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## The Effect of Group Identification and Emotion on Participation in Collective Action

Iryna Chaban

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LOYOLA UNIVERSITY CHICAGO

THE EFFECT OF GROUP IDENTIFICATION AND EMOTION ON PARTICIPATION IN  
COLLECTIVE ACTION

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO  
THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL  
IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF  
MASTER OF ARTS

PROGRAM IN SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY

BY  
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## ABSTRACT

In the last few years, the number of collective actions in the United States started to increase. These events have been ranging from peaceful to violent. The present research aims to understand what is causing groups to participate in collective action and become aggressive. It will expand understanding of group identification, emotion, and participation in collective action. The researcher hypothesizes that individuals who hold higher identification with a group are more likely to experience anger and participate in a protest. Data collection involved an online survey. Introductory psychology students read a passage describing a protest and respond to several short questionnaires. Based on the condition, the students read a passage describing protests at Loyola University or a neighboring school. The passages also varied the levels of intensity of the protests ranging from peaceful to violent. The researcher hypothesized that participants would be more likely to participate in a protest involving their ingroup (home university) and when violence was minimized. Results were consistent with hypotheses and are discussed in terms of how they can be used to help prevent violence in collective action situations.

## INTRODUCTION

Various factors can create an environment of social unrest and dissatisfaction, as demonstrated in and the numerous violent protests in countries such as Ukraine, China, and Turkey. (Ayanian et al., 2021). However, the United States has also seen an increase in the number of collective actions in the last few years. The Black Lives Matter movements have been among the most prominent examples of collective action. Ilchi and Frank (2021) define the main reason behind the BLM movement as the mistreatment of people of color by institutions in the United States. Another example of recent collective action would be the insurrection of the capitol, which turned to be extremely violent. Collective actions such as protests can take on various forms ranging from peaceful demonstrations to violent rampages. The main question is, why are some protests peaceful and others violent? The present research aims to learn the causes behind violent protests to prevent their occurrence. A decrease in violence may increase the chances of peaceful protests, which are more likely to bring social change. The central theory focused on research concerning group behavior and group collective action is social identity theory.

### **Social Identity**

In order to understand the behavior of some groups, there is a need to understand the concept of social identity. As defined by Turner et al. (1994), social identity is a process of categorizing self and others into social groups based on the observed similarities with some groups and differences with others. Thus, the theory of social identity explains the formation of

group membership and identification (Merck, 2021). However, group identification also defines how whole groups and members react and behave during public events. The variance in the behaviors can be explained by the shift from the personal to the social identity (Turner et al., 1994).

Social Identity Theory argues that people have various identities that are often derived from the groups in which they are members. Identities can vary from personalized (I see myself as a single individual) to social (I see myself as a member of a specific group). A person's identity at any given point in time depends on how they are currently categorizing themselves. The idea of self-categorization distinguishes both personal and social identity as two different concepts (Turner et al., 1994). However, the difference between the two is affected by the variability in the self-categorization based on the situation. The self-categorization of one individual may differ based on the social context. This process relies on the tendency to identify with multiple groups simultaneously. Being a member of a social group brings certain benefits to an individual. Among them are the feelings of belonging and recognition by the group (Hogg & Tindale, 2002) and the formation of connection with others (Turner et al., 1994). Choosing to identify with a specific group shows how important it is to the self (Iyer & Leach, 2008). The level of importance a group holds determines the response when the membership is threatened. Additionally, when identification with one category of people becomes salient, the personal identity and other memberships become less significant (Turner et al., 1994). It can lead to the depersonalization of self-perceptions and heightened focus on the shared traits between self and the group. If the following shift occurs in multiple members of the same group simultaneously, it may provide an explanation for the occurrence of collective actions.

The theories of social identity and self-categorization create a base for understanding the decision-making behind participation in unified calls to action (Adam et al., 2021). Most calls to action are distinguished into two groups, normative and non-normative (Wright, Taylor & Moghaddam, 1990). The normative collective actions tend to follow the rules and norms of the society in which they occur. However, the non-normative collective actions tend to neglect the imposed rules and instead participants behave in an unacceptable way. Numerous factors lead to the occurrence of collective action. But protests usually involve social groups whose behavior is caused by the desire to bring social change, remove injustice and disadvantage (Wright, Taylor & Moghaddam, 1990). In addition, there are emotional aspects that affect the occurrence and participation in the non-normative collective actions.

### **Emotion**

Emotional factors have been largely disregarded as a major aspect of group identification and calls to action. However, with the development of the Intergroup Emotion Theory (IET, Mackie, Devose, & Smith, 2000), emotions gained one of the central positions in the research of group behaviors. But the experience of group-based emotions cannot be possible without being a member of a group. Emotions based on the group membership and experienced by the members are different from those that are experienced based on the personal aspects of one's life (Smith, Seger & Mackie, 2007). However, research shows that group-based emotions are experienced similarly to individual emotions. The group identification process must occur first before a person can experience group-based emotions. As shown by Mackie and Smith

(2018), group identification can be activated by the slightest mention of a specific group to which a person might belong. They also found that the strength of the emotional response after group identification was different for various memberships mentioned. There are also some differences in the experience of negative and positive group-based emotions.

For instance, the study by Crisp et al. (2007) showed that the experience of negative group-based emotions depends on the strength of group identification. More specifically, soccer fans with high group identification who were subjected to social group threat through the team's loss experienced anger. However, soccer fans with low group identification who were subjected to the same threat only experienced feeling of sadness. These results suggest that the experience of negative group-based emotions is different from other emotions and that emotions can be used as potential identifiers of group identification. Group-based norms can also be used as identifiers of the group membership. As the studies by Mackie and Smith (2018) show, individuals who imagine themselves as members of certain groups report emotions that are perceived to be the norm for those groups. The cultural aspects play a significant role in the emotions that are perceived to be a norm for groups. The activation of group-based emotions can also occur due to the processes of appraisal or construal.

When members of a social group experience unequal treatment due to their membership, they begin to experience negative emotions, which in subsequence lead to aggressive reactions. However, in the case of group-based construal, when members of a certain group see other members experience unequal treatment, they may react with aggression (Obaidi et al., 2018). The research by Obaidi et al. (2018) shows that Muslim individuals who grew up in Western countries and did not encounter Western foreign policies experienced victimization by proxy.

The phenomenon of victimization by proxy caused those individuals to experience negative emotions towards the Western countries that adopt unfair policies in Islamic states. These results support social identification theory (Turner et al., 1994) and show that individuals can experience the world through their group membership. However, the results also imply that group-related events can produce strong reactions in members who have not experienced the event. Thus, the group-based perceptions of injustice may create the climate for the occurrence of calls to action. Emotions such as anger, fear, and guilt can arise as a result of an event holding a high implication for the group (Crisp et al., 2007).

Negative in-group emotions are also affected by out-group emotions, which are influenced by biases and stereotypes (Mackie & Smith, 2018). Whenever in-group members are asked to estimate the emotions of out-group members, they tend to underestimate the experience of positive emotions by the out-group members. In-group biases act as one of the causes for such estimates. But, the relations between the groups also affect the perceptions of the emotions (Hess & Fischer, 2013). In-group members are more likely to give correct estimations and even mimic the emotions of out-group members if the relation between groups is positive. However, a negative relationship between groups may lead to the negative emotions experienced by the in-group members due to incorrect estimations.

**Anger.** Anger is one of the emotions that most likely to be associated with collective actions. The dual-pathway model of collective action proposed by van Zomeren et al. (2004) shows that anger is a result of unfair treatment and a negative group-based appraisal. When a group collectively perceives an event as unfair, along with the social support from other groups, they may experience anger and choose to take collective action. In such a case, the collective

action would act as a way to remove negative emotions from the unjust event. However, anger as a cause of collective actions does not explain the aggressive behavior of protesters during the event. The process of anger contagion may be one of the reasons behind the negative emotions during protests (Hogg & Tindale, 2002). Emotional contagion occurs when emotions such as anger spread from person to person. When people find themselves in large groups that experience negative emotions, anger from a few people may transfer onto the whole group. The tense environment during the call to action may also produce the phenomenon of deindividuation (Hogg & Tindale, 2002). It can cause the prevalence of immoral behaviors during an event if its participants believe that they will not be recognized and punished for their actions.

Anger can function as a cause for collective action when it is present alongside other factors such as efficacy and perceived cost of participation. Ayanian and Tausch (2016) showed that feelings of anger and efficacy independently increase the chances of participation in high-cost protests. Similar effects of group-based anger and group efficacy were found by Shi et al. (2015) in their study on the occurrence of collective action in China. The researchers used the dual-pathway model created by van Zomeren et al. (2004) to evaluate the reaction of university students to negative news.

In the first experiment, the researchers asked students to read about the unfair tuition increase and answer some questions. The results of the first experiment showed that group-based anger increased the desire to participate in collective action. The group efficacy showed the same results as was predicted by the dual-pathway model. In the second experiment, the researcher manipulated news about the poor food quality in the university and found similar results. In the final experiment, the researchers studied the ability of the model to predict the type of collective

action participants are willing to take. As a result, participants experienced higher anger in the unjust condition and were more willing to participate in any form of collective action. Overall, anger appears to be one of the strongest predictors of any collective action, whereas efficacy only appears to predict participation in the protest.

### **Moral Judgment**

In recent years researchers also started looking at the moral judgment and its relation to collective action (Moreira et al., 2018). In their study, Moreira et al. (2018) proposed that individual differences in moral judgment affect willingness to participate in collective action. To test their hypothesis, the researcher collected a sample of university students and asked them to answer several questionnaires. The results of the study showed that the level and quality of moral reasoning influenced the desire to participate in the collective action. Specifically, young people who reported holding conventional moral beliefs were more likely to join collective action that followed the rules and norms of the society. But young people who reported holding post-conventional moral beliefs which allow for a better moral judgement were more flexible with engagement in activism and radicalism. To participate in activism, young people must recognize themselves as members of the social group and feel a moral obligation to act.

In their work, Sabucedo et al. (2018) define moral obligation as a force that motivates people to behave in a way that satisfies their personal norms and values. The researchers proposed that moral obligation plays a relevant role as a predictor of participation in collective action. A total of three studies showed that moral obligation was conceptually different from moral norms and moral convictions. Moral obligation was found to be a better predictor of

participation than the other two concepts and yielded results similar to group identification and efficacy. Several separate theoretical constructs, such as group identification, emotions, and moral judgments, seem to influence people to act together. However, they do not explain the reasons why some calls to action turn violent. The research on violent calls to action suggests that there are other factors that can create an aggressive environment during protests.

### **Situational Factors**

Wright, Taylor, and Moghaddam (1990) state that unequal distribution of resources is present among all groups and categories of people. The unequal amount of resources between groups can lead to competition between them to acquire more resources and cause a power imbalance (Mackie & Smith, 2018). It can generate intergroup conflict and promote out-group prejudice and biases. In such a case, collective action of the disadvantaged group is directed towards improving their condition. When the collective action takes the form of a protest, other situational factors may cause it to turn violent. Nassauer (2018) analyzed thirty protests that had taken place in United States and Germany to identify similar factors which lead to violence. The results of their research identified five aspects, such as lack of communication between protesters and opposition, issues with the police, and destruction of property. However, the five aspects have to work in combination to produce tension which subsequently turns to violence. The oppositional side of many protests takes the form of a local government whose oppressive tactics lead to dissatisfaction of social groups.

**Effects of oppression on participation.** The cost of participation in collective action also plays a relevant role in its occurrence. In a high-cost collective action, participants can experience fear of being punished for participating. But in low-cost collective action, participants

do not have to fear repercussions of their participation. If group members perceive the cost of a protest to be high (Ives & Lewis, 2020) and the efficacy low, they are less likely to participate overall. The punishments for collective action are set in place by the local government institutions that hold some form of legal power. However, in certain circumstances, the potential punishment for collective action does not prevent its occurrence.

A population can experience a surge in protests after the placement of severely oppressive laws by the government. For instance, Poland saw an increase in protest after the Polish government attempted to make abortion illegal; it placed severe restrictions on many people (Besta et al., 2019). The oppressive laws influenced groups of people to come together and act. When looking at the political side of collective action, the political group membership becomes a variable of interest. Tappin, Pennycook, and Rand (2020) stated that individuals tend to follow the political group in charge by conforming to their beliefs. Due to the popularity of political groups, they are often mentioned in the calls to action. While unjust laws may act as a cause for collective action, the measures taken by the government towards a peaceful call to action may turn it into a violent protest (Ives & Lewis, 2020). Violent protests lose their ability to deliver a clear message and bring social change due to violence and social damage. However, the researcher proposes that high group identification increases the desire to join protests even when it appears to be turning violent. Thus, the central hypothesis states that participants who hold high group identification with students from Loyola University are more likely to experience anger and choose to participate in a protest. The students coming from low economic backgrounds should be especially sensitive to the described threat. In addition, the researcher expects to see a decrease in participation for the violent condition across both groups.

## CURRENT STUDY

The current study aimed to deepen our understanding of relations between group identification, anger, and participation in violent collective action. The present research used a combination of emotional, social, and moral factors to predict willingness to participate in protests. Specifically, the researcher used an unjust increase in tuition to generate negative emotions in students. The participants of the study read a scenario that describe a protest taking place at either Loyola University or a neighboring school. The location was manipulated in order to activate the participant's social (school) identity. Finally, the descriptions of the protests varied in their degree of aggression and organization. Our dependent measures addressed to what degree students choose to participate in protests that were potentially violent and dangerous. All participants had the option to join the fictional protests; however, they were free to decline their participation and provide reasoning. Additionally, participants were asked to share alternative options of collective action which could work in the described situation. In addition, the moral justification, presence of opposition, and unorganized conditions of the protest were measured to assess how they affected participation.

## METHODS

### **Participants**

Overall, 308 undergraduate psychology students at Loyola University Chicago participated in the present study. Participants were randomly assigned to one of the six conditions. The study used a 2 (School: Loyola, De Paul) x 3 (Violence: peaceful/organized, visible unrest/somewhat organized, violent/unorganized) between participants factorial design. The conducted power analysis resulted in 40 participants required per cell of the study design. Thus, the researcher needed approximately 240 participants overall. The final number of participants whose responses were used for analyses was 263. The remaining 40 responses were removed from the data set as they either failed a manipulation check or did not respond to a majority of the questions. After their participation, the researcher granted each participant compensation in the form of 1 credit toward their Introductory Psychology grade.

### **Procedure**

The following study was conducted on an online platform. After applying for participation, participants got access to the study link. Participants were randomly placed into one of the six groups which differed in terms of the information presented in the scenario. After, the researcher asked students to answer a short demographic questionnaire (see Appendix A). Based on the condition, the program automatically displayed one of the passages to the participant. The passage described a possible scenario of a protest that takes place either on the Loyola University campus or the DePaul University campus. An unfair increase in the schools'

tuition was used as the cause of the protest. The scenarios varied in the levels of described tension and aggression displayed by the protesters. The researcher asked participants to carefully read the passage and think about it for a few minutes.

As soon as students finished their task, they were tasked to respond to three separate questionnaires. The first questionnaire asked about overall opinions of the protest and required a written response of at least two sentences. The second measured the emotional reactions to the information using a series of rating scales. Finally, the third questionnaire asked about past experiences of collective action and require a written response of at least two sentences. Upon completion of all questions, the participants were asked to read a debriefing form. and granted compensation.

## **Materials**

**Demographic questionnaire.** All participants were required to answer a short demographic questionnaire at the beginning of the experiment. The questionnaire asked general questions such as participants' gender, ethnicity, and school year (see Appendix A). In addition, it also asked about political affiliation and annual household income.

**Manipulation passages.** Each participant read one of the six manipulation passages about a protest that takes place at a university. All six passages were almost identical in writing and the details they were describing, with the exceptions of the location and levels of protest intensity (see Appendix B). Three passages described a protest held at the East Quad of the Lakeshore campus of Loyola University. The reason behind the protest was an unfair 8% rise in tuition. The school promised to use the money to upgrade the Baumhart residence hall in the Water Tower campus. The behavior of the protesters was different in each of the passages. In

peaceful conditions, protesters were presented as organized and calm, with no campus safety present. In visible unrest conditions, the protesters started to show tension and agitation with campus safety being present. In violent conditions, the protest turned aggressive and destructive with the active conflict between participants and the campus safety. The other three passages described identical events but at a Quad of the Lincoln Park campus of DePaul University. The passages described participants of the experiment as the students of Loyola University who are walking through the campus of DePaul University and are witnessing the protest. As before, the three passages differed in the descriptions of the protesters' behavior depending on the condition.

The researcher conducted a pilot test before to test the ability of the passages to generate a reaction in participants. In the pilot test, the researcher only used the three scenarios describing events at the Loyola University and a short version of questionnaires. The results of the pilot test showed that participants saw scenarios differing in terms of violence they described. Students also reported less desire to participate in the condition with high tensions and aggression. Based on the results of the pilot test, the researcher used scenarios in the current research.

### **Dependent Measures**

**Protest participation.** One of the dependent measures of the following study was the desire to participate in the protests described in the scenario. After spending some time thinking about the scenario, the participants were asked to share their opinions through a short questionnaire (see Appendix C). The first question asked: "Would you intend to participate in the following protest?" and choose among the options on *the intention scale*. The next two questions asked for short two-sentence explanations behind the decision and the overall perception of the described event. The last question asked participants to provide an alternative response

(other than to protest) that they thought would be effective. The researcher coded the following responses by the described reasoning and emotions, such as financial struggle and anger (Appendix F).

**Emotional response.** An additional variable of interest in the following study was the feeling of anger produced by the passages. The researcher looked at anger to see whether it correlates with intention to participate in collective action. Some other measures were also included for exploratory purposes. The researcher used a series of rating scales to evaluate students' reactions to the tuition increase (see Appendix D). The researcher asked participants to select one of the five options which apply to them in the set of 17 questions. The options varied from *strongly disagree* to *strongly agree*. For instance, several statements described the emotional state of the participant "I would feel angry at myself if I did not participate" and "The increase in tuition would make me sad." Additionally, several statements targeted the feeling of anger directly "Anger is necessary to resolve this problem" and "Protesters are right to be angry."

**Past experience.** The participants were also asked to answer a questionnaire about any past experience of participating in the collective action (see Appendix E). The first question asked, "Have you ever participated in a protest before?" with simple *yes* or *no* answers. Depending on whether participants answer yes, they were be asked to describe the cause of the protests they have been a part of and their overall experience in at least two sentences. If participants answer no, they were free to disregard the two questions.

## RESULTS

### **Analyses of Participation Rates**

The main dependent variable in the study was intention to participate in the protest and was measured on a 100-point scale (After reading one of the randomly provided scenarios the participants rated their intention to participate in the described protest. Subjects' participation was measured on the scale ranging from 0 to 100, where 0 was labeled as "Definitely" and 100 was labeled as "Definitely Not". This variable was analyzed with a 2 (social identity - ingroup (Loyola) vs. outgroup (De Paul)) by 3 (low, medium, and high violence) analysis of variance. Social identity had a significant impact on participation,  $F(1, 247)=12.073, p<.05, partial \eta^2 =0.047$ . Participants were more likely to participate in the protest when it was held at Loyola ( $M = 32.08$ ) than when it was held at DePaul ( $M = 44.10$ ). The level of violence also had a significant impact on intent to participate,  $F(2, 247)=8.803, p<.05, partial \eta^2 =0.067$ . The interaction between the social identity and levels of violence did not significantly impact participation,  $F(2, 247)=1.644, p=.195, partial \eta^2 =0.013$ . Post-hoc pairwise comparisons were analyzed at each level of violence using Tukey's HSD. This test showed differences between low levels of violence ( $M=29.14$ ) and high levels of violence ( $M=47.05; p<.001$ ). The other two comparisons were not significant. The results of this test suggest that intention to participate in a protest may be impacted by social identity and levels of violence separately, i.e., there is no interaction between the two variables.

## Analyses of Perceived Factors

**Factor Analysis.** The researcher performed a factor analysis on the 17 rating scale items. The results of the factor analysis showed that three factors (eigen values > 1.0) captured most of the variance of the 17-item scale (See Figure 1 for corresponding Scree plot). The first factor had strong loadings for items 1 through 7 was labelled “social identity”. The second factor had strong loadings for items 9 and 11 and was labelled “concern for safety”. The third factor had strong loadings for items 16 and 17 and was labelled “support of use of force”.

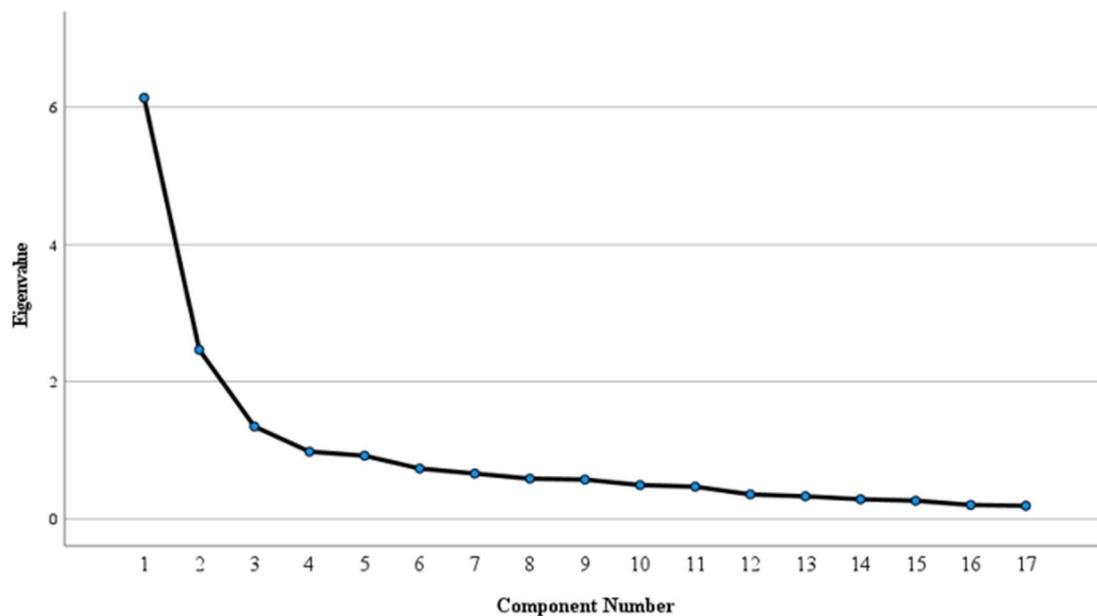


Figure 1. Scree Plot

**Analyses of Variance.** Based on the following findings, the researcher created scales for the three factors and performed a 2 by 3 analysis of variance (ANOVA) with each. The results for social identity mirror the results for willingness to participate in the protest. The social identity value was significantly impacted by the social identity variable,  $F(1, 257)=5.430$ ,  $p<.05$ ,  $partial \eta^2=0.021$  and level of violence,  $F(2, 257)=18.098$ ,  $p<.05$ ,  $partial \eta^2=0.123$ . Participants were more identified with Loyola as compared to DePaul, and more identified with

low violent protestors as compared to medium or high. The results also suggest that all three groups were different from each other. The interaction between the two variables was not significant,  $F(2, 257)=1.478, p=.230, \text{partial } \eta^2=0.011$ . The effects for value concerned with safety did not show any significant results. Lastly, the force value was only significantly impacted by the social identity variable,  $F(1, 257)=8.741, p<.05, \text{partial } \eta^2=0.033$ . The participants were more likely to support the use of force when they were in the condition of their own school (Loyola).

### **Additional Analyses**

**Correlations.** The researcher performed a simple correlation analysis to assess the relationship between the house income and intent to participate in the protest. Results demonstrated that there was no significant relationship between the two variables,  $r = -0.050, p = .431$ . This suggests that there is no relationship between household income and protest participation. Similarly, the correlation analysis between race (white vs. other) and participation demonstrated that there was no significant relationship between the two variables,  $r = -0.012, p = .852$ . Both analyses suggest that there is no relationship between the demographic factors and intent to join the protest.

**Frequencies.** The open-ended questions were first coded for content and then analyzed with a simple analysis of frequency (See Appendix F). The results of the first question showed

that around 35% of participant used finances as the main explanation to their decision (Table 1).

However, about 27% of participants used personal views on protesting as the main explanation.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Financial	93	35.4	35.4	35.4
	Help Others	47	17.9	17.9	53.2
	Fear/Safety	43	16.3	16.3	69.6
	Personal View	70	26.6	26.6	96.2
	Other	10	3.8	3.8	100.0
	Total	263	100.0	100.0	

Table 1. Reasoning

Additionally, the results for the second open-ended question showed that around 23% percent of participants would sign a petition rather than participate in a protest. However, almost 50% of students proposed a different form of collective action as alternative solution to the given problem.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Petition	60	22.8	24.0	24.0
	Contacting Officials	47	17.9	18.8	42.8
	Student Meeting	8	3.0	3.2	46.0
	Boycotting	9	3.4	3.6	49.6
	Other form of action	126	47.9	50.4	100.0
	Total	250	95.1	100.0	
Missing	-99.0	13	4.9		
Total		263	100.0		

Table 2. Alternative Solution

## DISCUSSION

Overall, peaceful collective action can be beneficial in bringing social change and improving the positions of disadvantaged groups. However, as the research shows, some collective actions turn violent due to oppression, emotional tension, and unequal group treatment. In recent years protests led by the younger adults became more prevalent, as young people seek new ideas and social change (Yusof et al., 2021). Young people are vulnerable to the threats of their social and group-based identities, which influence their involvement in extremist movements. Such threats are particularly important for young people from disadvantaged backgrounds whose social identities are still forming. Thus, the research should attempt to understand how young people decide to participate in collective action based on the strength of their group identification. In the present study, the researcher hypothesized that the activation of student identity should lead to a higher chance of participation in a protest even when it appears to be violent. Specifically, the researcher proposed that participants in Loyola University condition will report a higher desire to participate in the protest across the three conditions. The results of the study support the following hypotheses. The participants in the Loyola University condition reported a higher intent to join the protest across the three conditions than their DePaul counterparts.

As expected, the participants in the Loyola University condition experienced higher group identification with the protesting students. The social identity results are consistent with past research showing that outcomes for ingroups are more salient and important than are

outcomes for outgroups (Turner et al., 1994). Thus, participating in the protest when the tuition increase was relevant to the ingroup was seen as more viable even when threat levels (potential violence) increased. However, participants were generally less likely to participate as threat levels increased. Thus, both relevance and possible harm seemed to guide intentions to participate in protests.

The results showed no support for the potential for demographic factors to influence participation intentions. Neither race nor income level were significantly related to intentions to participate. Although logically one might assume that the tuition increase would pose a greater harm for low-income students, the procedures used here made university identity salient by directly mentioning it. It might be worthwhile in future research to also make salient income level (and/or race) to see if the combined category of poor and Loyola student would increase participation intentions.

Although some participants in the DePaul condition expressed similar views on the unfairness of the decision, their desire to participate was overridden by the fear for personal safety, as the events had the potential to escalate. However, the fear for safety was lower in the Loyola University condition as students reported the willingness to use force if the conditions of the event would escalate. The anger experienced by students as a result of unjust policies supports the dual-pathway model of collective action proposed by van Zomeren et al. (2004). The unfair increase in tuition can affect each student personally and cause them to experience negative emotions. Seeing other students from various groups protesting encourages participants to join and, depending on the condition, experience the phenomena of anger contagion.

Yet, the willingness to participate in the protest was also affected by the perceived efficacy of the actions. The perceptions of efficacy are based on the past experiences the students have with the University and the school's history of resolving collective action. Surprisingly, a number of participants expressed disbelief in the ability of protests to bring social change and suggested using other ways to communicate the dissatisfaction. One of the popular suggestions to resolve the unjust increase in tuition was signing an online petition or spreading the information on various social media platforms. The following findings suggest the need to study social media platforms as growing spaces for sharing information and engaging in collective behaviors. Platforms such as Facebook and Twitter help people organize collective actions and spread emotional messages (Jost et al., 2018).

### **Limitations**

It is necessary to outline several limitations present in the following study. One of the limitations is the fact that the sample was gathered through the convenience sampling technique. The researcher recruited students through the online portal offered by Loyola University in exchange for course credit. As a result, the collected sample was predominantly white and high in socioeconomic status, which could be one of the reasons why the researcher did not find a relationship between participation and household income. Also, the study only looked at intentions to participate in a non-real protest. Future research might want to contact students just prior to actual protests on campus to assess how social identity and threats of violence impact real decisions with real consequences. It would also be worthwhile to look at issues with more direct personal interests such as discrimination or sexual misconduct. Social identities other than university membership may play a much larger role in decisions to protest on different topics.

Groups of people who feel disadvantaged will continue to protest and learning more about people's intentions to join such protests may help to make them both safer and more effective.

APPENDIX A  
DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONNAIRE

Please select one or multiple options that apply to you.

1. What is your gender?
  - a. Male
  - b. Female
  - c. Non-Binary
  - d. Other
2. What is your ethnicity?
  - a. Black/African American
  - b. Asian
  - c. Hispanic/Latino
  - d. Middle Eastern
  - e. Native American
  - f. White/Caucasian
  - g. Other
3. What is your school year?
  - a. Freshman
  - b. Sophomore
  - c. Junior
  - d. Senior
4. What is your political affiliation?
  - a. Democrat
  - b. Republican
  - c. Liberal
  - d. Conservative
  - e. Other
5. What is your annual household income?
  - a. Below-20K
  - b. 30K-60K
  - c. 70K-90K
  - d. 100K-Above

APPENDIX B  
MANIPULATION PASSAGES  
PRESENTED IN ORDER

## **Students from Loyola**

### *Peaceful Organized Protest*

While walking through campus, you notice a group of students protesting. Suddenly, you remember seeing an email invitation to join a protest against the institution's decision to raise tuition rates by 8%. It means that, on average, students will have to pay around 3500\$ more starting next year. Given the current conditions, the following decisions can be detrimental to some current students and prevent applications from future students from disadvantaged backgrounds. The Loyola University justified its decision to raise tuition rates by stating that money will refine and upgrade the Baumhart residence hall in the Water Tower campus. The university sent an email about their plans of raising tuition rates, but it did not disclose the exact amount as this decision is not final. After the decision is approved, the university will inform students about the increase at the beginning of the next school year.

The protest was organized by the students two days after the initial email from the school. The protest was scheduled to take place the following week, starting on Monday at 8:00 am. Currently, the protest is taking place in the East Quad of the Lakeshore campus. Students from various majors and years are joining the protest. Upon getting closer, among them you see a number of your classmates who decided to participate. From your point of view, the protesters are calm and are cooperating to reach a common goal. There are a few cars from the campus safety present, but none of the officers are out of their cars. Some students are holding posters with various slogans of protest. Several upper-classmen are using megaphones to read the reasons against the increase to the crowd. You can hear their words and loud collective responses from the mass of protesters. The protestors argue that the increase in tuition for all students is unfair. Since some students will not benefit from the improvement as they cannot afford residence at the Baumhart Hall. Additionally, such a drastic increase can put a financial strain on a lot of students. Since the university's decision will affect you personally, you wonder whether you should join the protest.

### *Visible Unrest Somewhat Organized*

While walking through campus, you notice a group of students protesting. Suddenly, you remember seeing an email invitation to join a protest against the institution's decision to raise tuition rates by 8%. It means that, on average, students will have to pay around 3500\$ more starting next year. Given the current conditions, the following decisions can be detrimental to some current students and prevent applications from future students from disadvantaged backgrounds. The Loyola University justified its decision to raise tuition rates by stating that money will refine and upgrade the Baumhart residence hall in the Water Tower campus. The university sent an email about their plans of raising tuition rates, but it did not disclose the exact amount as this decision is not final. After the decision is approved, the university will inform students about the increase at the beginning of the next school year.

The protest was organized by the students a day after the initial email from the school. The protest was scheduled to take place sometime during the first few days of the following week. Currently, the protest is taking place in the East Quad of the Lakeshore campus. Students

from various majors and years are joining the protest. Upon getting closer among them, you see a number of your classmates who decided to participate. From your point of view, the protesters are a bit tense, and most of the students are looking upset. There are a few cars from the campus safety present, and the officers are out of their cars, but they avoid interaction with the crowd. Some students are waving and throwing posters with various slogans of protest. Several upper-classmen are using megaphones to explain the reasons against the increase to the crowd. You cannot hear their words as there is noise from the mass of protesters. Yet, some protestors can be heard arguing that the increase will put a financial strain on many students. Since the university's decision will affect you personally, you wonder whether you should join the protest.

### *Aggression turning to Violence Unorganized*

While walking through campus, you notice a group of students protesting. Suddenly, you remember seeing an email invitation to join a protest against the institution's decision to raise tuition rates by 8%. It means that, on average, students will have to pay around 3500\$ more starting next year. Given the current conditions, the following decisions can be detrimental to some current students and prevent applications from future students from disadvantaged backgrounds. The Loyola University justified its decision to raise tuition rates by stating that money will refine and upgrade the Baumhart residence hall in the Water Tower campus. The university sent an email about their plans of raising tuition rates, but it did not disclose the exact amount as this decision is not final. After the decision is approved, the university will inform students about the increase at the beginning of the next school year.

The protest was organized by the students the same day after the initial email from the school. Currently, the protest is taking place in the East Quad of the Lakeshore campus. Students from various majors and years are joining the protest. Upon getting closer among them, you see a number of your classmates who decided to participate. There are six cars from the campus safety present. Officers are pressuring the protestors to calm down and return to their classes. From your point of view, the protesters are tense and angry. Their facial expressions show outrage and resentment towards the university and officers. Students are pushing each other and the officers. Some are waving and throwing posters with various slogans of protest to the ground, and several protestors are holding megaphones and screaming. But you cannot hear their words as there is a loud noise from the mass of students. You notice students who are not participating in the protest quickly walk away from the scene in distress. Since the university's decision will affect you personally, you wonder whether you should join the protest.

## **Students from DePaul**

### *Peaceful Organized Protest*

While walking through DePaul Lincoln Park campus, you notice a group of students protesting. Suddenly, you remember seeing a poster inviting students to join a protest against the institution's decision to raise tuition rates by 8%. It means that, on average, students will have to pay around 3500\$ more starting next year. Given the current conditions, the following decisions can be detrimental to some current students and prevent applications from future students from

disadvantaged backgrounds. The DePaul University justified its decision to raise tuition rates by stating that money will refine and upgrade the University Center residence hall in the Loop campus. The university sent an email about their plans of raising tuition rates, but it did not disclose the exact amount as this decision is not final. After the decision is approved, the university will inform students about the increase at the beginning of the next school year.

The poster you saw stated that the protest was organized by students two days after the initial email from the school. The protest was scheduled to take place the following week, starting on Monday at 8:00 am. Currently, the protest is taking place in the Quad of the Lincoln Park campus. Students from various majors and years are joining the protest. Upon getting closer, you notice a few DePaul students whom you know participating in the protest. From your point of view, the protesters are calm and are cooperating to reach a common goal. There are a few cars from the public safety present, but none of the officers are out of their cars. Some students are holding posters with various slogans of protest. Several upper-classmen are using megaphones to read the reasons against the increase to the crowd. You can hear their words and loud collective responses from the mass of protesters. The protestors argue that the increase in tuition for all students is unfair. Since some students will not benefit from the improvement as they cannot afford residence at the University Center. Additionally, such a drastic increase can put a financial strain on a lot of students. Since the university's decision will not affect you personally, you wonder whether you should join the protest.

#### *Visible Unrest Somewhat Organized*

While walking through DePaul Lincoln Park campus, you notice a group of students protesting. Suddenly, you remember seeing a poster inviting students to join a protest against the institution's decision to raise tuition rates by 8%. It means that, on average, students will have to pay around 3500\$ more starting next year. Given the current conditions, the following decisions can be detrimental to some current students and prevent applications from future students from disadvantaged backgrounds. The DePaul University justified its decision to raise tuition rates by stating that money will refine and upgrade the University Center residence hall in the Loop campus. The university sent an email about their plans of raising tuition rates, but it did not disclose the exact amount as this decision is not final. After the decision is approved, the university will inform students about the increase at the beginning of the next school year.

The poster you saw stated that the protest was organized by students one day after the initial email from the school. The protest was scheduled to take place sometime during the first few days of the following week. Currently, the protest is taking place in the Quad of the Lincoln Park campus. Students from various majors and years are joining the protest. Upon getting closer, you notice a few DePaul students whom you know participating in the protest. From your point of view, the protesters are a bit tense, and most of the students are looking upset. There are a few cars from the public safety present, and the officers are out of their cars, but they avoid interaction with the crowd. Some students are waving and throwing posters with various slogans of protest. Several upper-classmen are using megaphones to explain the reasons against the increase to the crowd. You cannot hear their words as there is noise from the mass of protesters. But, some protestors can be heard arguing that that the increase is unfair and will put a financial

strain on some students. Since the university's decision will not affect you personally, you wonder whether you should join the protest.

*Aggression turning to Violence Unorganized*

While walking through DePaul Lincoln Park campus, you notice a group of students protesting. Suddenly, you remember seeing a poster inviting students to join a protest against the institution's decision to raise tuition rates by 8%. It means that, on average, students will have to pay around 3500\$ more starting next year. Given the current conditions, the following decisions can be detrimental to some current students and prevent applications from future students from disadvantaged backgrounds. The DePaul University justified its decision to raise tuition rates by stating that money will refine and upgrade the University Center residence hall in the Loop campus. The university sent an email about their plans of raising tuition rates, but it did not disclose the exact amount as this decision is not final. After the decision is approved, the university will inform students about the increase at the beginning of the next school year.

The poster you saw stated that the protest was organized by students the same day after the initial email from the school. Currently, the protest is taking place in the Quad of the Lincoln Park campus. Students from various majors and years are joining the protest. Upon getting closer, you notice a few DePaul students whom you know participating in the protest. There are six cars from the public safety present, and officers are pressuring the protestors to calm down and return to their classes. From your point of view, the protesters are tense and angry. Their facial expressions show outrage and resentment of the university and officers. Students are pushing each other and officers. Some are waving and throwing posters with various slogans of protest to the ground, and several protestors are holding megaphones and screaming. But you cannot hear their words as there is a loud noise from the mass of students. You notice students who are not participating in the protest quickly walk away from the scene in distress. Since the university's decision will not affect you personally, you wonder whether you should join the protest.

APPENDIX C  
MANIPULATION CHECK

For the questions below please select one of the options or write at least two sentences.

1. Would you participate in the protest?

Definitely      Probably      Not Sure      Probably Not      Definitely  
Not

2. In a few sentences explain why you decided as you did above.

3. What is your perception of the following protest based on the description?

4. What would be your alternative solution to the following problem?

APPENDIX D  
EMOTIONAL RESPONSE QUESTIONNAIRE

Select one of the options that apply to your views and feelings about the protest described previously. Please make sure that you answer each question.

The protest described before was peaceful	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Anger is necessary to resolve this problem	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
As a student, I would want to participate	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I would feel angry at myself if I did not participate	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I would feel like a part of the protesting group	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I would feel safe participating in this protest	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I would have the same feelings as protesters	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I would identify with protesters	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

I would support my fellow classmates	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
It would be morally right to participate	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Protesters are right to be angry	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Protesters should use force	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
The increase in tuition was unfair	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
The increase in tuition would impact me greatly	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
The increase in tuition would make me angry	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
The presence of police would scare me	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
The tuition increase would make me sad	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

APPENDIX E  
PAST EXPERIENCE QUESTIONNAIRE

For the three questions below please select one of the options for the first question, and if applicable write at least two sentences for the next.

1. Have you ever participated in a protest before?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
2. If yes, what was the cause of the protest?
3. If yes, please briefly describe your experience.

APPENDIX F  
CODING SCHEME

B1/Q2 (Block 1, Question 2) What is the main reasoning behind the decision?

- A. Financial
- B. Desire to help other students
- C. Fear for one's safety
- D. Personal view on protesting (Both positive and negative views)
- E. Other

B1/Q3 What is the participant's overall perception of the described event?

- A. Positive
- B. Peaceful
- C. Well organized
- D. Negative
- E. Violent
- F. Unorganized
- G. Other

B1/Q4 What kind of alternative solution did the participant provide?

- A. Formal petition
- B. Write to school's officials
- C. Student meeting
- D. Boycotting the university
- E. Other form of collective action

B3/Q1 (Block 3, Question 1) Does the participant have any prior experience of joining protests?

- A. Yes
- B. No

B3/Q2 If yes, what was the cause of the protest described by the participant?

- A. Black Lives Matter
- B. Women's Rights
- C. Gun Control
- D. Environmental Protection
- E. Abortion (pro and against)
- F. Other cause

B3/Q3 If yes, what was the participant's overall experience?

- A. Positive
- B. Peaceful
- C. Emotional
- D. Negative
- E. Fear eliciting
- F. Other

On the Excel Sheet, please mark for questions # B1/Q2 – B3/Q3 as A=1, B=2, C=3, etc.

Mark the missing responses with a zero. For the responses that mention several options, please select the one that is emphasized the most by the participant.

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## VITA

Iryna Chaban was born and raised in Ivano-Frankivsk, Ukraine. Mrs. Chaban received her Bachelor of Science in Psychology from Loyola University, Chicago, in 2020.

While attending Loyola, Mrs. Chaban developed an interest in group behavior and collective action while assisting Dr. R. Scott Tindale in his laboratory. In addition, to working in the laboratory, Mrs. Chaban spent a semester working as an intern and assisting an organizational psychologist. There Mrs. Chaban worked on developing an online leadership platform.

Mrs. Chaban completed the present work to receive her Master of Arts in Social Psychology at Loyola University, Chicago, in 2022.