından ileri gelen bir epistemolojik ayrıcalık elde ederler. Öne sürdükleri savunuları bu duruş noktasından üretirler ve bu savunular duruş noktalarından etkilendikleri için taraflı bir savunu haline gelir. Haraway’in düşüncesine göre, sadece taraflı bir bakış açısı objektif görüşü yansıtabilmektedir. (Haraway, 1988, p.583) Bu sayede Haraway, feminist objektivite anlayışını konumlanmış bilgi ile bağdaştırmaktadır.

Feminist Duruş Kuramı düşünürleri, bu kuramın yalnızca bir bakış açısı değil, mücadele ile kazanılmış bir duruş olduğunu ifade etmektedirler. Bu epistemolojik olarak ayrıcalıklı olan duruşun kazanımı, dezavantajlı grupların yaşadığı ortak baskıya dair deneyimleri ve sistematik olarak ilerleyen sosyal güç ilişkilerini ortaya çıkarmaktadır. (Grasswick, 2018) Doğru olan gerçeklik yalnızca bu mücadelenin sonucunda feminist analiz ile ortaya çıkarılabilmektedir. Bu mücadele, eşitsiz cinsiyet ilişkileri ve eşitsiz egemenlik pratiklerinin ortaya çıkmasını sağlayabilmektedir. (Ramazanoğlu & Holland, 2002, p. 10) Bu çalışmada da, kadınların alternatif rock alanındaki gündelik deneyimlerinden, epistemolojik avantajlı konumlarından ifade ettikleri deneyimlerden faydalanarak, saptırılmamış ve doğru bilgiye ulaşılması amaçlanmıştır. Konumlanmış bilgi üretimi ile, kadınların deneyimlerine dair doğru çıktılarını elde edileceği öngörüşmüştür. Analiz birimi olan, alternatif rock alanındaki müzisyen kadınların konumlarından türetilen konumlu bilgiler ile alanda sistematik olarak varlığını sürdüren cinsiyetlendirilmiş ilişkilerin, cinsiyetçi pratiklerin, ve kadınların konuyla ilgili ortak deneyimlerinin analizinin yapılması amaçlanmıştır.

Çalışmada müzik bir sosyal ilişki biçimi olarak ele alınmıştır. Bu çalışmada müziğin teknik/müzikal özelliklerindense sosyal özelliklerinin üzerinde durulmuştur. Müziğin sosyal ilişkileri şekillendiren ve insanların kendini ifade etmesine yardımcı olan bir araç olarak fonksiyon gösterdiği gözlemlenmiştir. Müziği ve topluma aktardığı değerleri daha efektif inceleyebilmek adına müzik, müzikal veya teknik açıdan ziyade sosyal anlamda ana akım ve alternatif olmak üzere iki ana kategoriye ayrılmıştır. Ana akım müzik toplumda genel olarak kabul gören sosyal kodları içerisinde bulundurmaktadır ve bu sosyal kodları yeniden üretme işlevi görmektedir. Bunun

temel nedeni; ana akım müziğin satış ve kâr odaklı olması ve toplumdaki talep mekanizmasına göre üretim yapmasıdır. Diğer yandan alternatif müziğin, ana akım müzik kadar satış ve kâr odaklı olmamasından dolayı, toplumdaki genel değerleri içinde barındırma amacı bulunmamaktadır. Bundan dolayı, alternatif müzik altında müzik yapan müzisyenler, içeriklerini ve söylemlerini ana akım müzikten farklı olarak, daha özgür seçebilmektedirler. Bu durum da, alternatif müziği toplumsal cinsiyet tartışmalarının sürdürülebilmesi için elverişli bir ortam haline getirmektedir. Ana akım müzik incelendiğinde, kadınların toplum içerisindeki dezavantajlı pozisyonunun ana akım müzik söylemlerine de yansıtıldığını, ve cinsiyetçi içeriklerin bu alan içinde yeniden üretildiğini görmek mümkün olabilmektedir. 1950'lerden günümüze dek cinsiyetçi şarkı sözü içeriklerinin popüler şarkılar içinde yer aldığı gözlemlenmektedir. Cinsel objeleştirme ve kadına yönelik şiddetin normalleştirilmesi ve romantize edilmesi popüler ana akım müzikte cinsiyetçi içerikler arasında yer almaktadır.

Alternatif müzik incelendiğinde ise, bazı spesifik değerlere başkaldırı anlamı taşıyan içeriklerin rock müzik içinde daha çok tercih edilmesi nedeniyle, alternatif müzik altında rock müzik incelenmiştir. Bu inceleme yapılırken, teorik olarak Hebdige'in alt kültür konsepti ele alınmıştır. Hebdige'in görüşüne göre, merkez kültüre zıt düşen ve aynı düşünceyi paylaşan insanlar merkez kültürün karşısında birlikte yer almakta ve bu şekilde kimliklerini inşa etmektedir. (Hebdige, 1979, p. 2) Bu düşünce, alternatif rock müzik içinde kadınları incelerken, kadınların müzikte seksizme karşı duruşlarını inceleme noktasında faydalı olmaktadır.

Alternatif rock müzik tarihi incelendiğinde, sosyal söylemleri içinde bulunduran alternatif grup ve müzisyenlerin, zamanla çok daha büyük kitlelere hitap etmeye, daha büyük müzik şirketleriyle anlaşmalar yapmaya ve albüm satışlarından ciddi gelir elde etmeye başladıkları gözlemlenmiştir. Bu noktada, müzik sektörü yapısı itibarıyla artık ana akım sayılabilecek olan grup/müzisyen, söylem açısından hala alternatif duruşunu korumayı seçebilir. Alternatif paradoks kavramı, bu grubun/müzisyenin duruşunu tanımlamak için kullanılabilir. Bu noktada alternatif söylemlerini devam ettirmeyi tercih eden grup/müzisyen sosyal olarak 'güçlü alternatif' bir duruş sergilemektedir.

Rock müzik 1970'lerden beri çoğunlukla agresif, hızlı ve şiddetli bir müzik türü olarak tanımlanmaktadır. Rock müziğin sosyal anlamda beraberinde getirdiği bu

sıfatlar genellikle maskülen davranış biçimi ile dolayısıyla erkeklik ile ilişkilendirilmektedir. Gündelik sosyal hayatta ve müzik alanında da feminen ve maskülen ayrımı, modernist teoride de olduğu gibi varlığını korumaktadır. Daha sakin ve yumuşak müzikler feminen olarak nitelenip kadınlara atfedilirken, daha şiddetli ve agresif müzikler ise maskülen olarak nitelenip erkeklere atfedilmektedir. Müzisyenlerin enstrumanları, vokal stilleri, giyim tercihleri, sahnedeki duruşları modernist ikili düşünce sistemine göre maskülen ve feminen olarak ayırt edilmektedir. Bu anlayıştan yola çıkarak rock müziğin toplumca erkeklere atfedilen bir alan olması, kadınların rock müzikte dışlanmasına ve yabancılaştırılmasına neden olmaktadır. Bu pratiklerin örneklerini ‘kadın grubu/kadın vokal/kadın gitarist/kadın davulcu’ gibi ifadelerde görmek mümkündür. Erkek bireyler için bu tür ifadeler kullanılmazken, kadın bireylerin temsili için bu tür ifadelerin kullanılması, alanda sık görülen bir durumdur.

Özellikle ana akım müzik alanlarında, satış ve reklam odaklı çalışmalarda, daha dikkat çekici kıyafetlerin tercih edilmesi gerektiği ile ilgili kadınların üzerinde sosyal bir baskı olduğu görülebilmektedir. Bu noktada kadınlar sahnede müzisyen kimliklerini kaybetmekte, satış odaklı faydalanılan birer objeye dönüşmektedirler. Bu durum kadınların rock alanında cinsel objeleştirilmesinin parçalarından birini oluşturmaktadır. Bu noktada alternatif rock alanı, özgür söylemlerin varlığı açısından daha elverişli bir ortam sunduğu için kadınların bu duruma karşı durabilmesine ve politika üretebilmesine de önayak olabilmektedir.

Rock alanında toplumsal cinsiyet gelişmelerinin daha iyi analiz edebilmesi adına kadınların bu alandaki pozisyonları iki dönem başlığı altında incelenmiştir. İlk dönem 1970 ile 1990 yılları arasını kapsamakta, ikinci dönem ise 1990’dan sonraki dönemi ifade etmektedir.

1970’li yıllardan önce kadınların müzik alanında caz müzisyenleri olarak aktif olarak rol alabildiği ve bazı durumlarda tamamen kadınlardan oluşan gruplar kurdukları gözlemlenmiştir. ‘Kadın grubu’ veya ‘kız grubu’ gibi cinsiyetçi ifadeler, bu dönemden itibaren kullanılmaya başlanmıştır. Rock müziğin de temel esin kaynaklarından biri sayılabilecek caz alanındaki kadınların pratikleri, daha sonraki dönemde kadın pratiklerini de etkilemiş ve müzisyenlere esin kaynağı olmuştur. Bu dönemde kadın

müziyenler ciddi cinsiyet ayrımcılığı pratiklerine maruz kalsalar da, o dönem içerisinde bu konuyla ilgili söylemlerinin ve deneyimlerinin aktarım yoğunluğunun günümüzden daha düşük olduğu görülmüştür.

1990 sonrası dönemde ise, rock alanında 1970 ve 1980'lerdeki punk rock'ın başkaldırı özelliğinden de beslenen yeni alternatif rock alt türleri oluşmuştur. Bu dönemde deneyim aktarımı ve cinsiyet pratiklerine dair söylemlerin ve paylaşımların daha yoğun olduğu görülmektedir. Alanda tartışılan temel konular arasında; kadınların bağımsızlığı, cinsiyet rolleri, cinsel taciz ve istismar, seksizm ve ayrıca genel bir başlık olarak toplumsal cinsiyet yer almaktadır. Bu dönemde toplumsal cinsiyete dair tartışmaların ve kadınların kendi deneyimlerinin; şarkı sözleri, yayınladıkları özel dergiler, röportajlar vesilesi ile paylaşıldığı görülebilmektedir. Bu paylaşımlar incelendiğinde alternatif rock alanında feminist bir gelişme süreci ile doğrudan ilgili olduğu anlaşılmıştır. Paylaşımların bilinç yükseltme, dayanışma oluşturma ve politika oluşturma üzerinde doğrudan etkisinin olduğu bilgisine, örnek vakalar olan Riot Grrrl ve Pussy Riot vakaları incelenerek ulaşılmıştır. İlk faaliyetlerine 1990'ların başında Amerika Birleşik Devletleri'nde başlanmış olan Riot Grrrl akımı, cinsiyetçi pratiklere karşı kadınlar arasında bilgi alışverişi sağlanarak bilinç yükseltmeyi, bir dayanışma oluşturmaya ve politika üretmeyi amaçlamıştır. Riot Grrrl içinde faaliyet gösteren müziyenler, şarkı sözlerinde toplumsal cinsiyet içeriklerini ciddi anlamda dile getirerek, kendileri bastıkları dergilerde bu tartışmaları sürdürerek ve sahnede konuyla ilgili aktivist pratikler sergileyerek bu konuda başarıya ulaşmışlardır. Günümüzde hala Riot Grrrl akımı içinde kendini tanımlayan ve toplumsal cinsiyetle ilgili çalışmalarını alternatif rock alanında sürdürmeye devam etmekte olan müziyenler varlığını devam ettirmektedir. Bir diğer örnek vaka olan Pussy Riot ise, 2011 yılında Rusya'da ortaya çıkmıştır. Pussy Riot müzik grubunun üyeleri olan kadınlar, Rusya'da kadınlar üzerinde kurulan dini ve politik baskıları protesto etme amacıyla grubu kurmuş olup aktivizm faaliyetleri oluşturmuşlardır. Grubun protestoları birçok farklı dünya ülkesinde ses getirmiş olup, günümüzde hala dünyanın her tarafında kadınlar tarafından desteklenmekte, yeni politik müzik gruplarına ilham kaynağı oluşturmaktadır. Pussy Riot rock müziği araç olarak kullanarak, cinsiyetçi pratiklerle ilgili protestolarını yürütmüş, konuyla ilgili kolektif bir bilinç oluşturmuş ve kadınlar arasında bir dayanışma oluşturmuştur. Bu iki örnek vaka ve konuyla ilgili literatür

incelendiğinde feminizmin alternatif rock alanında gelişme sürecinin spesifik bir düzende ilerlediği görülebilmektedir: Süreç kadınların ortak deneyimlerini paylaşmasıyla başlamakta, konuyla ilgili kolektif bilinç oluşturmasıyla devam etmekte, dayanışma ve politika üretimi ile alanda toplumsal cinsiyet ilerlemesi adına olumlu sonuca ulaşmaktadır.

Çalışmanın beşinci bölümü olan ‘Alternatif Türk Rock Alanında Kadınlar’ bölümünde teori ve literatürde elde edilen veriler, alternatif Türk rock alanındaki müzisyen kadınlar ile yapılan görüşmelerden elde edilen çıktılar ile birlikte analiz edilmiştir. Türk rock alanı ile ilgili kısa bir giriş bölümüyle başlayan bölümün devamında mülakatların Feminist Duruş Kuramı çerçevesinde analizi yapılmış, alandaki feminist gelişme bilinç yükseltme, dayanışma ve politika başlıkları altında analiz edilmiş ve kadınlar tarafından önerilen stratejiler tartışılmıştır.

Rock müziğin dünya üzerinde 1960’lardan sonra yükselişe geçmesinin etkileri Türkiye alanında da gözlemlenmiştir. Öncelikle ‘Anadolu rock’ olarak tabir edilen Türk müziğinin rock müzikle harmanlanmış bir versiyonu olan bu müzik türünün devamında, yıllar içinde Türk rock müziğinin oldukça çeşitlendiği ve geliştiği görülmüştür. Dünyadaki diğer rock alanlarında olduğu gibi Türk rock alanının da erkek müzisyenler sayıca daha fazla yer almaktadır. Toplumdaki cinsiyetçi pratiklerin Türk rock alanına da yansıdığı görülmektedir. 1990’lı yıllardan itibaren kadınların rock alanında artmakta olan pratikleri, kadınların toplumsal cinsiyete dair deneyimlerini de artırmıştır. 1994’te, tamamen kadınlardan oluşan bir rock grubu olan Volvox grubunun ana vokali Şebnem Ferah verdiği bir röportajda, kadın grubu olarak değerlendirilmektense artık ‘normal’ bir rock grubu olarak değerlendirilmek istediklerini ifade etmiştir. (Çiftçi, 1994) Aynı grubun bir başka üyesi Özlem Tekin, grubun aktif olduğu dönemdeki deneyimlerini aktarırken, o dönemde kadınların rock müzik yapmasına ek olarak rock dinlemelerinin bile garip karşılandığını, kendilerini bu piyasada kanıtlayabilmek için de çok ciddi bir şekilde çalışmalarını gerektiğini ifade etmiştir. (Arman, 2010) Günümüz rock müzik alanını incelediğimiz zaman toplumsal cinsiyetle ilgili söylemlere yer verilen röportajlara çok sık rastlanamamakla birlikte, şarkı sözlerinde konuyla ilgili söylemlerin yer alabildiği görülmektedir. Cinsiyet rollerini yıkmak, namus cinayetleri, kadına yönelik şiddet, sosyal baskı ile ilgili konular şarkı sözlerinde tercih edilmiştir. Aynı zamanda, kadın meseleleri ile ilgili

bilinç yükseltme amacıyla bazı organizasyonlar düzenlenmiştir. Bunlar arasında İstanbul Blues Derneği'nin, Kadın Cinayetlerini Durduracağız Platform'unun düzenlediği konserler yer almaktadır. Bu konserlere birçok kadın müzisyen ve müzik gruplarının destek verdiği, ve bazı organizasyonlarda satılan biletlerden elde edilen gelirin şiddet mağduru kadınları ve ailelerini desteklemek adına kullanıldığı görülmektedir.

Bu bölümde kadın müzisyenlerin deneyimlerini araştırmak adına yapılan mülakatlarda elde edilen deneyimlere dair veriler sekiz kategori altında toplanmıştır. Kadın olarak var olma, erkek egemenliği, cinsel objeleştirme, cinsiyet rolleri, kadın temsili, grup üyeleri ve sahne alanları hakkında seçici olma, idari ilişkileri yönetme, stage dive ve mosh pit bu kategorileri oluşturmaktadır. Bu bölümde, kadınların deneyimlerinden elde edilen çıktılar, çalışmanın temel sorgusu olan kadın deneyimlerinin alternatif rock alanında nasıl oluştuğu sorgusuna cevap vermesi amaçlanmıştır.

Görüşmeciler, müziğe bir iletişim biçimi olarak yaklaşmaktadırlar. Bu nedenle, toplumsal cinsiyet meseleleri ile ilgili, başka insanları ve kitleleri etkileyebilme gibi özel bir gücü olan müzisyenlerin, bu gücünü bilinç yükseltme amacıyla kullanmalarının faydalı olacağı görüşü hakimdir. Görüşmecilerin %60'ı kendi deneyimlerini şarkı sözlerinde, röportajlarında, sosyal medya sayfalarında ve sahnedeki aktivizm pratiklerinde paylaştıklarını ifade etmiştir. %20'si henüz buna fırsat bulamadıklarını, albüm kayıtlarının olmadığını fakat diğer kişisel mecralarda paylaşmayı tercih ettiklerini söylemiştir. %20'si ise, yaptıkları müzik türünün sosyal deneyim paylaşımlarına uygun olmadığını fakat kişisel olarak deneyimlerini paylaştıklarını ifade etmiştir. Rock alanında cinsiyet eşitsizliği olması nedeniyle, kadın olarak var olma deneyiminin diğer cinsiyet deneyimlerinden farklı olduğu gözlemlenmiştir. Kadınların alanda ötekileştirildiği, çoğu zaman da ciddi anlamda negatif eleştirilere maruz kaldığı gözlemlenmiştir. Ayrıca kadınlar arasında da ses ve enstrüman sanatçısı olma noktasında farklılıklar olduğu, toplumun ses sanatçısı olan kadınlara daha alışkın olduğu fakat enstrüman sanatçısı kadınlara daha negatif yaklaştığı bilgisine erişilmiştir. Görüşmeciler ses sanatçılarının enstrüman sanatçılara göre daha az negatif eleştirilere maruz kaldığını ifade etse de, ses

sanatçıları için de kadın ve erkekler arasında cinsiyet temelli ayrımcılığın devam ettiğini ifade etmişlerdir.

Kadınların toplumca erkeklere atfedilen alanlarda faaliyet göstermesinin toplumca gariipsenmesi durumu mülakatlar sonucu, kadınların bu alanda sayıca az olması gerçeği ile ilişkilendirilmiştir. Alandaki erkek egemenliğinin, müzisyen kadınların sayısının artması ile azalacağı görüşü hakimdir. Kadınların yeteneklerinin erkeklere göre çok daha yoğun bir şekilde sorgulanması, aşağı görülmesi, kadınların müzik alanında müzisyen kimliklerindense cinsel kimlikleri üzerinden değerlendirilmesi gibi durumlar alandaki erkek egemenliğini gösteren bazı örnekler arasında bulunmaktadır. Hatta, kadına yönelik şiddet gibi toplumdaki ataerkil kodların da müziğe yansıdığı, bazı rock alt türlerinde bu temanın açıkça işlendiği ve cinsiyetçi ve şiddet yanlı söylemlerin normalleştirildiği ve yeniden üretildiği görülmektedir.

Cinsiyet temelli ayrımcılığın bir diğer kısmını ise cinsel objeleştirme oluşturmaktadır. Alandaki müzisyen kadınların cinsel kimlikleri ön plana çıkarken, müzisyen kimliklerinin arka planda kaldığı gözlemlenmiştir. Bazı durumlarda, stratejik olarak diğer müzisyenlerin kadınlara yaklaşımı, kadınların alanda daha çok dikkat çekmesi gibi olası durumlar nedeniyle faydacı bir tutum örneği göstermektedir. Bu kişilerin kadınların müzisyen kimlikleri yerine cinsel kimlikleriyle ilgilenmeleri, bu nedenle beraber çalışmak istemeleri, beraber çalışmalarını sonucu gruplarının daha çok ilgi çekmesi gibi durumları amaçlamaları cinsiyet temelinde ciddi bir ayrımcılık örneği oluşturmakla beraber aynı zamanda cinsel objeleştirme örneği de oluşturmaktadır. Bu tutumlardan rahatsız olan kadın müzisyenler, bu gibi ataerkil pratiklerle başa çıkabilmek adına temel olarak iki yöntem geliştirmiştir. İlk yöntem olarak, müzisyen kimliklerine daha çok dikkat çekebilmek adına, dikkat çekmeyen/kadınsı olmayan kıyafetler tercih ettiklerini ifade etmişlerdir. İkinci yöntem olarak ise ataerkil tutum benimseyen seyirci grubuna karşı meydan okumak adına daha kadınsı kıyafetler ve tutumları tercih ettiklerini ifade etmişlerdir. İki yöntem de ataerki ile baş etme yöntemi niteliği taşımaktadır.

Görüşmeciler, daha önce yaşadıkları negatif deneyimlerden dolayı artık çalışma arkadaşları ve konserlerini düzenledikleri konser mekanları ile ilgili çok daha seçici davrandıklarını ifade etmiştir. Toplumda sosyal olarak oluşturulmuş olan cinsiyet

rolleri baskısının rock alanında da hissedildiğini ifade eden kadınlar, bu baskıyı ve cinsiyet rollerini üreten kişiler ve kurumlarla çalışmayı tercih etmediklerini ifade etmiştir.

İdari ilişkileri yürütme anlamında hem profesyonel hem de amatör kadın müzisyenlerin eşitsiz uygulamalar deneyimlediği fakat bu oranın amatör seviyede daha yoğun gerçekleştiği gözlemlenmiştir. Kadınların saygı görebilmek için kendilerini kanıtlama anlamında yoğun çaba harcamak durumunda kaldıkları öğrenilmiştir.

Stage dive ve mosh pit alanlarında ise; mosh pit pratiğinde, görece daha eşit bir ortam olduğu ve görüşmecilerin genellikle bu ortamı çekinceleri olmadan deneyimledikleri, stage dive pratiğinde ise eşit bir ortam olmadığı, cinsel taciz gibi durumların yaşanabildiği ve kadınların bu durumdan çekindiği, cinsel taciz yaşanması halinde kadınların çevrelerinde destek bulamayacaklarından endişe ettikleri gözlemlenmiştir. Bu nedenle mosh pit kadınlar tarafından genellikle tercih edilebilir bir ortamken, stage dive'ın tercih edilmediği gözlemlenmiştir.

Cinsiyet eşitliğinin olmadığı gözlemlenen rock alanında, kadın müzisyenlerin temsil noktasında cinsiyetçi uygulamalarla karşılaştığı gözlemlenmiştir. Alandaki kadın müzisyenlerin, rock alt türleri içinde farklı konumlarda ve tarzlarda yer almalarına rağmen tek bir janr altında 'kadın grubu/kız grubu' gibi ifadelerle toplanması cinsiyetçi bir uygulama ve ötekileştirme örneği oluşturmaktadır. 'kadın vokal/kadın davulcu vb.' gibi sıkça karşılaşılan ifadeler ise, bu alanların aslında toplumca erkeklere ait görüldüğü ve farklı olan bu durumu nitelemek için ifadelerin başına 'kadın' kelimesinin eklendiğine işaret etmektedir. Sosyal çevrelerde ise, kadın müzisyenler müzisyen kimlikleri ile temsil edilmek yerine, çevrelerindeki erkekler, özellikle de diğer müzisyen erkekler üzerinden; onların eşi, sevgilisi, hayranı vb. şeklinde temsil edilme durumlarından rahatsız olduklarını ifade etmiştir.

Görüşmelerden de elde edilen çıktılar ile birlikte, alandaki feminist ilerleme üç başlık altında incelenmiştir: bilinç yükseltme, dayanışma ve politika. Rock alanındaki feminist ilerlemenin ilk adımı bilinç yükseltmenin gerçekleşebilmesi için efektif deneyim paylaşımının olması gerekmektedir. Deneyim paylaşma oranının yıldan yıla arttığı ve feminist bir bilinç oluştuğu, kadın müzisyenlerin kadın hakları ve eşitlik

savunucusu oldukları gözlemlenmiştir. Fakat alan içindeki kadın müzisyenler arasında gözlemlenen iletişim eksikliği ve toplumsal cinsiyet tartışmalarının nadir gerçekleşmesi nedeniyle bu bilincin kolektif bir bilinç olmaktan ziyade daha çok bireysel bir bilinç olabileceği görülmektedir. Kolektif bilinç ve iletişim anlamında yaşanan bu eksiklik, dayanışma oluşturma da önünde bir engel oluşturmaktadır. Görüşmeciler yakın çevrelerindeki grup arkadaşlarına ve onları rol model alan hayranlarına destek olsalar da bu dayanışmanın daha büyük çaplı gerçekleşmediği gözlemlenmiştir. Burada temel nokta, kadın müzisyenler direkt olarak iletişimde olmadıkları diğer müzisyenlerin deneyimlerinden haberdar olmamaktadır. Bu nedenle, her ne kadar kadınlar birbirleri ile dayanışma içinde olma konusunda istekli olsalar da, güçlü bir dayanışma oluşumu gözlemlenmemiştir. Feminist ilerleme adımları incelendiğinde, politika üretiminin bilinç yükseltme ve dayanışmaya göre daha zayıf olduğu gözlemlenmiştir. Bazı görüşmecilerin politika üretimi hakkında düşünürken dahi, Türkiye’de çalışmalarının sansüre uğrayacağından endişelendikleri gözlemlenmiştir. Türkiye’de politika ayağını 8 Mart kutlamaları oluşturmaktadır. Ayrıca görüşmecilerin, başka kadınların müzik alanına girerken kendilerini örnek alabilmeleri için rol model oluşturma pratiklerini, alanda kadın hakların iyileştirilmesi adına bir politika olarak uyguladıkları görülmüştür.

Sonuç olarak, teorik olarak Feminist Duruş Kuramı’nın ilkeleriyle birlikte alternatif rock alanındaki veriler incelendiğinde, alandaki kadın deneyimlerinin önemi vurgulanmaktadır. Kadınların spesifik pozisyonlarından direkt olarak aktardıkları deneyimler, kendi hayatları ve yaşadıkları tecrübelerle ilgili doğru ve saptırılmamış bilgiler sunmaktadır. Kadınların konumlanmış pozisyonlarından üretilen bilgiler, doğruyu yansıtmaktadır. Toplum ve alan içindeki sosyal konumlar, deneyimlerini direkt olarak etkilemekte ve araştırmacı ve okuyuculara alandaki cinsiyet ilişkilerine dair kanıtlar sunmaktadır.

Alternatif rock alanında kadın deneyimlerinden elde edilen bu bilgiler, alandaki kadınların deneyimlerinin eksikliğini doldurmayı, kadınlarla ilgili doğru bilgileri saptırmadan aktarmayı amaçlamıştır. Bu araştırma metodolojik olarak kadınlarla yapılan görüşmeler çerçevesinde değerlendirildiğinde, alternatif rock alanının diğer müzik türlerine göre feminist bilgi üretimine ve feminist pratiklerin yürütülmesine daha elverişli bir alan olduğu saptanmıştır. Bu alanda kadın deneyimlerinden üretilen

dođru bilgiler, hem alandaki müzisyenlerin hayatlarını hem de bunun topluma bir yansıması olarak toplumdaki kadınların hayatlarını, toplumsal cinsiyet anlamında pozitif olarak etkileme ve dönüştürme gücü bulundurmaktadır. Kadınların kendi alternatif pozisyonlarından üretecekleri ‘güçlü alternatif’ söylemler, bu deđişimi sağlayabilecek bir pratiktir. Elde edilen bilgilere göre, alanda toplumsal cinsiyet özelinde bilgi, dayanışma ve politika üretimiyle ilgili pratiklerin gerçekleşmediđi durumda feminist ilerlemenin oldukça zayıf kalacağı görülmüştür. Alanda var olmaya devam etmek, başka kadınlara rol model oluşturmak, 8 Mart etkinliklerinde dayanışmayı pekiştirmek güçlü pratikler olsa da, alandaki güçlü ataerkiyi dönüştürme noktasında yetersiz kalmaktadır. Bu noktada ‘güçlü alternatif’ söylemlerin üretimi ve kadın deneyimlerin paylaşımı ile birlikte daha güçlü bir feminist ilerleme sağlanabilecektir.

Literatür araştırması özelinde, Türk rock alanında kadınlara dair yeterince çeşitli bilgi kaynađı bulanamaması; mülakat araştırması özelinde ise, görüşmecilerin Türkiye şartlarında söylemlerini oluştururken özgür hissetmediklerinin gözlemlenmesi çalışmanın kısıtlılıklarını oluşturmuştur.

Bu çalışmada üretilen ‘güçlü alternatiflik’ kavramından faydalanılarak, analiz birimlerinin konumlarından üretilen güçlü söylem ve aktivist pratiklerin, toplumsal ilerleme/dönüşüme olan katkılarının incelenmesinin faydalı olabileceđi düşünülerek bu kavramın kullanımı, ilerdeki çalışmalara öneri olarak sunulmaktadır.

## APPENDIX D: THESIS PERMISSION FORM / TEZ İZİN FORMU

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**Bölümü / Department** : GENDER AND WOMEN STUDIES

### TEZİN ADI / TITLE OF THE THESIS (İngilizce / English) :

ANALYSIS OF ALTERNATIVE ROCK SCENE THROUGH FEMINIST STANDPOINT

**TEZİN TÜRÜ / DEGREE:** **Yüksek Lisans / Master**  **Doktora / PhD**

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