



Araştırma Makalesi / Research Article

Digital Activism and Lynch Culture: A Review on Animal Rights Within the Frame of Save Ralph*

Dijital Aktivizm ve Linç Kültürü: Save Ralph Örneği Çerçevesinde Hayvan Hakları Üzerine Bir İnceleme

Mustafa Eren Akpınar**

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Abstract

In the context of today's global structure, many changes and effects have gained a significant scope. In the light of this scope, many social awareness actions and models have emerged. Among these emerging models, the digitalisation of activism and the electronification of lynch culture have had the most significant impact. Especially in recent years, increasing awareness of animal rights all over the world has also been shaped within this scope. It would not be wrong to say that one of the biggest contributions to the increase in animal rights awareness all over the world is the Save Ralph short film. Cos in addition to the effect created by the Save Ralph short film, lynching culture is generally a negative situation thanks to both street and internet activism created by the activist society created by the digitalisation of activism, while lynching actions created through animal rights have gained a more positive and sanctioned perspective. For this reason, semiotic analysis was used to evaluate the Save Ralph example in the article produced from this thesis. In addition, 250 tweets posted on Twitter using the hashtags "#saveralph and/or #hayvanhakları" within a 22-day period between 29.03.2021 and 19.04.2021 were analysed by content analysis in 17 different categories.

Keywords: Digital Activism, Lynching Culture, Animal Rights, Save Ralph, Awareness Studies

Makale Bilgisi

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Özet

Günümüz global yapısı bağlamında pek çok değişim ve etki önemli bir kapsam kazanmıştır. Bu elde edilen kapsam ışığında da birçok toplumsal farkındalık eylemi modeli ortaya çıkmıştır. Bu ortaya çıkan modeller arasında ise aktivizmin dijitalleşmesi ve linç kültürünün elektronikleşmesi en önemli etkiyi yaratmıştır. Özellikle son yıllarda tüm dünyada artan hayvan hakları farkındalıkları da bu kapsam dahilinde şekillenmiştir. Hayvan hakları farkındalığının tüm dünyada artış göstermesine en büyük katkılardan birini ise Save Ralph kısa filminin yaptığı söylemek yanlış olmamaktadır. Çünkü, Save Ralph kısa filminin yarattığı etkinin yanı sıra aktivizmin dijital hale gelmesi ile oluşturulan aktivist toplumun yarattığı hem sokak hem de internet aktivizmi sayesinde linç kültürü de genelde olumsuz bir durum olmaksızın hayvan hakları üzerinden yaratılan linç eylemleri daha pozitif ve yaptırımsal bir perspektife kavuşmuştur. Bu nedenle de bu tezden üretilen makale çalışmasında Save Ralph örneği değerlendirilirken göstergebilimsel analiz kullanılmıştır. Bunun yanı sıra ise Twitter üzerinden 29.03.2021 ile 19.04.2021 tarihleri arasındaki 22 günlük süre içerisinde "#saveralph ve/veya #hayvanhakları" hashtaglerini kullanılarak atılan 250 tweet 17 farklı kategoride içerik analizi yapılarak incelenmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Dijital Aktivizm, Linç Kültürü, Hayvan Hakları, Save Ralph, Farkındalık Çalışmaları

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**Independent Researcher m.erenakpinar@gmail.com ORCID: 0000-0002-3917-3203

1. Introduction

From the perspective of today's changing structure, it is seen that many new generation activist movements have created an agenda for themselves. For why, when the extent of today's world is analysed from the top, it can be said that social actions, street or internet activism have a very important feature. Especially when the points examined within the scope of this study are considered, the digitalisation of activism movements and thus the great development of street activism as well as the digital world have a very valuable positioning in the current process.

As well as this, an overview of animal rights, which have had a great agenda in recent years both within the framework of national and international law and within the social structure, has also been given. Thanks to this overview, both the literature on animal rights has been reviewed and animal rights have been examined at the point of creating a great social awareness. Inasmuch as today, many regulations have been made in order to protect the lives and lives of all living things. Animal rights, on the other hand, have gained a conceptual quality that is regulated and tried to be defined within this comprehension.

For this reason, within the scope of the study, firstly, a literature review is conducted in terms of digital activism, lynching culture and then animal rights, and the first two sections of the study has been shaped in this way. In the last part of the study, the short film Save Ralph, which can be considered as one of the biggest awareness raising studies on animal rights in recent years, is analysed from a semiotic perspective. At the same time, 250 tweets with the hashtags of animal rights and Save Ralph and within the range determined within the scope of the study on Twitter were analysed and content analysis was conducted. In this way, the study has become a more inclusive study that uses both semiotic analysis from qualitative research methods and content analysis from quantitative research methods.

2. Definitions of Activism

Activism, which can be regarded as a relatively new term, is defined as the ability to act and make history (Cammaerts, 2007: 217), which emerged in the mid-70s, and according to its dictionary meaning, activism (Türk Dil Kurumu, 2011: 78), in other words, action, reaction. However, it should be underlined that this definition is not sufficient to fully explain activism. Expressing activism as a set of struggles for social change (Gürel & Nazlı, 2019: 188) or as efforts to create change in the behaviour of institutions or organisations through action strategies such as lobbying, advocacy, negotiation, protest, campaigning and awareness raising (Koffel, 2003: 118) more clearly conveys the structure expressed by the concept of activism. It is also possible to define activism as a new model of social protest (Juris, 2004: 343) that includes workers' marches and rallies, independent media and the articulation of economic justice, environmental, feminist, labour and international relations.

Similar to Gürel and Nazlı's definition, Turhan defines activism as all efforts to contribute to or oppose social transformation (Turhan, 2017: 27). At the same time, it is important to define the concept of activism as a reminder not only of the existence of the world but also of its shaping (Gitlin, 1980) in order to obtain a more in-depth structure. Nevertheless, it is not a correct approach to see activism as consisting of these definitions. Because, as Akarsu does, it is possible to define the concept of activism on a more philosophical ground. Akarsu explains activism as the effect, state of agency and personal world view that occurs through one's life and thought (Akarsu, 1975: 72). Within the content of this explanation, it is more accurate to define activism philosophically as a social reaction, effect and stance.

In the light of these definitions, it is necessary to evaluate the concept of activism as an action, a transformation, a voice and an opposition. Otherwise, any definition made independently of these parameters is actually incomplete and inadequate at some point. The main reason for this is that what is meant to be expressed and meant by the concept of activism does not have a depthless perspective that can be conveyed with a single definition. On the contrary, it has the characteristic of being a concept that needs to be looked at from a wide range of perspectives and that exists thanks to this wide spectrum it possesses.

3. An Overview of the Concept of Digital Activism

If it is necessary to look at the concept of digital activism in general terms, activism movements that are considered specific to the global world are expressed as digital activism (Gürel & Nazlı, 2019: 190). According to Yegen (2014: 88), digital activism is defined as "internet activism", which occurs when the internet creates a space for social activism. In addition, it is also possible to define the concept of digital activism as a set of actions taken in an organised or unorganised manner to create social or political awareness or change (Aksu, 2017: 85). For, with the digitalisation of the activism movement with developing technologies, new social movements (Okan, 2020: 251) have started to be encountered.

This activism concept, which is expressed as digital activism or internet activism, can be expressed as a new type of activism activities rising from the ground of traditional activism. According to Joyce's discourse, digital activism is conveyed as economic, political and social content (Joyce, 2010: 2) that attracts attention with its instrumental structure and progresses in the light of digital technologies. And also, digital activism should also be evaluated within the scope of raising awareness and being a voice in society. Inasmuch as activism is basically a common stance against a social event, it should be evaluated within the scope of action.

Through digital activism, each individual from all segments of society can easily publicise their own thoughts and ideas. Moreover, it is much faster than traditional activism for some individuals to formulate a plan on an existing problem through social media and to gather a community in the light of these plans. Besides, although digital activism movements cannot be carried out with traditional activism, it is also very important that traditional activism movements can be easily carried out through digital activism.

This clearly shows that the people gathered through digital platforms have the opportunity to make their voices heard through digital channels, as well as to carry out their actions in unity in traditional media with their united power in digital channels. In doing so, they are in a two-way interaction. In this way, they can find a place for themselves within the scope of both traditional activism and digital activism, make their voices heard, and easily realise their goals of agency and effectiveness within the framework of interaction. Nevertheless, as activism movements, which can be carried out in a more limited way with traditional activism, have a wider area thanks to digitalisation, the lynch culture, which is one of the main problems of social media, has become harsher and has started to cause psychological and spiritual harm rather than physical harm. For this reason, it is very important to examine what lynch culture is and its effects.

3. The Phenomenon of Lynching and the Concept of Culture

Lynching can be defined as the extrajudicial vilification or physical or psychological harm of more than one person for a behaviour that they consider a crime (Türk Dil Kurumu, 2011: 1588). Within the framework of this definition, it is also possible to express this concept, which is actually expressed as lynching, as individuals trying to humiliate or vilify other individuals within the scope of their own judgement values. However, it does not make sense to see the concept of lynching as only this. Since, lynching is not only a mass action but also a tool used by the society for the mass or community to punish someone (Düzgün and Özkan, 2017: 44).

In addition to this, in terms of the fact that lynching is a social movement, a social punishment method, the fact that the individuality of the individuals in the lynch mass is ignored and that they do not realise the wrongs they have done by hiding behind the fact that they are actually a part of that society, and that lynching is the opium of the individuals in the society should be mentioned. This is because lynching is defined by the National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People, or NAACP, as an act done in the name of serving traditions or customs (Project HAL: Historical American Lynching Data Collection Project, 2012 as quoted in Baki, 2013: 3). For this reason, lynching can be explained as a state of agency that occurs as a result of individuals believing that they are doing something for the right purpose. In this context, in fact, explaining lynching as a state of activism that is carried out with social support and that allows the individual to be included in the lynch mass and to shift the responsibility to the community facilitates a better understanding of the concept and the phenomenon.

The concept of culture is generally defined as "all material and immaterial values created in the process of historical and social development and the whole of the means used in creating and transmitting them to the next generations, showing the extent of man's dominance over his natural and social environment, heritage, culture" (Türk Dil Kurumu, 2011: 1558). When examined within this scope, it is possible to define lynch culture as a community of thought that comes together to put an event or person in a bad situation or to humiliate them. However, it is not correct to analyse lynch culture in such a shallow structure. Indeed, the concept of lynching has a history dating back to ancient times. The first examples of the concept of lynching were encountered with the violence of the Ku Klux Klan against black individuals after the American Civil War (Türk, 2017: 464) and became an agenda. Within the framework of this scope, lynch culture can be defined as patterns of violence and action (Bora, 2016: 9) that are massively accepted but not legally and legitimately evaluated.

Within this perspective, it is possible to define lynch culture as the creation of a unity of various mass perceptions without judgement and without question. At the same time, it would not be wrong to say that lynch culture actually emerges out of hatred, grudge and me-know-it-ism. It is necessary to say that all this perception of lynch culture is actually a movement of othering and bringing oneself to the forefront.

3.1. The Role of Lynching in Social Media and Its Evaluation Within the Scope of Symbolic Interaction Theory

In addition to the emergence stories of the concepts of lynching and lynch culture and their position in the cultural structure, another issue that needs to be considered is the reflections of the terms lynching and lynch culture on today's social life. Therefore, it should be underlined that in today's social structure, as a result of the digitalised world and changing scopes, the consciousness has changed its shape to a certain extent. For example, with the rise of social media and the increase in the number of users, the way lynching is practised has changed. In the light of these changes, with the anonymous structure of social media, anonymous people hiding behind the shadows of a group or community (Bora, 2016 as quoted in Türk, 2017: 464- 465) were able to easily participate in acts of condemnation and lynching that they deemed risk-free for themselves. One of the main reasons for this easy participation process can be explained as the fact that people who can access social media can present their grudges and hostility in an uncontrolled structure with the content they produce through their anonymous or fake accounts regardless of right or wrong (Algül and Akpınar, 2022: 296- 297).

If it is necessary to take a general look at the aims of lynching activism produced through social media, it will be necessary to get support from symbolic interaction theory at this point. For according to the symbolic interaction theory, people are compatible with the environment they live in both perceptually and intellectually and in fact tend to resemble their own small environment (Algül and Akpınar, 2022: 296). In this respect, within the scope of the symbolic interaction theory, which is based on Max Weber, it is necessary to say that the situations of people at the moments of events are effective in the formation of the person's thoughts at that moment (Macionis, 2012 as quoted in Tatar, 2018: 1421). In this regard, it is not impossible to evaluate that the main reason why lynching campaigns carried out on social media are carried out by people who are at the centre of the incident in the first place or by completely anonymous people is to create mass support and to try to gather support from their own small circles.

For this particular reason, in terms of symbolic interaction theory, it is possible to say that the basis of the lynching activities carried out on social media is to gather support and that the perpetrators of the lynching aim to gain the support of their own environment.

4. Historical Adventure of Animal Rights: Development of Animal Rights in the World and Türkiye

The issue of animal rights is a process that has been discussed for many years and is becoming more and more important every day, as well as being very important for a clearer understanding of animal rights. Yet, in order to understand animal rights, it is first necessary to look at the historical adventure of animal rights. The processes between humans and animals go back thousands of years (Yeşilkayalı and Ofluoğlu, 2018: 1876). In fact, according to the beliefs in ancient cults, animals are a kind of spiritual, spiritual companions, and in some beliefs, various animals are conveyed with divine expressions (Serpell, 1996: 183). In this respect, it can be thought that the relationship between animals and humans has actually been a continuity since ancient times and that people have attributed different tasks to some animals in various belief processes. Although, humans have developed various rules in order to maintain a certain order within human unions in order to sustain their lives since the day they came into existence (Yaşar and Yerlikaya, 2004: 39), it can be said that the rules they have established are human-based and that a universal structure covering other living things within the framework of these rules cannot be established (Yaşar and Yerlikaya, 2004: 39). For this rationale, within the scope of the study, information on the historical processes of animal rights and how they have developed in the world and more specifically in Türkiye are emphasised separately.

There have been many developments in the world regarding animal rights. Many of these developments appear as issues that serve as a very serious source in the historical adventure and have been discussed from ancient times to the present day. As quoted by Dinçer and Menteş, it is stated that there are fundamental differences between human and animal species within the scope of various religious beliefs and the influence of Greek philosophers (Dinçer and Menteş, 1994 as quoted in Yaşar and Yerlikaya, 2004: 40). From this point of view, it is possible to say that the debates on the relationship between human beings and animals in the world have existed since the time of Greek philosophers. But this period is quite old and the relationship between humans and animals is based on medical grounds (Zutphen, 2001: 2). At the meantime, the book known as the "Corpus Hippocraticum", which appeared in the 400s BC and which contains some of the first information on the use of animals in medicine, contains some information on how animals can be used for humans (Zutphen, 2001: 2). In this sense, it can be said that the first relations between humans and animals were a relationship of interest.

Within the frame of the human-based interest relationship between animals and humans and the relationship based on medical experiments, the idea that animals do not have souls, emotions and do not suffer, which was put forward by the French philosopher René in the late 16th century, was among the most popular views of the period (Zutphen, 2001: 2). Only towards the end of the 18th century, Jeremy Bentham's "Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation" rejected the views supported by René (Zutphen, 2001: 2-3) and argued that, in terms of world history, animals were also capable of suffering (patocentrist) beings. But those who were already on the opposite side of this view opposed this view supported by Bentham, leading to a mutual debate (Finn and Stark, 2015: 13). Following this difference of opinion, a reaction against animal experiments grew in Victorian England in the 19th century, and this reaction led to the emergence of activism in France (Zutphen, 2001: 3). In the wake of these activist movements, the "Cruelty to Animals Act" came into force between 1875 and 1876 with the pioneering of the British (England) Royal Commission, and one of the first steps was taken in relation to animal rights, and the requirement to obtain approval and permission from the competent authority for any animal cruelty procedure was introduced (Finn and Stark, 2015: 13). In this case, one of the first regulations made by humans for animals was realised and one of the foundations of animal rights was laid.

The "Cruelty to Animals Act" enacted by the United Kingdom (England) has made a name for itself by taking its place in world history as the first and for a long time the only law protecting animals used for scientific purposes. Over the following years, however, other countries have started to make some changes in animal rights (Greeve, et al. 2001: 11). The first of these changes was achieved in 1985 when the "Animal Welfare Act", which is among the federal laws of the United States of America, was substantially amended as the "Improved Standard

for the Laboratory Animals Act" (Greeve, et al. 2001: 11). In addition, with some amendments made to the "Animal Welfare Act" in 1990, it became a law covering horses and farms (Greeve, et al. 2001: 11). During the 20th century, thanks to these developments in animal rights, the relationship between humans and animals has gained a different dimension (De Ruyver, 2021:13-14). In this connection, many countries have started to make regulations on animal rights and many countries continue to make regulations on animal rights today.

Türkiye is a country that has made frequent breakthroughs in recent years in the field of animal rights and has been on the agenda with many regulations, especially in the recent period. This does not mean, however, that Türkiye has only recently started to legislate on animals. According to Işın's quotation from Akgündüz, in the document titled Kanunname-i İhtisâb-i İstanbul el-Mahrûse from the reign of Bayezid II, overloading animals such as horses, mules and donkeys was prohibited (Akgündüz, 1990 as quoted in Işın, 2008: 1).

Notwithstanding, the first regulations on animal rights in today's sense were made in 1912, before the establishment of the Republic of Türkiye. This regulation led to one of the most important steps in the Turkish history of animal rights and an animal protection association named "İstanbul Himâye-i Hayvânât Cemiyeti" started to operate as a first in Turkish history (Özkul, et al. 2013: 366). The association, which had to suspend its activities with the outbreak of the First World War, was founded in 1923 after a break of 11 years (Melikoğlu, 2009: 41). On the other hand, it was 1924 when the association officially started its activities under the name of "Turkish Society for the Protection of Animals" (Özkul, et al. 2013: 366). Thus, one of the first steps was taken for the protection of animals in Türkiye.

In the subsequent years, according to Anon (2004a-b as quoted in Yaşar and Yerlikaya, 2004: 43), "In Ankara, under the leadership of Celal Bayar, the Association for the Protection of Animals (Hayvanları Koruma Derneği) (1955), in Istanbul, the Association for the Protection of Natural Life (Doğal Hayatı Koruma Derneği) (1975), the Association for the Protection of the Rights to Life of Animals (Hayvanların Yaşam Haklarını Koruma Derneği) (1988), the Foundation for the Protection of Natural Life (Doğal Hayatı Koruma Vakfı) (1996), the Association of Lovers of Nature and Animals (Doğayı ve Hayvanları Sevenler Derneği), the Environment and Street Animals Association (Çevre ve Sokak Hayvanları Derneği) (2003), and associations under similar names were established in centres such as Adana, Antalya, Eskişehir, İzmir, Konya, Kütahya, Mersin, Muğla, Bodrum, Çeşme, Kuşadası". With the establishment of these associations and various decisions taken for the protection of stray animals, the first comprehensive law on the protection of stray animals was enacted in 2004 (Özkul, et al. 2013: 366). In the years that followed, animal rights became even more important in our country with the enactment of various laws. In 2011, a decision was taken to further develop the law on animal rights and it was submitted to the parliament (Satıl, 2021). Animal rights activists, who thought that this decision was incomplete, met with the then Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan at Dolmabahçe Palace and exchanged views on making the necessary arrangements (Satıl, 2021).

Various amendments have been made within the scope of the Animal Protection Law (Hayvanları Koruma Kanunu) No. 5199 dated 24 June 2004, thanks to the amendments made in the title of the "LAW ON AMENDMENTS TO THE LAW ON THE PROTECTION OF ANIMALS AND THE TURKISH CRIME LAW (HAYVANLARI KORUMA KANUNU İLE TÜRK CEZA KANUNUNDA DEĞİŞİKLİK YAPILMASINA DAİR KANUN)" with Law No. 7332, which was published in the Official Gazette (TC. Resmi Gazete) dated 14 July 2021 and declared to have been adopted on 9 July 2021, and in the light of these amendments, the rights of animals have been expanded within the scope of legal legislation by considering animals as living beings, not as property. In this manner, various rights have been granted to animals and many negative situations that can be applied to animals have been defined by the relevant articles of the Turkish Criminal Law (Türk Ceza Hukuku) (Official Gazette of the Presidency of the Republic of Türkiye (T.C Cumhurbaşkanlığı Resmi Gazete), 2021). As a result of this definition and legal regulation, the Republic of Türkiye has clearly demonstrated the importance it attaches to animal rights.

4. Research

4.1. Aim of the Research

"*Digital Activism and Lynch Culture: A Review on Animal Rights Within The Frame of Save Ralph*" this thesis study aims to re-present a problem that exists not only in our country but also all over the world in an academic environment. For this simple reason, it can be clearly stated that the aim of this research is to make a social criticism, to create a humanitarian awareness and to be a voice for animals, which are often ignored. In this respect, with this master's thesis, it is aimed to find out what kind of opinions people have about animals, which tend to be ignored from time to time in the agenda of our country, and what kind of thoughts they have about animals and animal rights.

4.2. Problem of the Research

The main problem of this study is to emphasise the inequality of rights caused by the inadequacy of various studies on animal rights and the negativities caused by the fact that animal rights have always been put to the background in the historical process. For this aforesaid reason, what is considered as a problem within the scope

of this study can be explained as the inadequacy of people's support for animals and the lack of sufficient coverage of animal rights on the basis of academic communication.

4.3. Methodology of the Research

In order for the research to be shaped on a more solid basis and for the data obtained to be considered more inclusive, more framework and more scientific, two main methods were used throughout the study. These methods can be listed as semiotic analysis and content analysis methods respectively.

Semiotic analysis, which is the first method used in the last part of the research, is a research method used to analyse the meanings of visuals, things to be shown or messages in general (Akpınar, 2021: 34). In addition, another expression that can be used to define the semiotic analysis method is the analysis of many hidden or concealed indicators (Büyükparmaksız and Ermiş, 2022: 43).

Another method used in the research is the content analysis method. Content analysis method is a research method used to explain the data obtained during the research process (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2013 as quoted in Kır Elitaş and Akyol, 2022: 520). In parallel, content analysis can also be expressed as the reduction of many word and category groups obtained to more understandable numerical data (Altunışık et al., 2012 as quoted in Zafer Kavacık et al., 2022: 510). For this reason, content analysis is actually a quantitative research method.

It can be clearly stated that the main reason for using these two methods in the interpretation phase of the research findings is that the study provides qualitative and quantitative analyses together in order to be more inclusive and to receive greater contributions and acceptance within the scientific and academic community.

4.4. Research Assumptions and Hypotheses

Research assumptions are generally a concept that emerges with certain assumptions, regardless of whether they are true or false, when research is started to be carried out without the aim of verification or falsification. Therefore, the assumptions of this study are generally based on the assumption that animal rights will not be very important to people, but within the framework of digital activism and lynch culture, the Save Ralph short film has a positive effect on people and people have a more activist attitude towards animal rights. In this context, the research assumption can be defined as the constructs that are not actually measured in the study, but only established by the researcher in his/her own mind within the framework of certain views before starting the study.

In conclusion, when the hypotheses of the study are analysed, three main hypotheses are considered as a result of the situations arising from the assumptions. However, these hypotheses are considered as some propositions accepted in parallel with the assumptions.

Hypothesis 1: Save Ralph short film has a positive effect on animal rights.

Hypothesis 2: In the production of cosmetic products, animal experiments are carried out and animal suffering is not desired.

Hypothesis 3: It is known that lynch culture has sanctioning power in the social structure.

4.5. Population and Sample of the Study

As the universe of this research, all social media posts in which animal rights are addressed from the perspective of digital activism and lynch culture are accepted. While this population is sufficient for shaping one of the basic structures of the research, it serves as a very serious source for obtaining and interpreting the research data. For this specific reason, in order to conduct content analysis, the sample of the study was limited to 250 posts containing the hashtags #saveralph and/or #hayvanhakları on Twitter within a 22-day period between 29.03.2021 and 19.04.2021. The main reason for using these two hashtags is that they show a certain compatibility with each of the three main themes of digital activism, lynch culture and animal rights, which are the three main themes covered in this thesis. Due to this compatibility, these two hashtags were included in the sampling within the research.

For the semiotic analysis, which is another method used in the study, the Save Ralph short film, which was translated with Turkish subtitles on YouTube, was included in the sample and the study could be limited without being detached from the universe.

4.6. Findings of the Study and Evaluation of the Findings

In this section titled "Findings of the study and evaluation of the findings", the research findings of the study are evaluated by giving place to the semiotic analysis and content analyses that constitute the research part of the study.

4.6.1. Save Ralph Short Film and Animal Experiments

The Save Ralph short film was released on 6 April 2021 by an organisation called Humane Society International (Wikipedia, 2021). The Save Ralph short film has a structure that reveals the daily life of a rabbit named Ralph in terms of subject matter and aims to explain the difficulties and negativities experienced by Ralph and his friends, who are actually experimental animals, when they are exposed to various animal experiments,

especially dermatological tests (Milliyet, 2021). In this respect, in this study, semiotic analysis and content analysis methods were used in this study on Save Ralph and animal rights.

4.6.2. Semiotic analysis of the short film Save Ralph

In the short film Save Ralph, the difficulties experienced by experimental animals and the pain they experience during experiments were tried to be mentioned.

Figure 1: Ralph Introduces Himself (URL-1)



As the Save Ralph short film starts, the first thing we see is Ralph and after Ralph says "My name is Ralph", he introduces himself as seen in the figure above. When we look at the background, we see a warm background where brown and its tones are predominant. Although this background creates a warm image at first glance, in fact, when the various tools inside are examined, it is seen that the house is actually a very old house. This gives the impression that Ralph lived in an earlier period. At the same time, the pinkish structure around his eye and the fact that his ear appears bent refers to the moments when Ralph lived as an experimental animal.

Figure 2: Ralph Describes What the Experiments Did to Him (URL-1)



As Ralph continues to introduce himself, he also mentions some of his health problems, as seen above. Ralph says that he is blind in one eye and that one of his ears no longer hears enough, but only rings, and in fact he is again referring to the permanent and cruel conditions left by animal experiments on animals. In this way, he not only makes himself known, but also hopes that his suffering or health problems will be understood by others. In the video, he also gives an example of how his ears ring. Ralph, who expresses how disturbing this situation is in the example he gives, secretly expresses that he hopes that the viewers will understand the problem he is experiencing by saying "Yes, it's annoying, isn't it?" to those who watch the video.

Figure 3: Ralph Tells What Happened to Him During the Experiments (URL-1)



After Ralph introduces himself and mentions some of his health problems, the scene that follows is a scene in which he brushes his teeth, as seen above. In this scene, Ralph talks about some of the procedures applied to him during the experiments. In addition to the mention of these procedures, when the background is analysed, there are some indications that Ralph used to have a family. For example, the trophy in front of the mirror reads "World's Best Dad" and inside the trophy there are several toothbrushes. This is one of the clearest indicators that Ralph is a family man and has a wife and children. But the fact that none of Ralph's family members were seen in the video led to the conclusion that Ralph's family no longer existed.

Figure 4: Referring to Human Claim on Animals (URL-1)



In this scene, which appears after the tooth brushing scene, Ralph talks about animal experiments and expresses that it hurts after some procedures performed as a result of these experiments. Ralph expresses that the troubles he experiences in this scene are for humanity and that this should not be a problem, and that people are superior to them, as it is written in the figure above. However, when Ralph's facial expression and movements are analysed, it is observed that he actually thinks that this view is not entirely correct. In this respect, it is realised that the words Ralph expresses in this scene contain hidden criticisms when viewed as a whole.

Figure 5: Ralph Expresses Sadness (URL-1)



The first scene that appears after the scenes in the bathroom is the scene where Ralph has breakfast. At the beginning of this scene, Ralph, referring to the previous scene, says that he is not a space rabbit, but an experiment rabbit, mentioning that people have even gone to the moon and there has never been a rabbit going into space. When the situation he is in while saying these words is analysed, it can be clearly seen that he is actually unhappy and sad. The reason for this sadness becomes much more obvious in the next frame.

Figure 6: Ralph Talks About His Family (URL-1)



In the continuation of the scene in which Ralph states that he is a guinea pig, he mentions that his father, mother, siblings and children are all guinea pigs. In this respect, the assumption that the toothbrushes in the mug we see in the toothbrushing scene are the belongings of the family is justified. At the same time, it is a logical inference to think that they all died while doing their job, that is, while being used in experiments, and that Ralph no longer has anyone from his family. Because in the continuation of Ralph's words, Ralph's statement that everyone in his family was an experimental rabbit and that they all died while doing their job proves the accuracy of this inference.

Figure 7: Ralph Expresses His Fear (URL-1)



In the continuation of the breakfast scene, Ralph states that everyone in his family died while doing their work, and he mentions that he will die during these experiments as well as his family. In this regard, Ralph's fear of experiments and his acceptance of death are revealed in a very impressive way. At the exact same time, when the condition of his eye and ear is analysed in the figure above, it is an acceptable idea that the death he expected for Ralph was quite painful and that he suffered very intense pain during his acceptance of death.

Figure 8: Ralph Crying (URL-1)



When the figure above is analysed, it is seen that Ralph experiences an intense breakdown throughout the whole scene as he talks about the loss of his family, thinks about the pain he has suffered, expresses his acceptance of his own death, and tears come from his eyes with this breakdown. It can be stated that this tear is one of the most striking points of the documentary and one of the scenes that best reflects Ralph's mental collapse. Indeed, both the narration of the pains and losses he has experienced and the fact that he is now desperately waiting for his death have been very effective in conveying the pain to the audience by revealing the destructive effect of Ralph's mental balance and sadness.

Figure 9: Ralph Being Experimented (URL-1)



When Figure 9 is analysed, it is seen that in addition to Ralph's destruction in the previous scenes, his house and life are also destroyed by the intervention of others. Cos Ralph, who was having his breakfast and chatting, was suddenly forcibly pulled out of his place by a hand that pierced his ceiling against his will and was taken out of his own space, which could perhaps be considered relatively safe. This, in fact, is one of the indicators that experimental animals are forcibly taken away from their own safe areas just for experiments to be carried out. At the same time, Ralph is grabbed by the head and pulled quite hard, which is basically a reference to the bullying experienced by experimental animals.

Figure 10: Ralph is Putting in the Laboratory (URL-1)



There is a scene in which Ralph, who is forcibly detained by a hand piercing the ceiling while having his breakfast in his house, is locked by the same hand in a transparent plastic cage or a cage similar to a guillotine in terms of appearance. In this scene, the fact that Ralph is locked in the cage without being able to do anything or even struggling can be evaluated as a reflection of acceptance or helplessness in general. In this aspect, it is possible to think that Ralph went to that laboratory knowing that he could die every day he was taken there and that he was aware that the possibility of dying was increasing day by day.

Figure 11: Ralph Talks to His Friends (URL-1)



Ralph, who is forcibly taken to the laboratory by a hand and put in a transparent cage, is seen with his friends in the next scene. Seeing Ralph and the camera, the other experimental rabbits hope that Ralph and the cameraman can get them out of there. This is quite easy to understand from the discourse in the figure above. That is because Ralph's friends, thinking that they see a light that can save them from there, ask for help by saying "Can you ask them to get us out of here?" without any doubt. Moreover, it can be seen that other rabbits, like Ralph, are in transparent guillotine-like cages, so that each of them has to be there against their will. In this point of view, as can be seen in the figure, it can be clearly stated that experimental animals are freedom-seeking creatures.

Figure 12: Ralph's Friends Don't Want to Die (URL-1)



Ralph and his friends, also seen in the previous scene, express that they have only one wish in this scene. This desire, as seen above, is not to die. What is noticed at this point is that unlike Ralph's acceptance of death in the previous scenes, these experimental rabbits are not yet ready for death. The reason for this is revealed when the figure is analysed a little. In the figure above, there is no visible health problem in the other experimental rabbits other than Ralph, and this shows that the other rabbits are actually newer experimental animals or, in other words, experimental rabbits compared to Ralph. This reveals the main reason why, unlike Ralph, they still cannot accept death. Ralph has been suffering for longer than the others and has now fallen into despair and has naturally lost the will to struggle and is experiencing learned helplessness.

Figure 13: Ralph being used in the experiment (URL-1)



After his friends' desire to survive and not want to die, the scene we encounter is the scene where Ralph is experimented on. In this scene, an unidentified liquid is injected into Ralph's eye with a syringe. In addition to the fear on Ralph's face, his friends are heard saying "Don't touch him!". This can be accepted as an indication that Ralph is a rabbit loved by his friends and that his friends do not want Ralph to suffer more. At the same time, in this scene, it is felt that with each experiment, the rabbit comes closer to death and has to endure more pain.

Figure 14: Ralph Suffers (URL-1)



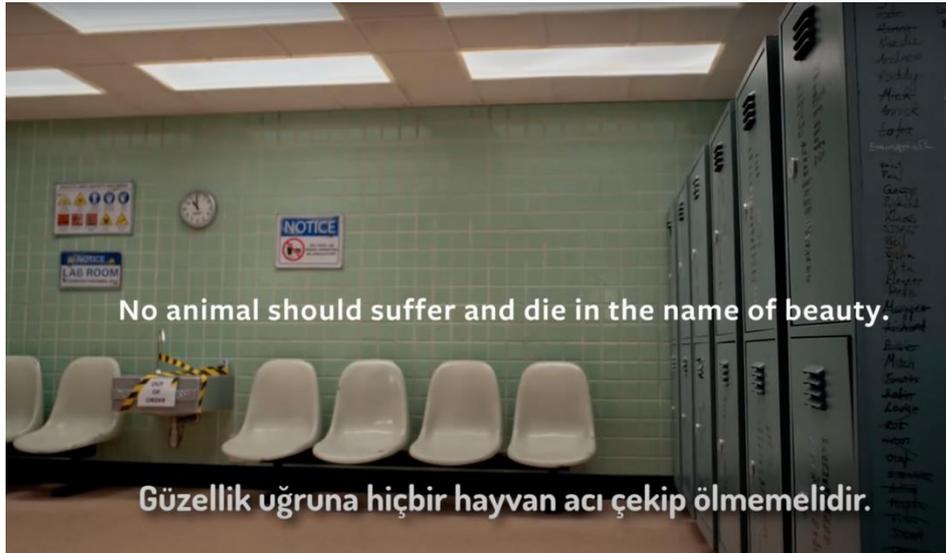
Ralph, who was experimented on in the previous scene, appears to be out of the experiment in this scene. Ralph, who is wearing a neck brace compared to his previous state and is seen with serious injuries and deformations on his arm and back, tries to appear in front of the camera to close the documentary. However, Ralph, who loses his orientation after his experiments, tries to speak with his back to the camera in the rest of this scene. Nevertheless, with the warning of the cameraman, Ralph turns his face towards the camera and it can be observed that his sense of direction is impaired as well as his eyesight. At the same time, with this scene, it is clearly shown what a rabbit that comes out of the experiment can become.

Figure 15: Ralph Closing the Documentary (URL-1)



In the figure above, which is one of the last scenes of this short film that presents a cross-section of Ralph's life, Ralph is seen with two injured eyes, a neck brace around his neck and a bent ear. When the figure is analysed, Ralph, seen at the beginning of the video, appears in a much worse form. The fact that their wounds at the beginning of the video increased so much at the end of the video summarises very well the difficulties faced by the experimental animals and what they sacrificed. In addition, it would not be wrong to think that the names written on the cabinets on the right side of the figure, which look like dressing cabinets, are other experimental animals such as Ralph, and that the crossed out names are animals that died during the experiments.

Figure 16: Giving the Main Message of the Video (URL-1)



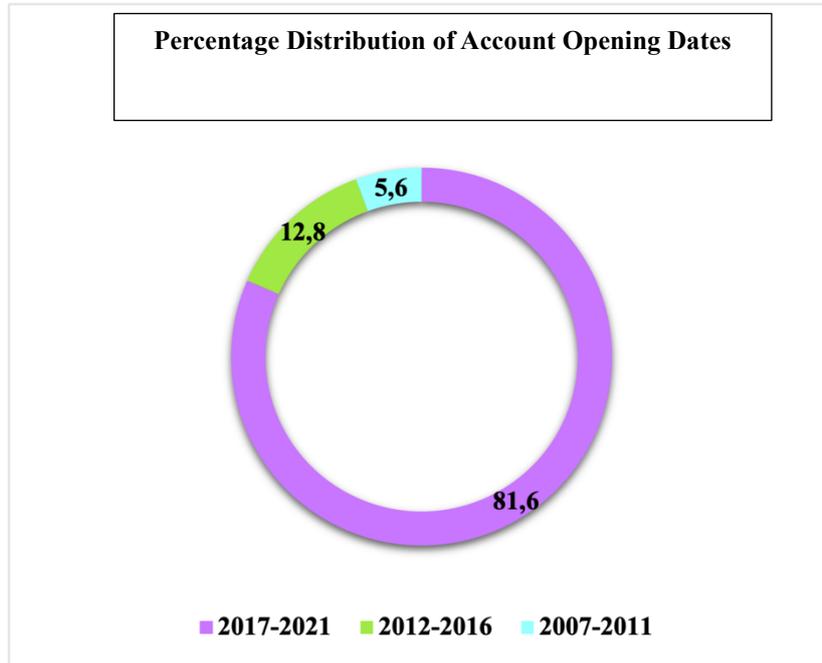
In the figure above, which can be considered as the last scene of the video, we are left with only an area similar to the green and white-dominated dressing room where Ralph has just been. Above this empty space, there is a text that can be considered as the main message of the video. This text is "No animal should suffer and die in the name of beauty." When this text and the background are examined, there is actually an empty room with the names of dozens of experimental animals who died for the sake of beauty and a short text commemorating many animals sacrificed for the sake of beauty, and the video ends. In this way, a content that is left to people's conscience and encourages people to think is encountered.

4.6.3. Content Analysis on Save Ralph and Animal Rights

In order to examine the tweets about Save Ralph and animal rights on Twitter in detail, account opening dates, total number of tweets, number of followers, number of followed, dates of tweets, compatibility of tweets with hashtags, supportive of animal rights, distribution of emphasised words, A total of 17 criteria such as the distribution of photographs in tweets, the compatibility of visuals and content, the distribution of videos in tweets, the compatibility of video and content, the number of likes, retweets and comments, the compatibility of hashtags

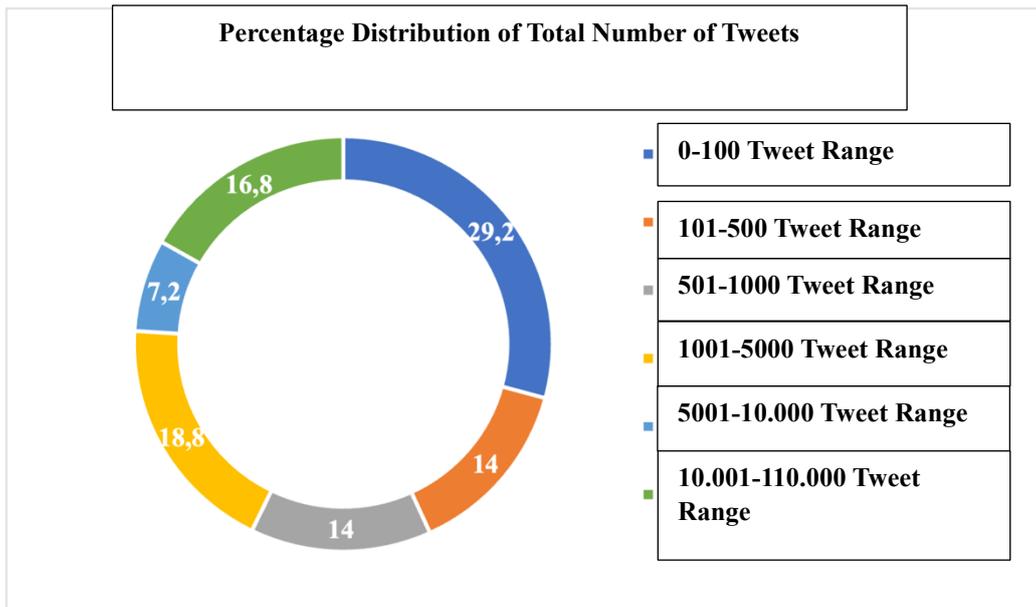
with the subject matter and the distribution of tweets according to the hashtags they contain were evaluated and analysed.

Figure 17: Percentage Distribution of Account Opening Dates



The first striking point in the content analysis on Save Ralph and animal rights is the account opening dates. Because, as can be seen when the figure above is analysed, it is seen that a significant 81.6% of the accounts tweeting about Save Ralph and animal rights opened their accounts between 2017 and 2021. This is one of the clearest indicators that the accounts tweeting on the subject are mostly accounts that have joined Twitter in the last 4 years and that Twitter has become a more popular medium in the last 4 years. As can be seen in the figure above, when the accounts that joined Twitter in a period of 9 or 10 years other than the last 4 years are analysed within the sample, they constitute only 18.4%, which is a significant difference with the number of accounts opened in the last 4 years. In this case, it can be said that Twitter has become a more popular medium between 2017 and 2021.

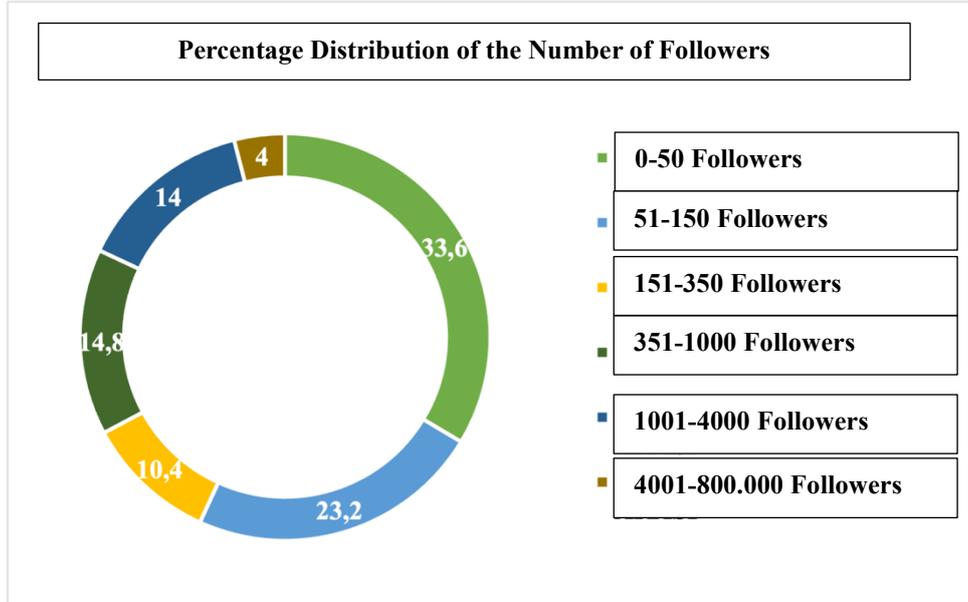
Figure 18: Percentage Distribution of Total Number of Tweets



When the general tweeting rates of accounts tweeting about Save Ralph and animal rights are analysed, 6 basic groups can be obtained as seen above. Among these six basic groups, the accounts with the highest percentage

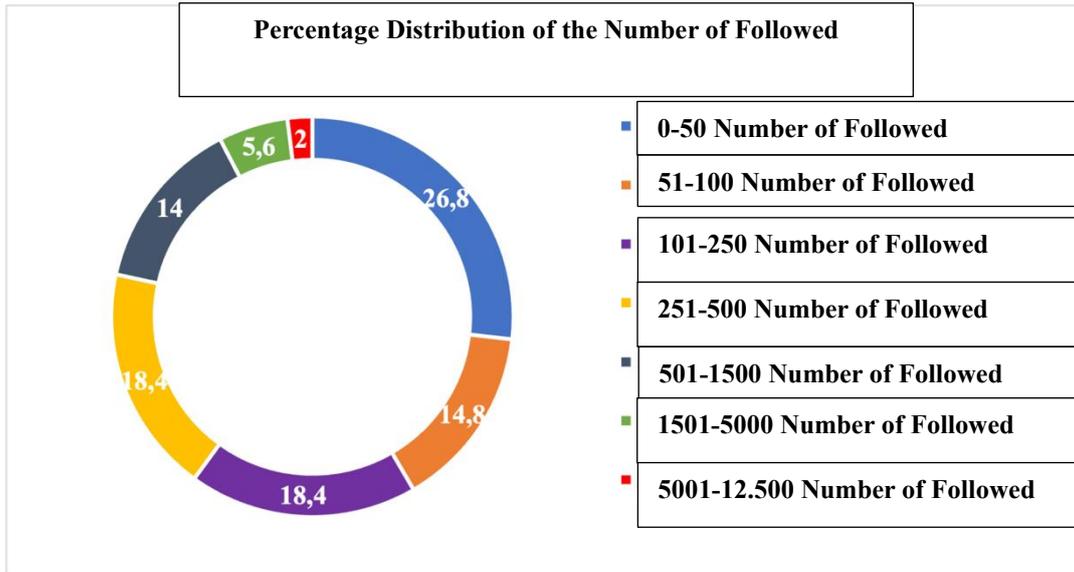
value are those that tweet between 0-100 tweets in total. When these calculations are analysed within the sample, a rate of 29.2% is obtained. According to this ratio, the clearest inference that can be drawn is that the accounts that tweet about the issue are predominantly newly opened accounts. For, when viewed within the framework of basic logic, it is one of the most logical thoughts that accounts that tweet between 0-100 tweets in total are accounts that have been opened recently and therefore may have tweeted much less than others. In addition, considering the total number of tweets of the accounts, it is estimated that the accounts that tweet between 10,001-110,000 tweets, which have the third highest rate with 16.8%, are older accounts compared to other accounts and therefore their total number of tweets is much higher than the total number of tweets in other groups.

Figure 19: Percentage Distribution of the Number of Followers



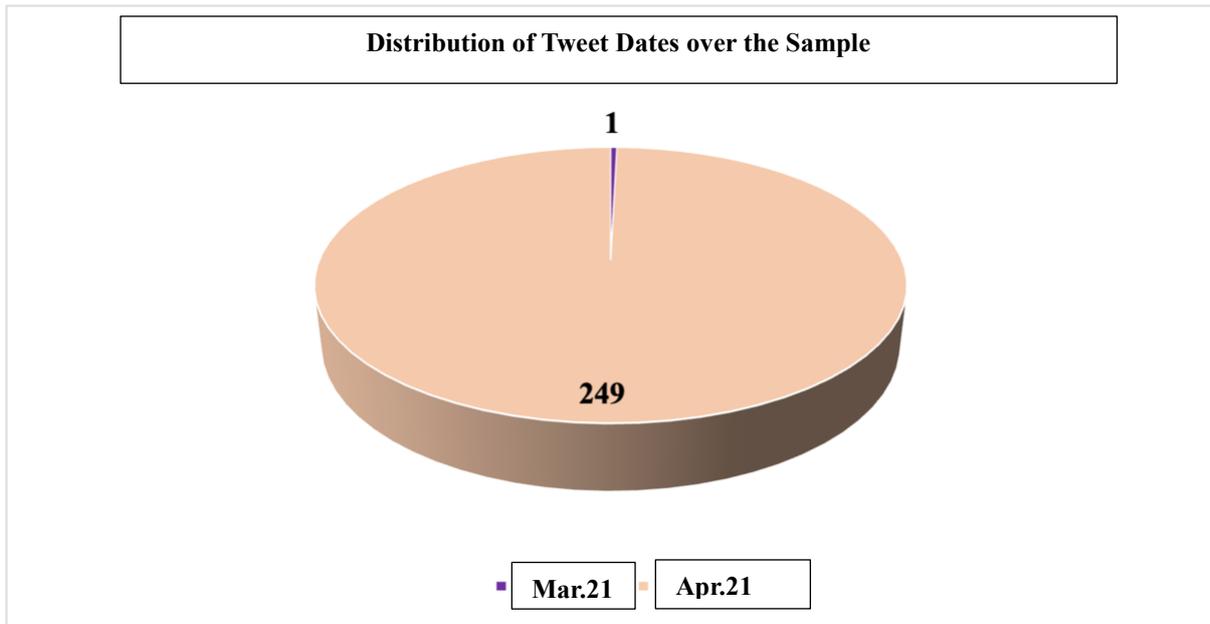
After account opening dates and total number of tweets, one of the most important evaluation criteria is the number of followers. This is because the number of followers is generally an important number that shows how long an account has been active and how long it can appeal to the masses. For this reason, when the figure above is analysed, the distribution of the percentage values of the number of followers is important in estimating the impact values of the tweets within the scope of the study. In addition, each follower count value is valuable in measuring different criteria. For example, when the graph above is analysed within the sample, the value of 33.6% with the number of followers between 0-50 stands out as a value equal to almost one third of the sample. At the same time, one third of the accounts tweeting about Save Ralph and animal rights have a low target audience. However, the fact that the groups with 1001 to 800,000 followers, which constitute 18% of the sample, are very effective accounts in reaching the target audience and that their tweets reach thousands of people can have a serious impact on the dissemination of the issue, creating a greater impact than the lowest follower number value of 33.6%. In this case, in percentage terms, the values of the groups totalling 18% are massively larger.

Figure 20: Percentage Distribution of the Number of Followed



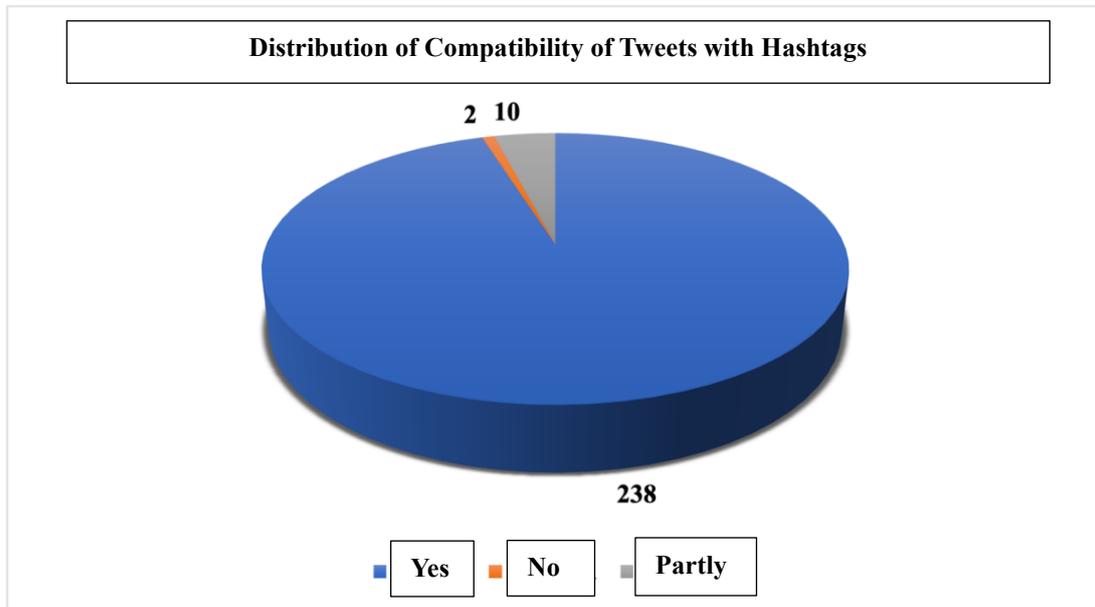
After the number of followers, the percentage distribution of the number of followers is one of the most important values in terms of the study. As the number of followers is important in terms of affecting the target audience reached by the tweets, the number of followers indicates the accounts that the accounts interact with regarding the issues they are interested in. In this respect, the number of actually followed is a very important number for each account. In particular, it is a great opportunity for accounts to interact with the right accounts and for accounts that can be considered popular in a field to be seen and accessible by other people who are interested in that field in order to follow extremely critical agendas. For instance, to make a brief explanation within the scope of the subject of the study, people who follow accounts related to animal rights can access issues related to that field much more easily and quickly. In this case, it can naturally be stated that the number of followers is an issue that affects the accounts. From this point of view, it would not be wrong to state that accounts with 0-50 followers (26.8%) within the scope of the sample can access slower and less information about current issues compared to other accounts thanks to their followers. However, it is an acceptable opinion to say that accounts with 5001- 12,500 followers, which have the lowest share with a value of 2% in the sample, can access quite complex data on the issues they are interested in, since there will be too many accounts they follow, and this will actually negatively affect those people's ability to follow the agenda.

Figure 21: Distribution of Tweet Dates over the Sample



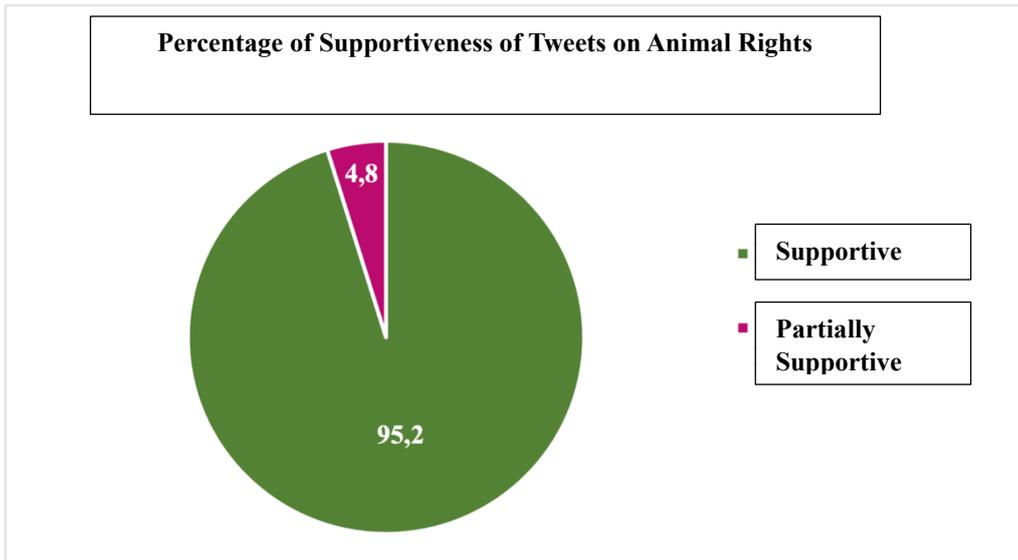
Tweet dates are one of the most important points in terms of research. Indeed, the release date of the short film Save Ralph, which constitutes the main theme of this thesis, is 6 April. Likewise, animal rights, which constitute another main theme of the study, point to a process that dates back as far as humanity. In this respect, the figure above provides us with very important data. This data is the dates of the 250 tweets analysed within the sample. Among the 250 tweets included in the sampling during the thesis study, only one tweet dating back to before the release date of Save Ralph was encountered. This tweet is a tweet sent on 30 March 2021. The tweets excluded from this and included in the sample consist of tweets posted in April 2021. These tweets correspond to the interval in which 249 of the 250 tweets analysed were sent. There are various explanations for this interval. At the beginning of these explanations, there are two main issues that were on the agenda in the date range included in the sample. One of these issues is the expected animal rights law in Turkey and the other issue is the Save Ralph short film, which has influenced the whole world and has been watched by millions of people. Among these two main topics, the agendas included in the sample of the study are mainly those related to Save Ralph. In this sense, when the figures in the rest of the study are analysed, it will be observed that the data collected are generally Save Ralph-centred, but animal rights are also frequently included.

Figure 22: Distribution of Compatibility of Tweets with Hashtags



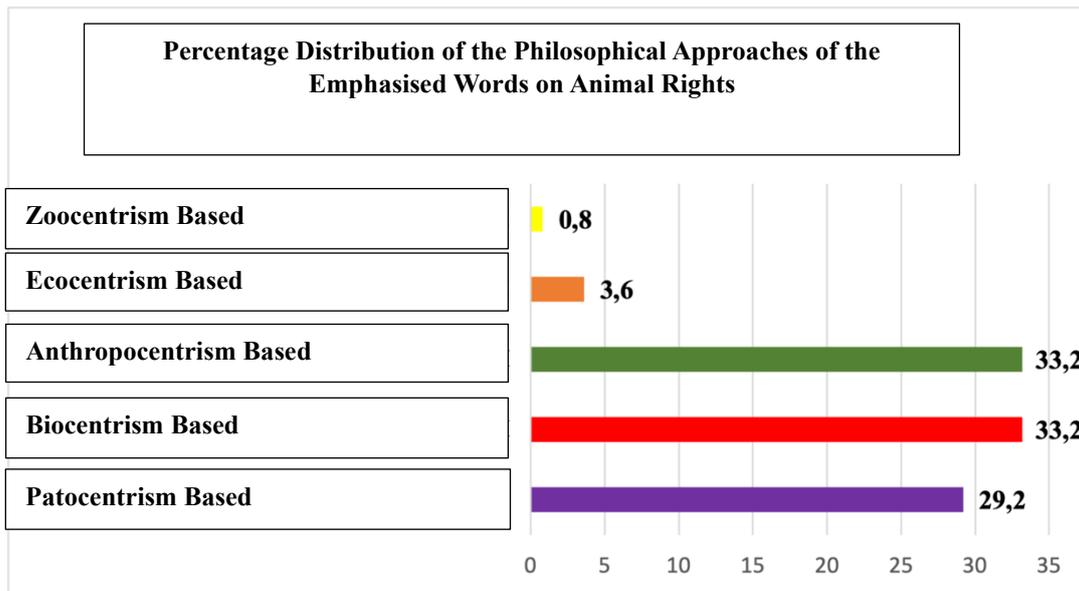
The tweets analysed within the sample were generally evaluated according to whether they were compatible with the hashtags. The reason for this is to ensure that the research is evaluated correctly within the scope of data collection processes. In order for the data in the thesis study to provide the most accurate findings on the subject, it is necessary to check whether the tweets and hashtags are compatible. For this purpose, as can be seen in the figure above, this was another issue analysed in the content analysis part of the thesis study. According to the graph above, 238 of the tweets were compatible with the hashtags used, while 10 were partially compatible and 2 were categorised as incompatible. The main purpose of this evaluation is to facilitate the identification of the purpose of the tweets. In order to better understand this situation, it is necessary to make a general explanation. In social media platforms such as Twitter, which are used by millions of people every day, there are times when the theory of symbolic interaction and the urge to be popular dominate. In these times, users sometimes try to stand out by using tweet-independent or semi-independent hashtags, sometimes just because everyone is talking about that topic, and sometimes to get more interaction and visibility through what they write. This may naturally cause tweets on any subject to not be directly related to that subject. For this rationale, the compatibility of the tweets and the hashtags used is very important in the data collection process. In the context of this, as can be seen in the figure above, there are 2 incompatible and 10 partially compatible hashtags among the tweets analysed within the scope of the research. Looking at these numbers, it can be said that in general terms, users pay attention to the use of hashtags while tweeting and pay attention to the compatibility of the tweet and hashtags, while sometimes, as mentioned above, there are cases where hashtags are used in a semi-compatible or incompatible manner just for popularity or visibility.

Figure 23: Percentage of Supportiveness of Tweets on Animal Rights



Animal rights, which is one of the main points of the study, is one of the main issues addressed in this study. For this respect, whether the tweets analysed within the sample are supportive of animal rights or not is a very important source for the data that the research aims to reach. Therefore, while collecting research data, collecting information such as whether the tweets are supportive of animal rights is one of the preferred criteria to achieve the purpose of the study. From this perspective, the importance of the graph above has increased much more. This is because, among the tweets analysed within the sample, no tweet that was not supportive of animal rights was encountered. Yet, 4.8% of tweets cannot be called fully supportive, but it cannot be said that they are not supportive either. This means that with the release of the short film Save Ralph, a more understandable positive effect on people about animal rights has been experienced, and thanks to this effect, it can be said that the tweets tweeted with the relevant hashtags in the date range within the sample are generally respectful, understanding and supportive of animal rights. This discourse can be interpreted as one of the clearest statements that the short film Save Ralph had a positive impact on society.

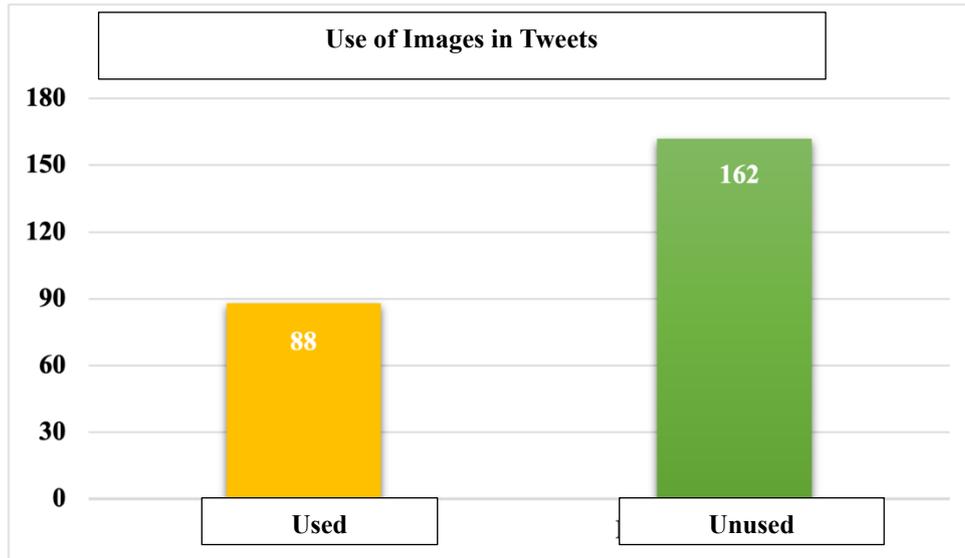
Figure 24: Percentage Distribution of the Philosophical Approaches of the Emphasised Words on Animal Rights



In the context of the subject of the research, the words emphasised in the tweets can basically be analysed under 5 categories. Integrating the tweets evaluated within the sample with various approaches is considered to be a very effective method in order to increase the scientific value of the study. Also, when the figure above is analysed, the evaluation of the data obtained on three main bases in general increases the importance of the concepts. In particular, the distribution of tweets based on anthropocentrism and biocentrism approaches with

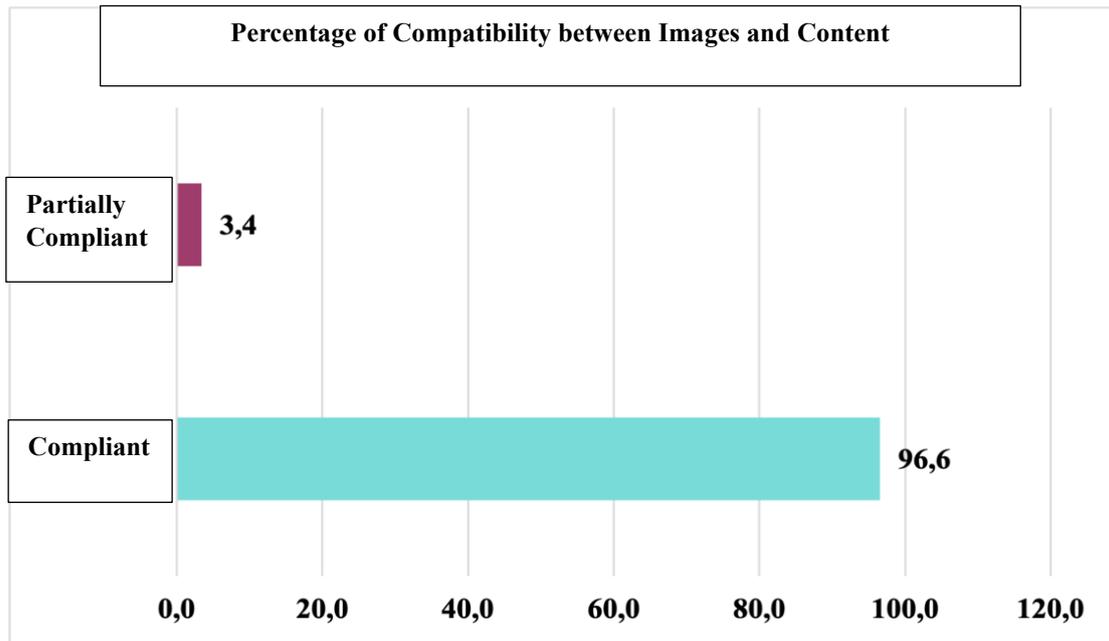
33.2% provides important information about people's view on animal rights. The most important ones among this information are anthropocentrism (human-centred) and biocentrism (live-centred) approaches in general. While one of these approaches exhibits a human-centred attitude towards animal rights, the other approach exhibits a more animal-centred attitude and actually explains the general approaches to animal rights. However, in addition to these two approaches, the patocentrism (pain-centred) approach with a value of 29.2% also has a very effective social structure. When the figure above is analysed, a difference of 3% or 4% is observed between anthropocentrism and biocentrism approaches and patocentrism approach. In this case, it can be considered as an indication that people have adopted a pain-centred approach to animal rights to a great extent. From this perspective, one of the hypotheses, "Hypothesis 2: Animal suffering is not desired by performing animal experiments in the production of cosmetic products." hypothesis is supported.

Figure 25: Use of Images in Tweets



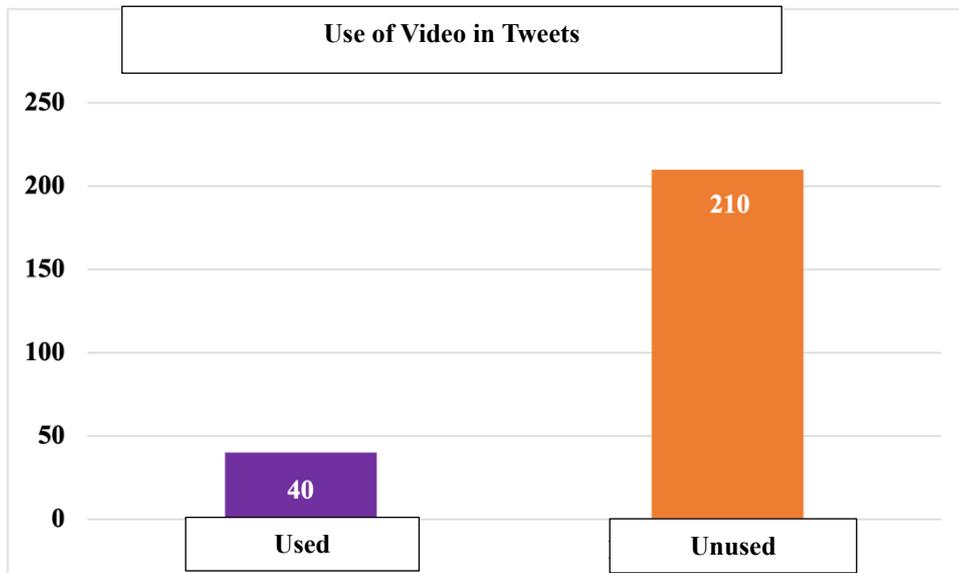
Whether or not visuals are used in the tweets provides an important data source for the study. Cos, tweets supported with visuals are more remarkable and many people It is a known fact that it is frequently preferred by. For this specific reason, it would not be wrong to say that the effectiveness rate of tweets using visuals is higher. Analysing the tweets posted within the sample, however, reveals data as shown in the figure above. According to this data, visual support was used in only 88 of the 250 tweets analysed. In contrast, visuals were not used in 162 tweets. When this situation was analysed in general terms, it was observed that the tweets were predominantly tweeted without using visuals and the people who tweeted on the subject expressed their opinions only by writing tweets. But considering that visual support is an undeniable requirement for attracting attention and attracting attention on a subject, the fact that tweets without visuals are predominant in the sample is also considered as a disadvantage in terms of effectiveness. In this case, it can actually be considered as a partial failure that overshadows the purpose of tweets such as making a noise or creating an agenda.

Figure 26: Percentage of Compatibility between Images and Content



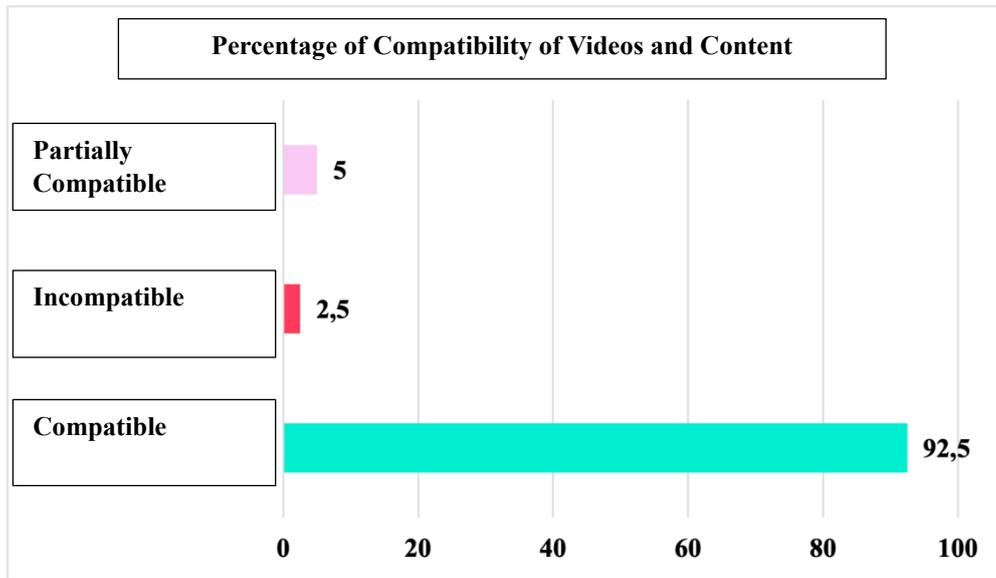
The fact that the visuals used in the tweets are related to the subject has a structure that increases the effect of the tweet in general. On the other hand, it is also a reality that it is not always paid attention to whether the tweets and visuals are compatible. When viewed from the framework of symbolic interaction theory, people are influenced by their environment and when a topic is popular or on the agenda, they feel the need to talk about that topic for various reasons. But this desire to talk may sometimes include topics outside the person's knowledge. For example, on the basis of the subject of the study, people who do not have information about animal rights or who have heard about the Save Ralph short film but have not watched it may want to say something for their own reasons when these issues are popular, and people who are not fully informed about the subject tweet about Save Ralph or animal rights and include various images with their pets. Yet, such tweets, which are not directly related to both topics analysed within the scope of the study, constitute 3.4% of the total number of tweets, indicating that tweets were sent even though they were not directly related to the topic. For this purpose, while collecting the research data, similar to the example above, all tweets were categorised as partial, and all images that did not have a primary connection with the tweet were included in this category. On the other hand, 96.6% of the tweeted tweet and the image are compatible, which is a very striking value. In fact, images that are compatible with the content, which has a very high value of 96.6%, can be accepted as a serious indicator that Twitter users who use images within the sample are at a serious point of awareness.

Figure 27: Use of Video in Tweets



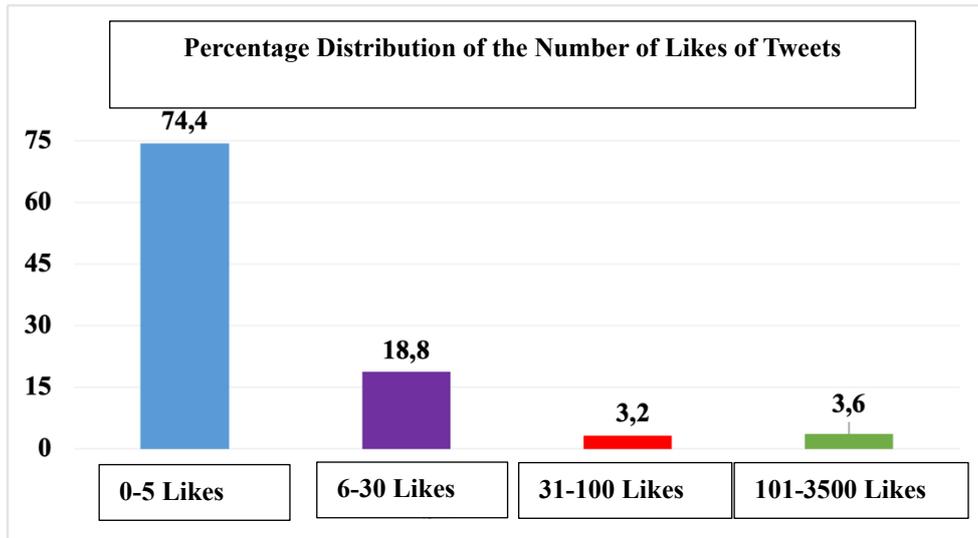
The use of video in any content makes that content look more vivid and more interesting. For this and for this reason, when a sharing is made on any subject, supporting it with a video is one of the most important methods for collecting interest. Likewise, it has been observed with the findings of various studies that the content supported by video receives more interaction than other content, and that it is very effective in raising awareness when the example of Save Ralph is taken into consideration. For this specific reason, it is recommended to use video support in tweets and content produced in order to raise awareness, increase interaction, increase the level of attractiveness and mobilise the senses. When the tweets within the sample are analysed, it is observed that many Twitter users do not use video support in their tweets, and those who use video support constitute only 40 out of 250 tweets. In this case, the research data obtained within the scope of the research basically shows that the need to appeal to the senses is not felt sufficiently among the research data obtained within the scope of the research, and that the tweets do not prefer to use videos as a mobilising element. The fact that 210 tweets out of 250 tweets did not use video in any way, and that they did not feel the need to do so can be considered as an indicator that the tweets were not sufficiently attentive.

Figure 28: Percentage of Compatibility of Videos and Content



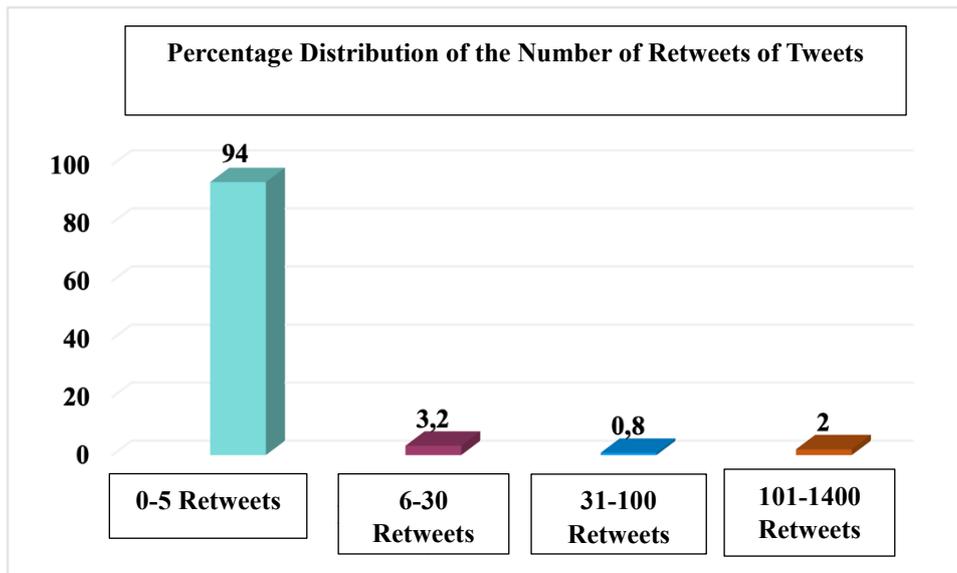
One of the most important points to be considered for a content to be interesting is undoubtedly videos. While visuals appeal only to the sense of sight, videos appeal to both the sense of sight and hearing. Therefore, tweets or content using video is one of the best methods that can be used to attract people's attention. But, in order for a content or a tweet to be remarkable, it is not enough to use only video. Although people show more interest in video content, they lose interest if the content and video are not compatible enough. Thus, if a person aims to create awareness, attract attention and attract attention with the content he produces, he should first pay attention to the use of video. Nevertheless, it is also a very important criterion that the videos used in the content or tweets produced are compatible with the content or tweet. Otherwise, even if the videos that are not compatible with the content attract the attention of individuals in the first place, if they cannot establish a connection between the content and the video, their interest will be greatly reduced and they will show ignoring action. That is why it is necessary to say that the compatibility of content and videos is very important at the point of increasing attractiveness. Similarly, when the figure above is analysed, the fact that 2.5% of the tweets examined within the sample are not compatible with the content has an effect that reduces the level of attractiveness of the videos. In terms of the partially compatible 5%, it can be stated that the rate of attractiveness will vary according to the interests of the people watching the video. Considering the video content compatibility of 92.5%, it can be said that the tweets analysed within the scope of the research are generally tweets with high levels of attractiveness.

Figure 29: Percentage Distribution of the Number of Likes of Tweets



The number of likes of any tweet is a factor that determines the popularity of that tweet. For this rationale, one of the most important procedures to be performed in order to determine the popular percentages of the tweets within the sample is to categorise these tweets according to their likes. In this respect, the number of likes of each of the tweets within the sample is also included in the research data to understand how valuable the topic within the scope of the research is seen by other Twitter users. The number of likes, which is one of the most important issues that determine the value of each tweet, can be expressed as indicators that show how interested other users are in the relevant topic or tweet and how interesting that topic or tweet is. In this regard, when the figure above is analysed, it is seen that a very high rate of 74.4% of the tweets examined within the sample were evaluated only between 0-5 likes, and for this reason, although the subject is actually interesting, the impact it creates in the society is revealed. As seen in the figure above, however, tweets with a value of 3.6%, which are categorised between 101-3500 likes, can clearly be considered among the indicators showing that the issue is important. This is because, although 74.4% of the tweets received almost no likes, the remaining 25.6% of tweets that received between 6-3500 likes, in terms of the interaction and recognition they provided, can be said to have led the issue to be seen and heard by various circles by providing an interaction far above the tweets that have a high majority and can be considered almost unliked.

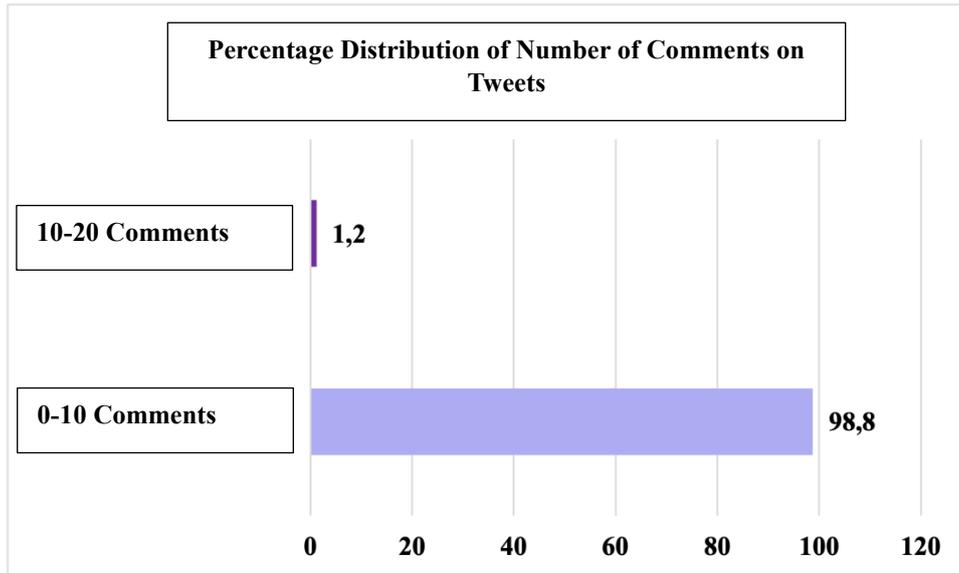
Figure 30: Percentage Distribution of the Number of Retweets of Tweets



Retweeting tweets is a highly important issue. For, each retweet is a very valuable action by another user in order to communicate to different target audiences that they support the views of other users or to publicise their views. The main reason for this is that under normal circumstances, tweets posted by an account can be announced according to the number of followers that account can address, while the target audiences that the tweet can reach

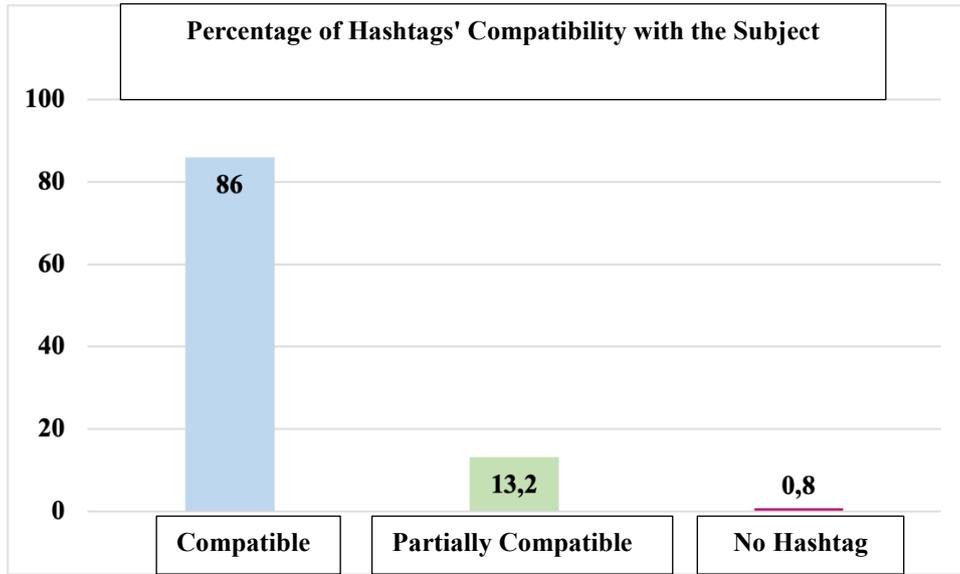
grow even more thanks to the retweet of that tweet by another user. This allows tweets, which would normally be publicised according to the number of followers of the account that posted the tweet, to be noticed by other accounts and to interact with much different target audiences through other accounts. In this way, both the tweet can show a wider spread and it can be ensured that the tweets that are tweeted for a particular purpose can cause unexpected effects. In this aspect, the number of retweets is considered as a very serious data source in order to understand the interaction levels of the tweets analysed within the sample. In an attempt to find out whether the tweets with a value between 0-5 retweets constitute 94% of the research sample has led to the conclusion that the tweets do not reach other target audiences other than the users' own followers. In comparison, the fact that the 2% segment with a value between 101-1400 retweets creates a serious interaction provides a very valuable finding in order to make the graph more understandable.

Figure 31: Percentage Distribution of Number of Comments on Tweets



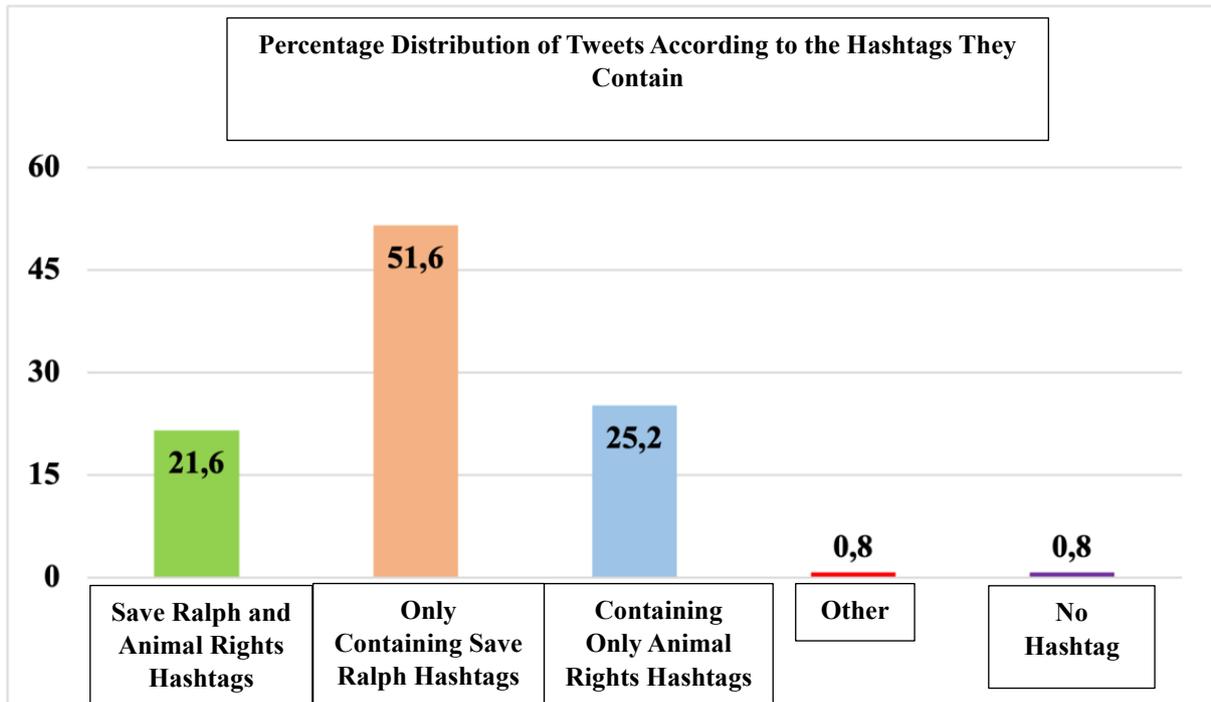
Among the research data, one of the most surprising points was the data on the percentage distribution of the number of comments on tweets. This is centre of attention because, under normal circumstances, each of the comments on a tweet can be explained as a set of opinions offered by other people related to that tweet or, in other words, by other users. By examining the figure above and considering the data obtained, it can be stated that the values obtained within the scope of the relevant research sample may be surprising. Indeed, the fact that the tweets that received between 0-10 comments constitute 98.8% of the sample is an indication that many people do not feel the need to comment on the tweets. The fact that such a large proportion of tweets on Save Ralph and animal rights, which are considered to be very important in the general tweet stream and have become an important part of the agenda, received very few comments shows that people do not feel the need to communicate directly with other people in terms of general perception. As a result of this indicator, it may be thought that there is no social unity within the scope of the relevant topics of the research. But it should also be examined within the possibilities that the fact that the number of tweets on the subject is quite high and that these tweets are predominantly supportive of animal rights, as stated in the figures above, may cause other users to not feel the need to say anything else about the tweets, and in the future, various focus group studies should be conducted on this subject and elaborated within the scope of academic studies. In this way, both the findings obtained from the above figures can be made much more detailed and the interdisciplinary studies on these issues in the academic field can be further increased.

Figure 32: Percentage of Hashtags' Compatibility with the Subject



One of the most significant things to be visible on text-based social media channels such as Twitter is undoubtedly the rate of hashtag usage. The visibility that can be achieved at the right time and with the right hashtags has a very high value. For that matter, with a public profile with 10 followers, it will be quite easy for tweets using the right hashtags to reach many more people than 10 people. In accessibility of the tweets made by using hashtags related to the relevant agenda by other people interested in that subject will also be quite easy. For which reason, analysing the relevant hashtags in advance before a tweet is sent and using hashtags that are compatible with the popular agenda at that time will make it easier to reach people who are closely related to that field. At the meantime, users who tweet will be able to easily convey their wishes if they want to raise awareness or gain visibility on the relevant issue. In this aspect, when the figure above is analysed, it is seen that the hashtags used in 86% of the tweets are related to the subject, which actually helps the people who are related to the subject to become more prominent, and they have been able to display a very effective struggle in order to achieve their goals and mobilise the masses. In terms of serving the purposes of the tweets analysed within the sample, the partially compatible value of 13.2% provides a very effective perspective, and thanks to this perspective, it can be said that the tweets exhibit a considerable stance on animal rights and Save Ralph issues.

Figure 33: Percentage Distribution of Tweets According to the Hashtags They Contain



As mentioned in Figure 32, it is very important that the hashtags used in a tweet are compatible with the subject. Thus, it is seen as very important that the hashtags used in a tweet about a subject are compatible with the tweet. Hence, categorising the tweets examined within the sample determined within the scope of the research into four main categories is not only very valuable for understanding the importance of hashtag usage, but it is also possible to easily discover which subject users are more interested in thanks to the hashtags used. The clearest indicator of this is the use of only the Save Ralph hashtag with a rate of 51.6%. Since, when the figure above is analysed, it is seen that more than half of the users are generally interested in Save Ralph in their tweets and are not interested in other hashtags. This can be examined as an indicator that the Save Ralph short film was on the agenda and popular between the sample dates. Besides the Save Ralph hashtag, the fact that the other most used hashtag is the animal rights hashtag can probably be explained by the fact that animal experiments, which are revealed with Save Ralph, are effective on the social structure. It was observed that with the release of the Save Ralph short film, animal experiments and animal rights became more popular issues and this effect continued on the determined dates. From this perspective, it can be said that animal rights became more visible with the short film Save Ralph. Moreover, the fact that animal rights became more important with the Save Ralph short film also supports one of the hypotheses of the study, "**Hypothesis 1: Save Ralph short film had a positive effect on animal rights.**"

5. Conclusions and Suggestions

Emphasising on the concepts of digital activism and lynch culture within the scope of the research, the situations of these concepts in today's conditions have been mentioned. In order to achieve this, the theoretical perspective of these concepts as well as their practical perspectives have been scrutinised. In this scrutinising process, literature sources were frequently examined and the information obtained was blended with the support of symbolic interaction theory. Thus, each definition or explanation could be evaluated within a more theoretical structure.

In the following part of the research, by focusing on animal rights in general, the samples preferred in the study and the methods to be used were matched and efforts were made to create a more efficient process in scientific terms. Furthermore, within the scope of the study, the historical process and the revolutions experienced by animal rights both in the world and in Türkiye have been mentioned. In this way, it is aimed to achieve a more developed perspective on animal rights.

In the last part of the study, the foundations of the research are generally explained, assumptions and hypotheses are explained through the sample and the focus is on moving in a more in-depth direction. Consequently, both the semiotic analysis of the study and the content analysis have reached a position that supports the literature and can be a source for new studies.

When the data obtained by using the semiotic analysis method in this academic study were analysed, it was concluded that the short film Save Ralph is a serious awareness raising study on animal experiments today. With the release of the Save Ralph short film, millions of people around the world have watched this short film and learned about the experiments that cosmetic companies apply to animals. Many people who have accessed this information have fuelled both digital and traditional activism movements internationally. With the sparking of this fuse, people started to protest against various cosmetic brands and stopped using the products of those brands, and with the effect of digital activism, each of the companies conducting animal experiments began to be exposed with various visuals and lists.

Some of these companies, which were protested by the masses both on the streets and in the virtual world, withdrew various products and some of them preferred to make serious discounts on their products in order to minimise the damage of this impressive activist movement. This situation was actually a very good example in understanding the importance of activist movements, especially international activist movements, and supported the hypothesis "**Hypothesis 3: It is known that lynching culture has sanctioning power within the social structure.**" Additionally, especially the fact that thousands or even millions of people protect the rights of animals as a single voice at the same time, put various action plans into action, and some brands were lynched by the masses showed that digital activism and lynching culture have a very serious response in the social base and that people who come together can become a great power and challenge hegemony and capitalist systems. This not only raised awareness about animal experiments but also achieved an activist victory by causing relevant organisations that experiment on animals for their own benefit to reconsider their actions.

When the data obtained by using the content analysis method of the research were analysed, it was seen that there was a certain similarity with the data obtained in semiotic analysis. Unlike the data obtained with the semiotic analysis method, the data obtained with the content analysis method is more related to the effects of the process on the digital environment, and therefore, various differences were encountered. One of these differences is the achievements brought by the digital form of activism. For this reason, it is thought that the data obtained by content analysis should be handled from a different perspective.

When the findings obtained through the content analysis method are analysed, it is concluded that social media is a very powerful field for activist movements. For through digital activism, it is possible to interact directly with any person anywhere in the world and through this interaction it becomes possible to achieve rapid organisation. The most obvious indication of this is that people who have a physical presence at quite independent points can communicate with each other instantly with just a few buttons. From this point of view, the most clear inference among the findings obtained through the content analysis method is that there is fast communication independent of physical existence.

As a result of the fact that many people today have access to the Internet, it is necessary to mention that there is an effective interpersonal interaction. As can be seen in the content analysis, people who are quite independent from each other can access opinions that differ from their own by using channels such as Twitter. For this purpose, it was concluded that it was sufficient for other users to show support by retweeting, liking or commenting on the tweets written by other Twitter users. Equally, it has been observed that users can carry out digital activism by communicating with other users through hashtags, images or videos, as well as preparing simultaneous action plans on various issues such as animal rights by using these digital ways.

To this end, it can be stated that each of the findings obtained by using both semiotic analysis and content analysis method support each other to a certain extent and are similar to each other to a certain extent. It has been concluded that the only thing necessary for many important issues such as animal rights to come to the agenda and for this agenda to be put into action is human beings. So, in this respect, it has been concluded that people, or more accurately, masses, societies, can impose anything they want on the hegemony as long as they are together.

From this perspective, when any issue that disturbs the masses or societies comes to the agenda, it is thought that people can combat all kinds of problems as a result of their cooperation and blending activism and lynch culture. It is estimated that there will be no problem that people cannot solve if they stand as one voice and one breath in the face of all kinds of pressure on societies and every problem that is ignored although it is important, and it can be suggested that all humanity should remain in unity so that they can fight against all kinds of troubles.

Apart from this, it is thought that issues such as digital activism, lynching culture, animal rights are among the most important issues of recent years and that much more attention should be paid to these areas in the academic sense. Due to the fact that these issues, which can be considered among the most important issues in the mass sense, are not researched in sufficient depth by the academic community, such a vast field remains empty and causes the academy to move away from social issues. In preventing this, it is believed that more researchers should go into the field and address this field from a sociological, psychological, communicative and many other perspectives.

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Declaration of Researcher's Conflict of Interest

There is no potential conflicts of interest in this study.

Declaration of Research and Publication Ethics

This study which does not require ethics committee approval and/or legal/specific permission complies with the research and publication ethics.

Researcher's Contribution Rate Statement

I am a single author of this paper. My contribution is 100%.