

Voices Against Misogyny in Turkey: The Case of a Successful Online Collective Action Against a Sexist Commercial

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This contribution examines a case of collective action in Turkey against a sexist advertisement. Protests unfolded exclusively through social media and resulted in more than 20,000 protestors signing a petition against the ad. In this study, we examine protest motivations behind the case and study the degree with which these motivations are explained by (1) online/offline action practices, and (2) three social-psychological variables (social identity, perceived efficacy, and just-world beliefs). Survey data from 353 participants were analyzed by means of hierarchical linear regression. Results indicated that protestors were mobilized by their identification with women's rights defenders, their perceptions of collective efficacy and both offline and online action practices. In addition, just-world beliefs were negatively associated with collective action. Our findings confirm and expand recent findings of the relevance of social-psychological predictors for collective action in the online sphere. At the same time, the case points to the facilitating power of social media toward change in Turkey's current authoritarian climate.

Keywords: sexism, SIMCA, collective efficacy, Turkey, sexist ad, Doğadan, online collective action, just-world beliefs

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Collective action constitutes one form of response to sexist advertising, as exemplified in various recent cases such as the Doğadan protests¹ in Turkey and the Doritos protests² in the U.S. These cases of digitally enabled collective action have been effective tools for increasing women's awareness of gender inequality and promoting social change against sexism. At the same time, little of collective action research has been connected with sexism in particular. One possible reason for this may be that protests against sexism are, surprisingly, relatively rare (see also Becker & Wright, 2011), even in the face of widespread gender inequality. Identifying the factors that trigger and prevent protests against sexism, therefore, is crucial for understanding the barriers to and facilitators of promoting social change in this context. In the current research, we draw on social-psychological factors in an attempt to gain insight into what mobilizes protestors to engage in digitally enabled collective action against sexism.

For some time in Western scholarship, the impact of various types of collective action (e.g., offline on the street, online on social media) have sparked up a controversial debate in the literature (Boulianne, 2009, 2018)—with some arguing that online action is mere “slacker action” with little consequence in the real world (Sormanen & Dutton, 2015), and others arguing that online action can propel individuals toward sociopolitical change (Quintelier & Vissers, 2008). Over time, scholarship has made it clear that online and offline forms of political engagement are intertwined and inseparable today, forming a “hybrid” type of engagement in the quest for social justice and rendering slacktivism discussions obsolete (Milošević-Đorđević & Žeželj, 2017, p. 113; see also Gibson & Cantijoch, 2013; Valenzuela, 2013). Scholarship has thus moved from testing the mere existence of an effect of online action on collective protest to studying the mechanisms that unfold between the two.

In the context of sexist advertising, identifying with other women and recognizing the efficacy of collective action were identified as key reasons that lead individuals to react collectively (e.g., Radke, Hornsey, & Barlow, 2016). Similarly, the Social Identity Model of Collective Action (SIMCA; van Zomeren, 2016; van Zomeren, Postmes, & Spears, 2008) has put forward some related forces to explain collective mobilization: perceived injustice, perceived efficacy, and social identity. According to the model, individuals are likely to fight for social justice if they perceive some form of injustice in their social world, identify strongly with a collective that represents change, and perceive their own efficacy in making this change happen. The model has received considerable empirical support, particularly in the context of democratic societies. However, its application to authoritarian contexts, where taking to the streets constitutes a larger risk, has been less frequent so far. It has received considerable empirical support, particularly in the context of social movements involving actual protest on the streets (overview in van Zomeren et al., 2008). Recent research has shown how newer forms of digitally enabled collective action on the Internet are equally catalyzed by the three predictors identified in the SIMCA (Alberici & Milesi, 2013; Jost et al., 2018; Odağ, Uluğ, & Solak, 2016).

Studies on the impact of social-psychological variables linking social media use and protest engagement have been rare so far (Hsiao, 2018). The variables used in the few available studies have been

¹ Please see <https://www.birgun.net/haber/dogadan-cay-in-klise-yuklu-kadinlar-ne-ister-reklami-kadinlardan-gelen-tepkiler-uzerine-cekildi-78147>

² Please see <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/women/life/doritos-lady-friendly-crisps-prove-crunch-time-sexist-marketing/>

fairly diverse, including social support, grievances, anger, social identity, and individual and collective efficacy—with some of these reflecting the SIMCA and others expanding the model (see Hsiao, 2018, for an overview; further research examples can be found in Hsiao & Yang, 2018; Valenzuela, Correa, & Gil de Zúñiga, 2018). Despite the increasing interest in the effects of social-psychological variables on collective action, however, our understanding of these effects has remained insufficient and largely confined to Western democratic contexts (such as Germany, the Netherlands, and the U.S.; see Hsiao, 2018, for an overview of this research).

The current study aims to add a non-Western case to the literature, demonstrating exactly how online and offline action relate to protest participation, and aiming to replicate Western findings in a non-Western, authoritarian context. More specifically, we examine the social psychology behind a case of digitally enabled collective action against a sexist ad in Turkey. We argue, here that, how people respond to sexism depends largely on (1) a combination of individuals' online and offline collective action practices, and (2) social-psychological predictors such as social identity, perceived efficacy, and global perceived injustice (of which the former two are conceptualized in line with the SIMCA, and the latter is conceptualized as a global attitude expanding the SIMCA). We analyze the relative importance of these factors for intentions to protest again in the future, constituting a common outcome variable in collective action research (van Zomeren, Leach, & Spears, 2010). More specifically, we argue that online and offline collective action practices can relate to protest engagement in an authoritarian context, especially through social-psychological factors such as social identity, perceived efficacy, and global perceived injustice. We examine this claim specifically among protestors against sexism in Turkey in the context of the Doğadan protests.

The Political Climate in Turkey

Turkey has experienced many important social and political changes in the past five years. Among those, the 2013 Gezi Park protests constituted one of the strongest and largest waves of protest in Turkey's history. Most importantly, nearly half of those occupying the park were women (Acar & Uluğ, 2016; Uluğ & Acar, 2018). The protests were, therefore, crucial not only for activists in general but especially for women who had, up to that point, not been active on the street before (Canlı & Umul, 2015). Unfortunately, both domestic and international developments worsened the political atmosphere in Turkey in the post-Gezi period and made it difficult to protest in the country. In 2016, an attempted coup further exacerbated the already unstable political landscape. Following the coup attempt, a state of emergency was declared. Even though the Turkish government has ended the nationwide state of emergency, any opposition protest is still regarded as a threat to the government, and the police have used disproportionate force against protestors (Gürsoy, 2017).

The Doğadan Protests

In April 2015, the tea brand Doğadan released the movie-clip advertisement³ "What do women want?" In the ad, a male voice is asking the question "what do women want," answering himself hastily by means of a long list of stereotypically female attributes (translated by the authors of the current article):

³ Please see <https://www.izlesene.com/video/kadinlar-ne-ister-dogadan-hemen-kaldirilan-reklam/8801674>

She wants love like in the movies, high-heel shoes with heels unbroken, an ideal body, pastries without gaining weight; she wants to go on a diet, but can't; she wishes that cellulite becomes fashionable; she doesn't want anyone to know her age after 20; she wants shoes, bags, she wants everything; wants the perfect man; she likes it if her man buys her a bag; she wants sports clothes, sports shoes, an empty parking space, an automobile that parks itself; she wants to be healthy, well-groomed, beautiful, and attractive; she wants chocolate, flowers, and, again, shoes; she wants green tea, she wants it with a soft taste. . . . Oh, now we can take a breath. Because this is what we already have: Doğadan soft taste green tea.

As can be easily seen, women are portrayed in the ad as consumerist, unsatisfiable, discontent complainers in their search for ideals of beauty. In addition, women are also presented as superficial, domestic, and dependent. These descriptions highlight the sexist content of the ad.

Despite its inconspicuous mission to advertise green tea, the ad sparked outrage in Turkey. The starting point was an online petition, started by the first author on Change.org on April 30, 2015, highlighting the sexist nature of the ad and asking both Doğadan as well as its advertising agency (Plasenta) to remove the ad. In only a couple of days, exactly 21,563 people, both women and men, signed the online petition against the sexist ad⁴—with a convincing impact in the real world: The protests led to a halt on the advertisement as well as a public apology by Doğadan⁵ and its advertising agency⁶—a surprising result in an authoritarian context under the leadership of a man who has become renowned for his misogynist views (Özcan, 2018).

Online Collective Action, Offline Collective Action, and Facilitatory Variables

In public discourse, the Internet has come under severe criticism for alienating its users from political and civic action (Putnam, 1995, 2000). The central argument of critics is that media users surf the Internet predominantly for pleasure and entertainment, rather than using their time more wisely for political or civic activity. Media users are thus distracted by the myriad of opportunities on the Internet as well as sidetracked from engaging in civic life.

In a similar vein, political or civic action on the Internet has raised concerns that it represents "slacker action" (i.e., action that satisfies a media users' need to become engaged with socio-political concerns, but has little consequence in the real world—other than heightening the user's self-esteem; Hsiao & Yang, 2018; Morozov, 2009; Schumann, 2015). Put differently, Internet actions such as signing online petitions, liking political posts, using a hashtag as part of a political discussion, have been considered to be nothing but easy, low-risk, and noncommittal ways of feeling good about oneself, though with little socio-political impact (Harlow & Guo, 2014; Hsiao & Yang, 2018; Lee & Hsieh, 2013; Sormanen & Dutton, 2015).

⁴ See <https://www.change.org/p/dogadan-cay-kad%C4%B1nlar-ne-ister-adi%C4%B1-cinsiyet%C3%A7i-reklam%C4%B1n%C4%B1z-i%C3%A7in-%C3%B6z%C3%BCr-dileyin>

⁵ See https://twitter.com/Dogadan_Cay/status/593018497564835840

⁶ See <https://twitter.com/plasentaca/status/593434479135428609>

In contrast to high-risk and committed offline political actions, arguably the “gold standard” of political engagement, online political actions have been met with great concern.

The academic discourse on political and civic action on the Internet is much less consistent, however, with some studies providing evidence for the slacktivism argument (e.g., Kristofferson, White, & Peloza, 2014; Sormanen & Dutton, 2015) and other studies showing that online political and civic action can, in fact, have very useful ramifications for change in the real world (Hsiao, 2018; Jost et al., 2018; Milošević-Dorđević & Žeželj, 2017; Quintelier & Vissers, 2008; Valenzuela et al., 2018). A recent study by Milošević-Dorđević and Žeželj (2017), based on a large probability sample from southeast Europe, for example, shows that online and offline activism are not independent of each other but form a larger construct of “hybrid activism” combined (p. 113). Additionally, in a meta-analysis of 38 studies concerning the relationship between Internet use and political engagement in the U.S., Boulianne (2009) finds mostly positive effects and little evidence for the critical arguments surrounding Internet action discussed above (see also Boulianne, 2018).

Arguments concerning the facilitating power of the Internet for political engagement and mobilization are based, in part, on the Internet’s affordances to create networks of politically predisposed individuals that want to speak out for a common cause (DiMaggio, Hargittai, Celeste, & Shafer, 2004; Valenzuela, 2013; Valenzuela, Kim, & Gil de Zúñiga, 2011). According to this point of view, the Internet mobilizes especially individuals that are already politically interested. On the other hand, recent examples of political uses of the Internet in non-Western, authoritarian contexts, such as Egypt and Tunisia, have demonstrated the Internet’s potential to motivate a broader spectrum of citizens, even hitherto non-politically-active ones, in their quest for change (Howard, 2010; Jost et al., 2018; McGarty, Thomas, Lala, Smith, & Bliuc, 2014; Tufekci & Wilson, 2012). Studies on the heightened role of the Internet in the Arab Spring (McGarty et al., 2014), the Egyptian uprising (Tufekci & Wilson, 2012), or the Gezi Park protests (Baysu & Phalet, 2017; Bilgiç & Kafkaslı, 2013; Odağ et al., 2016) have clearly underlined the facilitating potential of the Internet in mobilizing copious amounts of individuals for protest. Especially, social media’s potential for coordinating protest action and informing as well as connecting like-minded individuals quickly have been shown to be highly effective in this context (Hsiao, 2018; Jost et al., 2018; Valenzuela et al., 2011; see the term “connective action” in Bennett & Segerberg, 2012). In addition, the fact that social media cannot easily be curbed by autocratic media censorship renders them a highly influential means in authoritarian contexts (Odağ et al., 2016). For example, the Gezi protests in Turkey were organized predominantly by means of social media as mainstream media were under the control of the government. Protestors used Twitter and Facebook as main platforms for disseminating reliable information about actions, circumventing government media censorship (see Tufekci & Wilson, 2012, for a similar type of usage in the Egyptian uprising). A representative survey of Gezi protestors indicated the important role of online media in protests: Approximately 70% of survey participants heard about the protests through social media for the first time, and 80% used social media during the protests (KONDA, 2014). In addition, the Gezi Park protests caused a significant rise in Twitter account numbers: On May 29, 2013, a total of 1,819,403 users were registered on Twitter in Turkey; on June 10, 2013, this number had skyrocketed to 9,548,503 (Kuzuloğlu, 2013).

Individuals distinguish among types of collective action based on the costs involved (see Jost et al., 2018, for an overview of this perspective). Signing a petition is traditionally seen as less costly in terms of time, effort, wealth, and difficulty than taking to the streets—with the former type of practice representing

an example of “soft” collective action and the latter an example of “hard” collective action (see Brunsting & Postmes, 2002; Shi, Hao, Saeri, & Cui, 2015). Perceived differences among types of collective action practices based on costs might dissolve in authoritarian political contexts, however, where any type of protest might have a high material, social or physical costs (see Jost et al., 2018, for a similar argument; see the term “commitment” related to subjective costs in Hsiao & Yang, 2018). Recent research shows that expressions of collective action on social media are in danger of being prosecuted, especially “in countries where surveillance is widely employed to monitor the behavior of citizens” (Hsiao & Yang, 2018, p. 4). Confirming this, statistics show how costly just the sharing of contents on social media can be in Turkey: In 2017, the Turkish government investigated more than 39,000 social media users. More than 3,000 social media users were detained, and more than 1,000 arrested by Turkish courts (Stockholm Center for Freedom, 2017)—leaving little doubt as to how risky and costly it is to participate in online protests in Turkey.

More recently, scholars have become interested in examining the facilitative conditions under which online political activity may lead to social change in real life. Access to the Internet (Sylvester & McGlynn, 2010), interest in politics (Boulianne, 2009), young age (Quintelier & Vissers, 2008), liberal political preferences (Best & Krueger, 2005), Internet skills (Best & Krueger, 2005), generalized trust (Best & Krueger, 2006), opinion expression and activism (Valenzuela, 2013), and low-system justification tendencies (Jost, Becker, Osborne, & Badaan, 2017) have been identified as important conditions of facilitation on the side of users. The type of online activity or offering (Boulianne, 2011; Cantijoch, Cutts, & Gibson, 2016; Gil de Zúñiga, Puig-i-Abril, & Rojas, 2009), accessibility/availability of political information online (Kenski & Stroud, 2006; McDonald, 2008), and strong-/weak-tie communication affordances (Valenzuela et al., 2018) were put forward as facilitatory conditions on the side of the medium. Only rarely have social-psychological factors been discussed as preconditions for a positive impact of Internet use on political and civic engagement (Jost et al., 2018; Odağ et al., 2016; see Hsiao, 2018, for an overview). This is even though factors such as subjective grievances, social identity, individual and group efficacy, and social support (in terms of ties to supportive others) have received consistent support in the literature on traditional collective action, especially in democratic countries (Hsiao, 2018; van Stekelenburg & Klandermans, 2013; van Zomeren et al., 2008).

Social-Psychological Predictors of Collective Action and Beliefs in a Just World

Empirical studies on the predictors of political engagement and collective action have shown that actors are likely to become mobilized under three social-psychological conditions systematized in the SIMCA (van Zomeren et al., 2008): (1) they perceive some form of sociopolitical injustice (perceived injustice), (2) identify with a collective that stands for change (social identity), and (3) regard this collective as efficient in bringing change about (perceived efficacy). Put differently, individuals are likely to engage in civic and political action as a response to injustice to the extent that they can rely on their memberships in like-minded groups of individuals representing change (see Bliuc, McGarty, Reynolds, & Muntele, 2007, for a discussion on opinion-based groups), and to the extent that they consider these groups to be effective in goal achievement. These conditions of mobilization have received extant support in the context of traditional social movements facilitated, mostly, without Internet media (Brandstätter & Opp, 2014; Drury & Reicher, 2005; see van Zomeren et al., 2008, for a review).

At the same time, research on whether the three conditions hold in the context of digitally enabled collective action only recently has started to proliferate. For example, Hsiao (2018; see also Hsiao & Yang, 2018) examined the psychological incentives of protest participation evolving from social media use. In the context of a large student protest in Taiwan, the author could show that social media use intensified supportive networks, anger, efficacy, and identification (to use the author's own terms), constituting the psychological catalysts of the students' protest engagement. Odağ et al. (2016) investigated the impact of the said SIMCA factors (perceived injustice, social identity, and perceived efficacy) in the context of the Gezi protests in Turkey (see Tucker et al., 2016, for an extended discussion of the case). The authors demonstrated that the effects of online and offline protest activities on continued protest intentions despite heavy police violence were mediated through the three SIMCA variables. In a larger scale study quantitatively content analyzing Occupy Wall Street tweets, Jost et al. (2018) highlighted the dominant role of social-psychological motivations such as social identification with the Occupy movement, expressions of concerns about justice, self-interest, and group efficacy for protest participation. These and other examples (Alberici & Milesi, 2013) have confirmed the relevance of the three SIMCA predictors for digitally enabled collective action, despite their, at times, different terminology. Recent studies have underlined especially the role of social identity in this context (e.g., Alberici & Milesi, 2016; Bäck, Bäck, & Knäpfton, 2015; Pendry & Salvatore, 2015; Smith, Gavin, & Sharp, 2015; Subasic, Reynolds, & Turner, 2008; van Stekelenburg & Klandermans, 2013; Wiley, Srinivasan, Finke, Firnhaber, & Shilinsky, 2013). The relevance of perceived injustice and efficacy for digitally enabled collective action have been studied more rarely so far (for exceptions, see Alberici & Milesi, 2013; Hsiao & Yang, 2018; Jennings & Zeitner, 2003; Johnson & Kaye, 2003; Lee, 2006).

The current work ties in with existing attempts to examine the social-psychological mechanisms that connect offline/online activities with protest participation motivations. Two of the selected social-psychological variables in the current study draw on the SIMCA: social identity and perceived efficacy. Instead of perceived injustice (conceptualized in the SIMCA as an intergroup injustice specific to a particular event), however, we use global beliefs in a just world as a further social-psychological influence on collective action motivations. This broader attitude encompassing people's views of injustice in the world more generally reflects the tendency to believe that people get what they deserve and deserve what they get (Lerner, 1980). Belief in a just world has been studied most actively in the context of research on attitudes toward outgroups (e.g., attitudes toward poor, Furnham & Gunter, 1984; attitudes toward immigrants, Dalbert & Yamauchi, 1994), and there are only a few studies focusing on the relationship between belief in a just world and collective action. Previous research demonstrated that the belief in a just world is negatively related to collective action and sociopolitical participation (Beierlein, Werner, Preiser, & Wermuth, 2011; Hafer & Olson, 1993; Rubin & Peplau, 1973). Based on this work, we argue that people are more likely to engage in collective action to the extent that they do not see the world as a just place. The concept is allied with system-justifying beliefs as conceptualized in System Justification Theory (see Jost et al., 2017; Jost et al., 2018, for a discussion of this theory). We are using this concept as an extension of the SIMCA, thereby combining research on attitudes with research on political mobilization.

Taken together, the current study adds to the literature on digitally enabled collective action, by examining the impact of (1) online and offline action practices, and (2) the said social-psychological variables (i.e., social identity, perceived efficacy, and just-world beliefs) in a case of collective action against sexism

in Turkey, an authoritarian regime context. We argue further that the impact of offline and online action practices on mobilization unfolds especially through its interplay with social-psychological variables.

The Present Research

The current research examines the social psychology behind a case of digitally enabled collective action that ensued in Turkey as a reaction to an inconspicuous sexist advertisement by the tea brand Doğadan. More specifically, the present study analyzes protest motivations behind the case by looking at the influence of (1) online/offline action practices and (2) three social-psychological variables (social identity, perceived efficacy, and just-world beliefs). An online questionnaire was used to explore the role of these predictors in predicting intentions to protest expressions of sexism again in the future.

We hypothesized that both offline collective action and online collective action practices would predict intentions for future actions (Hypothesis 1) and did not expect relative weight differences among these predictors. In addition, with reference to the SIMCA, we hypothesized that future protest intentions would be predicted by social identity (here: women's rights defender identity) as well as perceived efficacy (here: perceived efficacy of women's rights defenders). We also predicted that precisely the rejection of just-world beliefs would lead to future protest intentions (Hypothesis 2). Finally, we hypothesized that the three social-psychological variables would predict collective action intentions, even when controlling for online/offline protest practices (Hypothesis 3). In other words, the most relevant hypothesis of the study was Hypothesis 3, underlining the relevance of the said social-psychological variables for political engagement.

Method

Participants and Procedure

A survey was carried out in December 2015 and January 2016. We contacted 21,563 petitioners via Change.org to distribute the questionnaire, and were able to collect data from 353 participants. In other words, all participants of the earlier petition were contacted through change.org retroactively. Seventy-five of the respondents self-identified as male, 274 self-identified as female, and four identified themselves as "other." Participants' ages ranged from 19 to 87 years, with a mean age of 37.61 years⁷ ($SD = 13.56$; $Median = 34$). Forty-six participants held a PhD, 85 a Master's, 197 a Bachelor's degree, 23 a high-school degree, one a secondary-school degree, and one a primary-school degree.

Measures

The following measures were responded to on 5-point Likert scales (1 = *strongly disagree*; 5 = *strongly agree*) in the Turkish language.

Online Collective Action Practices

⁷ As of 2019, the median age in Turkey is 32.

To assess online action practices, we used two items: "I like to express my societal opinion on the Internet" and "I like to participate in social and political discussions on social media" ($r = .82$).

Offline Collective Action Practices

We measured offline action practices with two items: "I like to express my opinions on the streets" and "I like to contribute to political discussions in the real world" ($r = .76$).

Women's Rights Defender Identity

To measure women's rights defender identity, which may be seen as an opinion-based group identity (Bliuc et al., 2007), four items were adapted from van Zomeren et al. (2010): "I see myself as a typical women's rights defender," "I feel strong ties with other women's rights defenders," "I identify myself with other women's rights defenders," and "I am happy to be a women's rights defender" ($\alpha = .87$).

Perceived Efficacy of Women's Rights Defenders

Four items were adapted from van Zomeren et al. (2010) and used to measure women's rights defender efficacy: "As women's rights defenders, we can fight sexism together," "As women's rights defenders, we can have a real impact on decisions to be taken," "As women's rights defenders, we can protect/defend our own benefits vis-a-vis sexists," and "As women's rights defenders, we can stop advertisement campaigns such as the Doğadan ad" ($\alpha = .84$).

Just-World Beliefs

Six items were used to measure participants' beliefs in a just world (Dalbert, Montada, & Schmitt, 1987): These items were as follow: "Basically, the world is a just place," "By and large, people deserve what they get," "I am confident that justice always prevails over injustice," "I am convinced that in the long run, people will be compensated for injustices," "I firmly believe that injustices in all areas of life (e.g., professional, family, politic) are the exception rather than the rule," and "I think people try to be fair when making important decisions" ($\alpha = .84$).

Collective Action Intentions

In collective action literature, it is a common practice to use "intention to participate" or "willingness to engage in collective action" as dependent variables. These variables are often used as a proxy to understand to what extent social-psychological variables may predict people's future collective action intentions (see, e.g., Bäck et al., 2015; Odağ et al., 2016; Stewart, 2017; Tropp & Uluğ, 2019). Four items were adapted from van Zomeren et al. (2010) to the study context: "I will participate in future protests against advertisement campaigns such as Doğadan," "I will participate in other future protests in which we collectively raise our voices to stop similar advertisements," "I will act together with other women's rights defenders to stop similar advertisements," and "I will participate in any kind of collective protest to stop similar advertisements" ($\alpha = .89$).

Results

Table 1 presents descriptive statistics and correlations. A hierarchical regression analysis was carried out in SPSS to examine the degree to which (a) online and offline collective action practices and (b) social-psychological variables (identification with women's rights defender identity, perceived efficacy of women's rights defenders, and rejection of just-world beliefs) predicted future collective action intentions, controlling for gender. In this analysis, gender (1 = male, 2 = female) was entered in Step 1, followed by online and offline collective action variables in Step 2, and the three social-psychological variables were added in Step 3. The standardized and unstandardized coefficients of our analyses are presented in Table 2.

Results indicated that gender was a significant predictor of collective action intentions in Step 1, $F(1, 347) = 20.28, p < .001; R^2 = .06$. Specifically, women reported more willingness to participate in future collective action than men did ($\beta = .24, p < .001$). Online and offline collective action practices significantly predicted collective action intentions in Step 2, $F(3, 345) = 19.04, p < .001; R^2 = .14, \Delta R^2 = .09; \Delta F = 17.45, p < .001$, with both online collective action ($\beta = .18, p = .003$) and offline collective action ($\beta = .15, p = .011$) being associated with future collective action intentions (confirming Hypothesis 1). There was little difference between these weights. We should also note that gender ($\beta = .22, p < .001$) remained a significant predictor in Step 2.

With respect to the SIMCA predictors, women's rights defender identity ($\beta = .32, p < .001$), perceived women's rights defenders efficacy ($\beta = .26, p < .001$), and just-world beliefs ($\beta = -.10, p = .018$) were significant predictors of collective action intentions in Step 3, $F(6, 342) = 32.91, p < .001; R^2 = .37, \Delta R^2 = .22; \Delta F = 40.28, p < .001$ (confirming Hypothesis 2). In particular, the stronger the identification with women's rights defenders was, and the higher their efficacy was perceived, the higher were future collective action intentions. At the same time, a stronger endorsement of just-world beliefs negatively predicted future collective action intentions. In other words, the higher the rejection of just-world beliefs, the stronger were individuals inclined to protest again in the future. In addition, after entering the social-psychological variables in Step 3, the impacts of gender ($\beta = .08, p = .092$), online collective action practices ($\beta = .02, p = .727$), and offline collective action practices ($\beta = .09, p = .083$) were no longer significant (confirming Hypothesis 3).⁸

⁸ The analysis yielded the same pattern of results after controlling for age and education level. Specifically, we ran the same hierarchical regression analysis by entering age and education level, next to gender, in Step 1. The results indicated nonsignificant results for age ($\beta = .04, p = .447$) and education ($\beta = -.01, p = .882$) in Step 1. However, gender was a significant predictor of collective action intentions ($\beta = .26, p < .001$).

Table 1. Correlations and Descriptive Statistics.

Variables	<i>M (SD)</i>	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Education	4.42 (0.83)	.13*	.09	-.10	-.12*	-.07	-.07	-.04	.02
2. Age	37.66 (13.60)	-	-.28***	.02	-.07	.00	-.04	.20***	-.03
3. Gender (1 = <i>male</i> , 2 = <i>female</i>)	1.79 (0.41)		-	.01	.10	.20***	.27***	-.16**	.24***
4. Online collective action practices	3.69 (1.20)			-	.55***	.39***	.25***	-.09	.27***
5. Offline collective action practices	3.96 (1.00)				-	.34***	.20***	-.06	.28***
6. Identification with women's rights defender identity	4.23 (0.80)					-	.61***	-.08	.54***
7. Perceived efficacy	4.60 (0.57)						-	-.06	.50***
8. Just-world beliefs	2.21 (0.91)							-	-.17*
9. Collective action intentions	4.72 (0.54)								-

Note. *** $p < .001$. ** $p < .01$. * $p < .05$.

Table 2. Model of Summary of Regression Analysis.

	Collective action intentions									
	Unstandardized β	Standardized β	t	F	R^2	ΔR^2	ΔF	$df1$	$df2$	
Step 1				20.28***	.06	.06	20.28***	1	347	
Gender (1 = <i>male</i> , 2 = <i>female</i>)	.31***	.24***	4.50							
Step 2				19.04***	.14	.09	17.45***	2	345	
Gender	.29***	.22***	4.33							
Online collective action practices	.08**	.18**	3.01							
Offline collective action practices	.08*	.15*	2.56							
Step 3				32.91***	.37	.22	40.28***	3	342	
Gender	.10	.08	1.69							
Online collective action practices	.01	.02	.35							
Offline collective action practices	.05	.09	1.74							
Identification with women's rights defender identity	.22***	.32***	5.56							
Perceived efficacy	.24***	.26***	4.63							
Just-world beliefs	-.06*	-.10*	-2.38							

Note. *** $p < .001$. ** $p < .01$. * $p < .05$.

Discussion

In this study, we examined the social psychology behind a case of digitally enabled collective action in Turkey that ensued as an online response to an inconspicuous sexist advertisement by the tea brand Doğadan. More specifically, we analyzed protest motivations behind the case by (1) distinguishing between online and offline collective action practices, (2) making use of the SIMCA and two of its key social-psychological predictors: social identity (here: women's rights defender identity), perceived efficacy (here: perceived efficacy of women's rights defenders). We also expanded the literature by (3) including a social-psychological variable hitherto unexamined in the context of digitally enabled collective action: the rejection of just-world beliefs.

We hypothesized that much in contrast to previous doubts surrounding the impact of online actions on political engagement, both offline and online collective action practices would predict future collective action intentions (Hypothesis 1), especially in an authoritarian context where both types of actions are associated equally with risks and costs. Our first hypothesis was confirmed. As mentioned previously, earlier studies raise concerns about the influence of online political engagement in the virtual world on social injustice in the real world (e.g., Harlow & Guo, 2014; Kristofferson et al., 2014; Lee & Hsieh, 2013; Sormanen & Dutton, 2015). By contrast, more recent studies show that online political and civic action can, in fact, have very useful ramifications for change in the real world (Hsiao & Yang, 2018; Jost et al., 2018; Milošević-Đorđević & Žeželj, 2017; Quintelier & Vissers, 2008; Valenzuela, 2013). These newer research examples have shown that it would be misleading to claim that offline and online methods translate directly into costly versus less costly, committed versus noncommitted, ways of collective action (Hsiao & Yang, 2018). Rather than contrasting the impacts of offline and online collective engagement as absolute routes to protest efficiency, more recent research has set out to examine the conditions under which either means are effective (Hsiao & Yang, 2018)—in line with the central aim of the current article (see below). As with respect to differences in the effects of offline versus online methods of collective action, our results highlight that both represent effective means to keep individuals mobilized against sexism—with hardly any difference in the size of their weight. Online action thus turns out to be an equally relevant avenue toward political action here, predicting future collective action together with offline action and rendering the controversy surrounding the (lack of) impact of online action obsolete. To the very least with respect to the current case, the Doğadan protests, we agree with Milošević-Đorđević and Žeželj (2017) that collective action encompasses both online and offline actions that are not independent of each other but form a larger construct of "hybrid activism" combined (Milošević-Đorđević & Žeželj, 2017, p. 113). Surely, in any case of protest as well as any type of political regime, what matters is whether either the online or offline method is safe and effective in that context. That is, online methods that allow anonymous protest and the dissemination of dissent are likely to be very useful. Online methods that do not guarantee this may have the opposite effect. In the Doğadan case, petitioning on Change.org was considered an efficient means, perhaps, because of the inconspicuousness of the topic: a tea advert. This might be very different, however, in the context of a riskier topic related more closely to Erdoğan's misogynist politics (Özcan, 2018). Unfortunately, the amount of risk associated with the various activism practices (offline vs. online) was not assessed in the current study and should be considered in future research.

In our study, social-psychological variables such as social identity, perceived efficacy, and just-world beliefs especially constituted the key predictors of collective action intentions (van Zomeren et al., 2008). More specifically, we hypothesized that collective action intentions would be more likely to occur for those with a stronger women's rights defender identity and perceived efficacy, and those with relatively weak beliefs in a just world (Hypothesis 2). Again, our hypothesis was confirmed. Of the SIMCA variables, identification with women's rights defender identity proved to be the strongest predictor of collective action intentions, confirming other studies emphasizing the role of social identity in mobilization (Hsiao, 2018; Jost et al., 2018; Simon et al., 1998; van Zomeren et al., 2008). Additionally, our results highlight that the effects of perceived efficacy and rejection of just-world beliefs are equally important in motivating people to engage in collective action against sexist voices. Though previous studies had already yielded evidence for the relevance of group and individual efficacy in the context of digitally enabled collective action (Alberici & Milesi, 2013; Hsiao, 2018; Jost et al., 2018; Lee, 2006; Odağ et al., 2016), insights on the relevance of just-world beliefs contribute a new dimension to the literature. The results of the current study show that this global attitude to justice in the world constitutes a small, though not trivial, influence on digitally enabled collective action, over and beyond social identity and efficacy. The study thus demonstrates that perceived injustice as conceptualized in the SIMCA as intergroup injustice needs to be complemented by a more ideological global belief in a just world. System Justification Theory (see Jost et al., 2017, for a discussion of this theory in the context of digitally enabled collective action) might come closest to what this global attitude represents: a social-psychological tendency "to defend, bolster, and justify the social, economic, and political systems on which they depend" (Jost et al., 2018, p. 95). According to Jost et al. (2017), most social-psychological models of collective action have so far neglected such ideological factors. Our study yields new evidence in this direction.

We found only a weak relationship between the rejection of just-world beliefs and collective action tendencies in the Doğadan case. Why might belief in a just world be a weak predictor? One possible explanation is that global just-world beliefs are low in our sample. Given that injustice is prevalent in the current political climate of Turkey, it is less likely for our study participants to believe in justice and exhibit a general trust in social and political institutions, in comparison with citizens of developed countries. Further research might help to understand the contextual conditions under which the rejection of just-world beliefs leads to system-justifying or system-maintaining collective actions (e.g., Jost et al., 2017).

Taken together, we argue that the practices through which individuals protest (online or offline) are effective only insofar as they relate to social-psychological factors such as social identity, perceived efficacy, and just-world beliefs. We obtained the predictive effects of the social-psychological variables even after controlling for online and offline collective action practices (confirming Hypothesis 3). In a nutshell, our study shows that social-psychological factors outlined in the SIMCA and beyond are key variables that, more than online and offline action practices on their own, predict change in Turkey's current authoritarian climate.

Limitations and Future Directions

Our study has a few limitations. First, our research is purely correlational and provides little insight into issues of causality. Future studies should investigate the relationships among the selected variables with more rigorous causal designs such as experiments or panel designs.

Second, our sample was not representative, and the current research is conducted on a sample of individuals in Change.org's database. This database is composed of individuals who have expressed at least some interest in movements for social change. Accordingly, our data may be able to tell us about the motivations of those already active in collective action, but not about individuals' motivations for getting involved in collective action in the first place, as we did not ask about their previous protest participation. Therefore, one can question whether our results replicate with a community sample, beyond the one we recruited through Change.org. Future studies should test our hypotheses with a less engaged community sample.

Another limitation is related to response rate. Even though we contacted all 21,563 petitioners of Doğadan via Change.org, we could retroactively collect data from only 353 petitioners. This low response rate might, perhaps, be related to the amount of e-mails members of Change.org typically receive through the platform automatically, reducing the amount of attention that members might pay to each, including our study invitation e-mail. One may also question sample characteristics. As mentioned earlier, 46 of 353 participants held a doctoral degree. Even though one's education may not be relevant for protest participation (Mercea, Karatas, & Bastos, 2018), future studies should test our hypotheses with a more representative sample.

Finally, our conclusions concerning the role of collective action practices and social-psychological variables for collective action within an authoritarian regime are currently limited to the specific case we investigated: the Doğadan case. Our findings should certainly be compared with other cases, including unsuccessful ones, cases that have taken place in other authoritarian contexts as well as democratic contexts. In other words, our findings have to be put to the test in comparative research designs.

Conclusion

Participation on social media has the potential to mobilize and translate into real-world change under special conditions: provided that individuals are highly identified with a collective, believe in this collective's efficacy in bringing change, and perceive little justice in the world. The type of engagement (i.e., offline or online practices) with social issues such as sexism is effective only to the extent that they bolster social-psychological variables. Previous studies had examined the impact of these variables on collective action, mostly in the democratic Western countries. We tested the impact of these variables in the context of an authoritarian regime exemplified by Turkey. We partly replicated existing studies (with respect to social identity and efficacy), partly added new insights (concerning just-world beliefs), though comparative studies are currently lacking. Taken together, our results highlight how social media can be a means of countering sexism and misogyny even in an authoritarian context, particularly through social-psychological mechanisms.

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