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Is Martin Luther King or Malcom X the more acceptable face of protest?

High status groups' reactions to low status groups' collective action

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## Abstract

Work on collective action focuses mainly on the perspective of disadvantaged groups. However, the dynamics of social change cannot be fully understood without taking into account the reactions of the members of advantaged groups to collective action by low status groups. In 10 experiments conducted in four different intergroup contexts ( $N=1349$ ), we examine advantaged groups support for Normative vs Non-normative collective action by disadvantaged groups. Experiments 1a to 1e show that normative collective action is perceived as more likely to improve the disadvantaged group's position and that non-normative collective action is perceived as more damaging to the advantaged group's social image. Also, these differences are due to differences in perceptions of actions violating norms of protest and perceptions of protesters as blaming the advantaged group for the inequality. Experiments 2a to 3 show that high compared to low identified members of advantaged groups distinguish more between types of collective action, showing a greater preference for the normative type. Both a mediational design and an experimental-causal-chain design (Experiments 3 and 4) show that support among high-identifiers depends more on whether collective action damages the high-status group's social image than on whether it actually reduces inequality. Findings suggest that high-status groups' support for collective action is not only shaped by the perceived likelihood of change but also by its potential damage to the image of the high-status ingroup.

*Word count: 226*

*Keywords:* Social inequality, high-status groups, support for collective action, normative and non-normative actions

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“Nonviolence is a powerful and just weapon, which cuts without wounding and ennoble the man who wields it.”

Martin Luther King Jr.

"We declare our right (...) to be given the rights of a human being in this society, on this earth, in this day, which we intend to bring into existence by any means necessary."

Malcom X

These two quotes illustrate how members from disadvantaged groups might choose very different means to challenge discrimination towards Black-Americans. These different strategies find a theoretical echo in the distinction between normative and non-normative collective action (Tausch et al., 2011; Wright, Taylor, & Moghaddam, 1990; Wright, 2009). The present research is the first to date to examine high-status groups' reactions to normative (e.g., demonstrations or strikes) vs. non-normative (e.g., riots or road-blocks) collective action initiated by low-status groups. We propose that support from high status groups' for normative and non-normative actions will depend on how commitment to the high-status ingroup affects reactions to the *perceived* consequences of these actions for the ingroup. More specifically, perceived consequences of collective action are conceptualized here as the extent to which different collective action strategies are perceived to lead to a reduction of inequality (through redistribution of resources and privilege) *or* to a deterioration of the high-status ingroup's social image (through the public exposure of illegitimate domination). We hypothesize that normative collective action is perceived to lead to more inequality-reduction, through an increase in outgroup resources, whereas non-normative action is

perceived as more likely to damage the high-status social image, through the questioning of the larger system and the exposure of undeserved privilege of the high-status group. We suggest that support for collective action will be determined by the extent to which low and high identified members of advantaged groups are sensitive to these expected consequences of collective action.

The recent “boom” in collective action research has focused on predictors of engagement in collective action among members of disadvantaged groups (e.g., Tausch et al., 2011; van Zomeren, Postmes, & Spears, 2008; van Zomeren, Spears, Fischer, & Leach, 2004). Some work has examined members of advantaged groups' willingness to engage in collective action on behalf of the disadvantaged (e.g., Saab, Tausch, Spears, & Cheung, 2015; Stewart et al., 2016; van Zomeren, Postmes, Spears, & Bettache, 2011). However, social change can only be fully understood when considering not only how high-status groups act in the face of inequality but also how they *re-act* when confronted with low-status groups' inequality-challenging *actions* (Iyer & Leach, 2009; Leach, Snider, & Iyer, 2002). Indeed, true change is difficult to conceive without the acceptance or even co-option of the advantaged (Iyer & Ryan, 2009). It is therefore surprising to see how little attention has been paid to *reactions* to specific collective action strategies from low-status groups among *advantaged, high-status* ones, namely those who have arguably the most to lose with social change (for an exception, see Mallett, Huntsinger, Sinclair, & Swim, 2008).

### **Collective Action: The Importance of an Intergroup Perspective**

By definition, low-status groups have little power, resources, and influence to trigger the change they desire in their position (Iyer & Ryan, 2009; Leach et al., 2002). Thus, more often than not, low-status groups need to secure support from other sectors of society if they want to see social change come about (Hornsey et al., 2006; Simon & Klandermans, 2001; Subasic, Reynolds, & Turner, 2008). This may include attempts to express grievances to

policy-makers or to shift public opinion to build political pressure (Burstein, 2006; Burstein & Linton, 2002). Previous research has examined attempts to influence bystanders (Saab et al., 2015), sympathizers (Stewart et al., 2016; Thomas & Louis, 2014), and opinion-based groups (McGarty, Bliuc, Thomas, & Bongiorno, 2009). However, there is far less work on how collective action by the disadvantaged affects those who would also be directly affected by social change – the advantaged (Iyer & Leach, 2009). As high and low status groups are in an intergroup relation, collective action by the disadvantaged should be viewed as an intergroup struggle with the advantaged (Simon & Klandermans, 2001) who are affected by social change in ways different from the disadvantaged (Leach et al., 2002). As Goodman (2001, p. 6) nicely puts it:

There are unequal power relationships that allow one group to benefit at the expense of another group. The various ways people name the two sides of this dynamic reflect these qualities: oppressor and oppressed, advantaged and disadvantaged, dominant and subordinate, agent and target, privileged and marginalized, dominator and dominated, majority and minority.

Here, we use the terms high vs low status/power and advantaged vs disadvantaged groups interchangeably. We chose these terms as they convey the aspect of intergroup inequality without necessarily implying intentional oppression or domination or differences in groups' sizes.

There are two main reasons why analyzing collective action from this intergroup perspective is crucial for understanding social change. First, because of their greater power and resources, high-status groups play a major role in the actual effectiveness of collective action (Goodman, 2001; Iyer & Leach, 2009). For example, one consequence of the “glass-ceiling” is that men rather than women are likely to be in positions of power in organizations.

This makes it more likely for men to possess the means to actually reduce gender discrimination in the workplace. High status groups' support for collective action by low status groups can also give credibility to low-status groups' grievances and change efforts which can help convince other sectors of the organization or society (Burstein, 2006; Burstein & Linton, 2002; Simon & Klandermans, 2001; Subasic et al., 2008).

Second, high-status groups may have the most to lose materially if collective action by low-status groups is successful. Thus, unlike bystanders, and other less self-interested sectors of the society, high-status groups have more interest in opposing social change so as to preserve their advantage (Jackman, 1994; Jackman & Crane, 1986) and maintaining the power, resources, and prestige that goes with the high-status position (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999).

Having said this, analyzing collective action from an intergroup perspective is also crucial to understanding that collective action from low-status groups is likely to draw attention to the unfair advantage of high-status ones. This can lead to a need by the high-status group to legitimize their higher status (Iyer & Leach, 2009; Leach et al., 2002). Although high-status group members may be sensitive to the predicament of low-status individuals (and thus open to the action), this also creates an additional threat to the social image of high-status groups, and consequent defensiveness, which may reduce support. We argue here that these two motives, interest and social image, are critical in shaping reactions to collective action among high-status group members. In the remainder of this section, we examine previous research on high-status groups' support for social change in the absence of collective action from low-status groups.

### **High-Status Groups' Support for Social Change**

Previous research shows the very sophisticated and sometimes ironic ways by which high-status group members manage to justify and maintain their dominant position (Chow,

Lowery, & Hogan, 2013; Jackman, 1994; Saguy, Tausch, Dovidio, & Pratto, 2009; Taylor Phillips & Lowery, 2015). For instance, strategies that have proven powerful in improving *general attitudes* towards disadvantaged groups, such as intergroup contact (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006) will not necessarily generalize to support of policies aimed at reducing intergroup inequality (Jackman & Crane, 1986; Thomas, McGarty, & Mavor, 2009; Wright & Lubensky, 2009).

One hierarchy-maintenance strategy is the increased willingness of threatened high-status group members to provide dependency-oriented help to low-status groups (Halabi, Dovidio, & Nadler, 2008; Nadler, Harpaz-Gorodeisky, & Ben-David, 2009), preferably to autonomy-oriented help (Shnabel, Bar-Anan, Kende, Bareket, & Lazar, 2016). In a similar vein, feelings of guilt about inequality result in support for reparative policies *but not* for inequality-reduction ones (Iyer, Leach, & Crosby, 2003). Even when it comes to the mere perception of intergroup inequalities, high-status group members seem to use denial strategies as ways to protect the ingroup's advantaged position (Knowles, Lowery, Chow, & Unzueta, 2014).

This tendency to oppose inequality-reduction policies seems to be directly linked to a “fear of falling” associated with the prospect of losing power or resources (Jetten, Mols, Healy, & Spears, 2017; Jetten, Mols, & Postmes, 2015). For example, opposition to affirmative action among highly identified White people was found to be stronger when such policies were expected to lead to a loss of privilege among Whites (*vs.* a gain for Blacks; Lowery, Unzueta, Knowles, & Goff, 2006). In the same vein, when a minority plight for equality was framed in terms of “rights” as compared to causing “distress” or no framing, support for empowering policies was reduced and this effect was mediated by an increase in zero-sum perceptions, that is, perceptions of loss for high-status groups (Shnabel, Dovidio, & Levin, 2016).



However, a loss of resources is not the only source of threat that high-status groups might experience (for a general discussions, see Neuberg & Cottrell, 2002; Scheepers, Spears, Doosje, & Manstead, 2002, 2003, 2006a, 2006b). In addition to resource-related motives and (correspondent) threats, we find issues related to the symbolic value of the identity of the ingroup (Stephan & Stephan, 1996, 2000). As is the case for resource-related threats, threats to the social image ingroup trigger ingroup bias (Bourhis, Giles, Leyens, & Tajfel, 1979), outgroup derogation (Branscombe & Wann, 1994) and increase support for inequality (Gordijn, Yzerbyt, Wigboldus, & Dumont, 2006). Importantly, research on the needs-based model of reconciliation (Shnabel & Nadler, 2008) has shown that high-status groups profiting from illegitimate advantage are especially likely to experience a threat to their moral image (Siem, von Oettingen, Mummendey, & Nadler, 2013). This threat is associated to less positive attitudes towards the low-status group and less willingness to engage in collective action on behalf of the outgroup (Shnabel, Ullrich, Nadler, Dovidio, & Aydin, 2013).

This concern about the ingroup's social image or reputation is especially visible among highly identified group members (Branscombe, Ellemers, Spears, & Doosje, 1999; Jiménez-Moya, Spears, Rodríguez-Bailón, & de Lemus, 2015). Research shows that low and high-identifiers react differently to threats to the ingroup's image (Doosje, Ellemers, & Spears, 1995; Ellemers, Spears, & Doosje, 2002; Spears, Doosje, & Ellemers, 1997; van Zomeren & Spears, 2009; van Zomeren et al., 2004; van Zomeren, Spears, & Leach, 2008). Whereas low-identifiers are usually more instrumental and motivated by self-interest, high-identifiers are also concerned with the group's social image (see also, Jiménez-Moya, Spears, Rodríguez-Bailón, & de Lemus, 2015; Leach et al., 2008; Packer, 2008). Clearly, this research suggests that the level of identification among high-status group members is likely to be an important predictor of support for collective action. We argue that social image

concerns are likely to weigh more in determining support for collective action among highly identified high-status group members than among lowly identified ones.

### **Normative and Non-Normative Protest: Perceived consequences**

In the present research, we examine the role of self/group interest and social image motives on high-status groups' support for collective action. We propose that one factor likely to differentially activate these two concerns among high-status group members varying in levels of identification is the type of collective action taken by low-status groups. A central prediction is that normative and non-normative collective actions from low-status groups will be perceived as likely to lead to different outcomes and that the extent to which these outcomes will be experienced as threatening will depend on the level of identification of high-status groups members.

The main conceptual distinction between normative and non-normative actions concerns the extent to which actions align with the norms of society. However, this is not to say that normative and non-normative protest will not vary in other respects. The multitude of terms interchangeably used by scholars to define normative and non-normative protest is a clear sign that these concepts overlap on more than one dimension. For example, Piven and Cloward (1991) refer within the same paper to normative and non-normative protest as "rule-conforming" and "rule-violating", "permissible" and "prohibited", "conventional" and "unconventional", "nonviolent" and "violent" or "legal" and "illegal". To some extent, this apparent fuzziness is probably due to collective action research often using this distinction as a dependent variable (e.g., Tausch, et al., 2011; Jiménez-Moya et al., 2015). This leads to a higher focus in operationalization of normative and non-normative protest in terms of specific behaviors people can engage in. However, it is surely not limited to this issue and it is objectively difficult to reduce the distinction between normative and non-normative protest to a specific dimension. There is a constellation of dimensions that are virtually inseparable

of perceptions of normativity of protest, such as perceived legality, violence, extremity, etc. This stems from a general negativity effect that behaviors outside the rules of the system are likely to trigger. For example, even behaviors that outside the realm of protest are legal and commonly accepted, such as going topless on European beaches, get a totally different response when inserted into a context of protest. The Femen movement in France in which women wrote protest messages on their breasts and stood in museums and churches in silent protest come across as extreme, even violent, and lead to arrests.

Yet, the fact that normative and non-normative protest is likely to co-vary on multiple dimensions, in the guise of a “syndrome”, should not prevent us from examining the independent contributions of different dimensions for perceptions of normative and non-normative protest. Specifically, a systematic analysis of current definitions of (non)normative collective action highlights two distinct aspects that are, in our opinion, especially worthy of attention from scholars trying to understand perceived outcomes of different types of protest.

The first is the extent to which *all* members of a superordinate category (i.e., low and high-status groups) perceive the action in which low-status groups engage as a normal and appropriate way to pursue social change within the system. Put simply, “a riot is clearly not an electoral rally, and both the participants and the authorities know the difference” (Piven & Cloward, 1991, p. 437). We refer to this aspect as perceived ‘strict normativity’.

The second concerns more directly the role of the high-status groups in the creation and maintenance of inequality. This aspect is closely linked to perceptions that protesters engaging in (non)normative protest are “pointing the finger” at the advantaged as responsible for the inequality. We refer to this aspect as perceived ‘attributions of blame to the advantaged’. We argue that differences between normative and non-normative protest in these two dimensions (i.e., ‘strict normativity’ and attributions of blame) are of special

importance in determining the perceived consequences of protest in terms of outgroup-gain and social image damage.

Normative strategies, following legitimate and accepted channels of protest (at least in democratic societies), represent shared societal perceptions of how groups should collectively strive to improve their position within the system. *Both* low and high-status groups should perceive them as especially high in 'strict normativity'. In addition, these actions "provide tacit support to the social order" (Wright, 2009, p. 874), that the high-status group embodies and supports (Cariati, 2017; Caricati & Lorenzi-Cioldi, 2012; Sachdev & Bourhis, 1991; Sidanius & Pratto, 1999; Tajfel & Turner, 1986). They should also be unlikely to put the high-status in the spotlight as responsible for the inequality. High normativity and low attributions of blame to the high-status group should lead to perceptions of these actions as likely to be successful in decreasing social inequality by triggering a redistribution of resources. We will refer to this perceived consequence of collective action as the "outgroup-gain" outcome.

In contrast, non-normative actions are, by definition, not recognized by society as acceptable or common means of protest. These actions fall outside the "realm of common and acceptable protest". As such, they question the specific intergroup inequality at stake but also the legitimacy of the social order more broadly, and the rules determining intergroup differences (Louis, 2009; Piven & Cloward, 1991; Stephen C. Wright, 2009). These low perceptions of 'strict normativity' of non-normative protest should lead to perceptions of non-normative actions as damaging the social image of the high-status group, as responsible *and* supportive of an unfair system of rules. In addition, "participation in non-normative actions may require firmer convictions about the injustice/immorality of the high-status group's actions" (Wright, 2009, p. 874). Groups resorting to non-normative protest (compared to normative) are therefore more likely to be perceived as blaming the advantaged

for the inequality and to direct attention on the high-status group role as perpetrator of inequality (Klandermans, Sabucedo, Rodriguez, & de Weerd, 2002). As a consequence of both low perceptions of 'strict normativity' and higher perceived attributions of blame to the high-status group, non-normative actions should be perceived as more likely to damage the social image of the high-status group than to necessarily lead to outgroup-gain for the low-status group.

Finally, it is important to clarify that our proposed conceptual model pertaining to the consequences of perceptions of likelihood of outgroup-gain and social image damage is one in which the type of collective action brings to the foreground one type of concern *relative* to the other. Specifically, we propose that concerns about outgroup gain will take precedence over social-image concerns in the case of normative action and vice-versa for non-normative action.

### **How perceived consequences of normative and non-normative protest shape support: the role of ingroup identification**

In order to set the stage for our reasoning concerning support for collective action, it is first important to make clear that the extent to which people perceive normative and non-normative collective action to lead to different outcomes should be consensual among different audiences (e.g., advantaged groups or non-involved observers). This should be the case because the normativity of protest is a social norm shared by members of the same society with respect to the (in)appropriateness of different social change strategies (Piven & Cloward, 1991; Wright, 2009). Among members of advantaged groups, there will also be consensus around the perceived consequences of normative and non-normative actions. However, whereas *perceptions* of the consequences of collective action should not vary, we argue that *reactions* to these consequences in the form of support should. More specifically, support will likely be shaped by how different levels of identification determine sensitivity to

different perceived consequences of collective action. In other words, the fact that one consequence (outgroup-gain vs. social-image damage) is perceived to be more likely than the other will trigger different levels of support among high and low identified members of advantaged groups. Importantly, this does not mean that high-status group members are not generally concerned with both these outcomes in absolute terms. Indeed, virtually all group members (independently of their level of identification or even of their ingroup status) are sensitive to the loss of resources or damage to their ingroup's social image. Moreover, all types of collective action likely activate both concerns to different degrees. We therefore predict that support for the low-status group's action should reflect high and low identifiers differential sensitivity to the expected outcomes of different collective actions.

Because high-identifiers are more concerned about their group's image than low identifiers (e.g., Doosje, Ellemers, & Spears, 1995), and to the extent that non-normative actions are perceived as *more* of a problem for the high-status ingroup's social image *than* for the ingroup's interest, we expect high-identifiers to be relatively less supportive of such non-normative actions than low-identifiers. For normative action, we do not expect this polarizing effect on support to be a function of ingroup identification given that both high and low identifiers should be sensitive to material threats to their resources.

### **The Present Research and Proposed Model**

We first test hypotheses concerning the perceived outcomes of normative and non-normative collective action (Experiments 1a to 1e). We predict that different types of actions by low-status groups will trigger different expected outcomes. Specifically, normative action should be perceived as more likely to actually improve the low-status group's situation *than* to damage the high-status group's social image (hence "outgroup gain"). In turn, non-normative action should be more associated with a social image-damaging outcome *than* to

an outgroup-gain one. In other words, we are expecting an interaction between type of collective action and perceived outcomes.

Secondly, we address the specific reasons leading to differences in expected outcomes (Experiments 1c to 1e). Normative and non-normative actions are likely to lead to a constellation of differences in perceptions of actions, of their consequences and perceptions of the protesters involved. Not all these differences should be associated with differential consequences of (non)normative actions in terms of outgroup gain and social image damage. Of key importance for these outcomes, we argue, is 'strict normativity' (i.e., perceptions of the extent that the actions infringe social norms of protest at the prescriptive and descriptive levels) and 'attributions of blame to the advantaged' by the protesters. In this sense, we predict that *high(low)* levels of 'strict normativity' and *low(high)* levels of attributions of blame to the advantaged explain why (*non-*)normative actions lead to higher perceptions of outgroup gain (social image damage) *than* of social image damage (outgroup gain). Importantly, these differences should not rest on differences in other aspects such as perceived violence, extremity, harm, anger from the protesters, and the like, that also distinguish perceptions of normative and non-normative collective action.

Third, we tested the impact of type of collective action on support for low-status collective action among high-status group members (Experiments 2a to 4). In this respect, we predicted an interaction between ingroup-identification and type of action of the low-status group on support for these actions. We predict a negative effect of identification concerning support for non-normative protest. No effect of identification should be found on support for normative actions.

Finally, differences in expected outcomes of normative and non-normative actions should explain differences in support among high and low-identifiers, reflecting different

concerns among ingroup members varying in levels of identification (Experiments 3 and 4, see Figure 1 for the full hypothesized model).

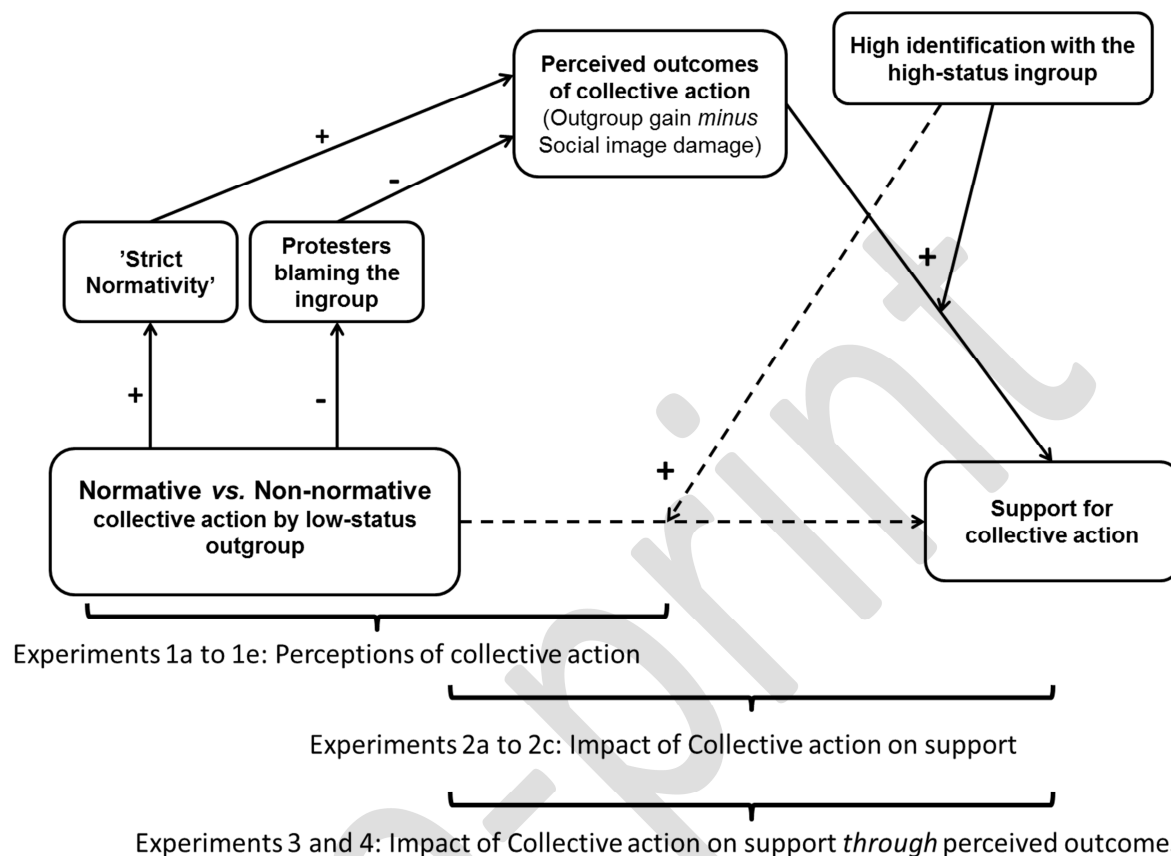


Figure 1. Hypothesized conceptual model of the effects of normative and non-normative low-status collective action on support among high-status group members and research program.

### Experiments 1a & 1b

We conducted two experiments to examine our hypotheses that normative action is more strongly associated with outgroup gain than ingroup social image-damage, whereas non-normative action elicits stronger expectations of social image-damage than of outgroup gain. As a first step, we conducted Experiment 1a in the absence of a clear intergroup context involving collective action. Experiment 1b then went on to present a fictitious collective action campaign varying in collective action strategies and tested ingroup identification as a potential moderator of the effect of type of action on the perceived outcomes of the action.



## Experiment 1a

### Method

We presented 44 college students recruited around the university campus (31 women, 2 missing;  $M_{age}=22.35$ ,  $SD=6.66$ ) with 12 actions that low-status groups in general “can carry out in order to reach their goals in a society composed of other, more privileged, groups”. According to pre-testing, 6 actions were normative forms of protest (e.g., help to organize at participate in a strike, create and circulate a petition) and the other 6 non-normative ones (e.g., to graffiti buildings with protest messages, hack websites to let people know about the low-status group cause, see Appendix A for the full list of actions). For each action, participants estimated on a 7-point scale (1=not at all; 7=very much) the extent to which the action aimed at: a) “getting the resources/rights that the low-status group wants” (outgroup gain outcome,  $\alpha_{normative}=.80$ ;  $\alpha_{non-normative}=.58$ ); b) “making people understand that the high-status group is an oppressor” (social image-damage outcome,  $\alpha_{normative}=.75$ ;  $\alpha_{non-normative}=.79$ ).

### Results

Given the low reliability of the outgroup gain scale for non-normative actions we tested our hypotheses using a mixed model in which the 12 actions were crossed with perceived outcomes (outgroup gain vs. image damage) and nested within type of action (coded 1= normative, -1= non-normative). We included random intercept and random slope terms for each participant. Such an analysis takes into account the impact of inter-action variability in the determination of our predicted model (Judd, Westfall, & Kenny, 2012). Results showed no main effect of action outcome,  $B= -.15$ ,  $t(22.29)= -1.17$ ,  $p=.254$ , a main effect of action type,  $B=1.68$ ,  $t(15.60)= -5.53$ ,  $p<.001$ , as well as the predicted interaction between action type and action outcome,  $B=-1.80$ ,  $t(37.14)= 4.74$ ,  $p<.001$  (see Figure 2). Further probing the interaction revealed that participants perceived normative actions as more targeted at outgroup gain ( $M= 4.94$ ,  $SD=1.08$ ) than at damaging the high-status group's

social image ( $M= 3.89, SD=1.13$ ),  $B=1.05, t(36.39)=4.03, p<.001$ , whereas the opposite held for non-normative actions ( $M_{\text{outgroup gain}}= 2.36, SD=.82$ ;  $M_{\text{social image-damage}}= 3.13, SD=1.37$ ),  $B= -.75, t(24.77)=-3.80, p<.001$ ). These results provide initial evidence for our hypothesis that normative actions are more strongly associated with outgroup gain than with social image-damage outcomes whereas the opposite holds for non-normative actions.

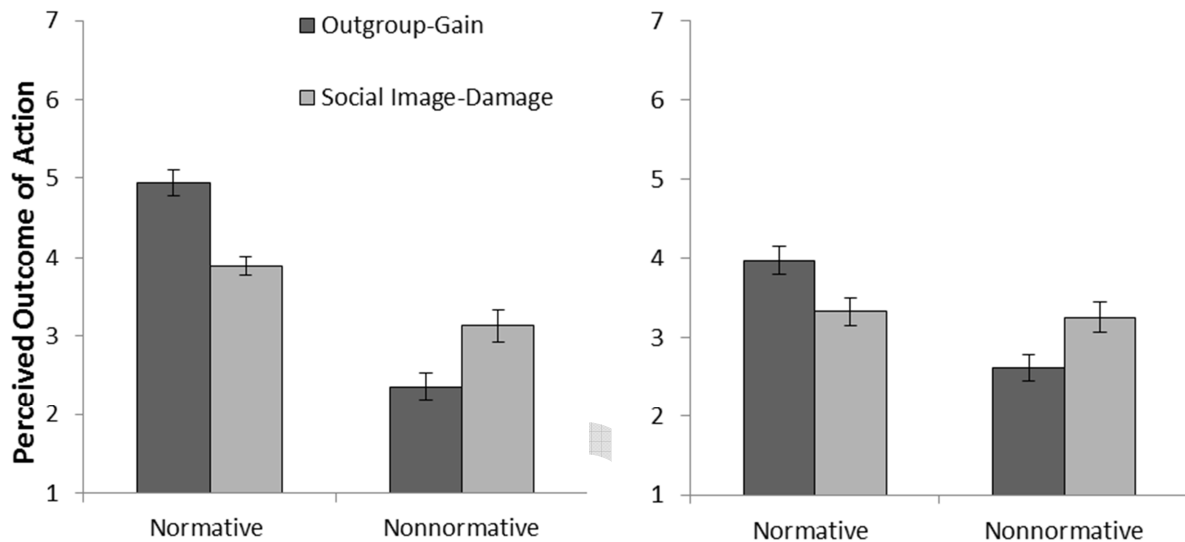


Figure 2. Perceived likelihood of outgroup gain and ingroup's social image damage as a function of normative and non-normative collective from low-status groups (Experiment 1a on the left and 1b on the right). Vertical bars represent standard errors.

### Experiment 1b

In Experiment 1b, we placed participants in a more tangible and realistic intergroup situation. Additionally, we tested the potential moderating role of level of identification with the ingroup. This is important given that we argue that the impact of identification on support for collective action is due to high and low identifiers' differential sensitivity to (perceived) outcomes of different actions and not to the fact that they perceive the actions differently. Because the items we used in the previous experiment stressed the actions' perceived goals more than their perceived outcomes, we also reframed them in terms of perceived outcomes.

### Method, procedure, and sample

## HIGH-STATUS GROUPS' SUPPORT FOR COLLECTIVE ACTION

We approached 47 Belgian participants (29 women,  $M_{age}=21.96$ ,  $SD=5.20$ ) in various university libraries and asked them to participate. After consenting, they received a fictitious newspaper article that described a movement of North African citizens of Belgium (an important minority in Belgium) in reaction to a survey showing biased hiring procedures that discriminate against North African citizens. Specifically, the article stated that a survey by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) had revealed that five Belgians were hired for each North African worker with the same level of qualifications. Such a job discrimination scenario was a realistic and ecologically valid option because there had been a lot of media coverage regarding discriminatory hiring practices in which employers required recruitment agencies to hire only workers of Belgian origin. The article further stated that the “Same qualifications, same job” movement was initiated by North African citizens in reaction to these statistics and demanded the creation of affirmative action policies in hiring and promotion in order to reduce the gap between these two groups.

Participants then read two possible endings for the newspaper article describing the actions initiated by this movement. As in the previous experiment, type of action was therefore manipulated within-participants. In the *normative* ending, the article portrayed the movement as having organized a demonstration in front of the European Parliament in Brussels during rush hour and having launched an online petition directed to the Belgian political authorities demanding the creation of affirmative action policies in favor of North African citizens. In the *non-normative* ending, the actions of the movement involved blocking the entrance of the major recruitment agencies and hacking the main job search websites by redirecting any person trying to access these sites to the same online petition mentioned in the normative condition.

### Measures

**Ingroup identification.** We measure this variable by means of Leach et al.'s (2008) 14-item multidimensional identification scale. Participants stated their level of agreement with each item on a 7-point scale (1=not at all; 7=very much; example item: "I am glad to be Belgian";  $\alpha=.87$ ).

**Perceived outcomes of low-status collective action.** We measured perceived outgroup gain with 3 items adapted from Tausch and colleagues (2011; items: *to what extent do you think that it is likely that*: "North-Africans citizens get what they want"; "successfully argue for their rights"; "provoke a change in the situation"; all answers on 7-point scales, 1=*not at all likely*; 7=*very likely*,  $\alpha_{\text{normative}}=.87$ ,  $\alpha_{\text{non-normative}}=.83$ ). We measure perceived social image-damage with 4 items (items: *to what extent do you think that it is likely that*: "people wrongly think that Belgians discriminate against other groups"; "the image of Belgium is stained"; "the Belgians are discredited";  $\alpha_{\text{normative}}=.48$ ,  $\alpha_{\text{non-normative}}=.62$ ).

## Results

As in Experiment 1a, the reliability indices were not satisfactory across the four scales. We therefore relied on the same mixed model analysis as before to control for inter-item variability. We entered the 7 items measuring the perceived outcomes (3 for outgroup gain and 4 for social-image damage) as random effects nested within type of outcome and action. Identification with the advantaged ingroup was entered as continuous predictor at the participant level. As before, the model included random effects for intercepts and slopes per participant. Results again showed a main effect of action type,  $B=.61$ ,  $t(9.02)= 3.68$ ,  $p<.005$ ), as well as the predicted type of action by action outcome interaction,  $B=-1.49$ ,  $t(7.73)= -4.67$ ,  $p=.002$ , (see Figure 2). Importantly, the level of identification did not moderate this interaction,  $B= .29$ ,  $t(20.28)= 1.04$ ,  $p=.309$ . The main effects of identification,  $B= .02$ ,  $t(33.76)= .14$ ,  $p=.893$ , and action outcome,  $B= .01$ ,  $t(8.18)= .02$ ,  $p=.985$ , did not reach significance, and the same was true for the interactions between identification and type of

action and action outcome, respectively,  $B = .03$ ,  $t(23.75) = .19$ ,  $p = .850$ ;  $B = .33$ ,  $t(15.58) = 1.55$ ,  $p = .142$ .

Probing the two-way interaction between type of action by action outcome revealed that participants perceived normative actions as marginally more likely to lead to outgroup gain ( $M = 3.98$ ,  $SD = 1.26$ ) than social image-damage ( $M = 3.32$ ,  $SD = 1.12$ ),  $B = .74$ ,  $t(7.33) = 2.08$ ,  $p = .07$ , whereas the opposite was true for non-normative actions ( $M_{\text{outgroup gain}} = 2.62$ ,  $SD = 1.15$ ;  $M_{\text{social image-damage}} = 3.25$ ,  $SD = 1.33$ ),  $B = -.75$ ,  $t(9.66) = -2.92$ ,  $p = .016$ .

## Discussion

Experiments 1a and 1b provide initial evidence for the first path of our conceptual model regarding the perceived consequences of normative and non-normative collective actions. Normative collective action was associated with higher likelihood of reducing inequality (by improving the disadvantaged group's situation) than of damaging the high-status social image. Non-normative actions showed the reverse pattern: they were perceived to be more likely to harm the high-status group's social image than to actually improve the low-status group's situation.

This pattern was obtained in relatively "empty" contexts (Experiment 1a) as well as among members of a high-status group (Experiment 1b). Also, participants' level of ingroup identification did not affect perceived outcomes of actions. Taken together, these results suggest the presence of some consensus regarding the predicted outcomes of normative and non-normative collective action.

Concerning normative action, our results align with the defining essence of these types of actions, namely that society in general sees them as legitimate means of protesting for social change. In this sense, normative actions come across as more likely to fulfill the social change goal of improving the low-status group's position than non-normative ones, at least within the confines of the existing system. Our findings are perhaps less obvious with

respect to non-normative actions. One could expect non-normative actions to be easily dismissed as they are beyond the realm of socially appropriate means of protest. Our results suggest that this is not the case but that, in line with our rationale, non-normative actions stand as a means to highlight (emphasize, draw attention to) unfair oppression more than as a way to improve the low-status group position.

These first results are in line with the prediction that the type of collective action affects the extent to which one outcome is perceived to take precedence over the other. This is an important aspect of our theoretical reasoning because we argue that: 1) the type of collective action determines the extent to which one outcome outweighs the other; 2) the perceived relative difference between outgroup-gain and ingroup's social image-damage outcomes shapes the level of support among high-status groups.

The extent to which a protest action comes across as (non-)normative is likely to elicit a series of consequences. In these first two experiments, we limited ourselves to examine the basic assumption that actions varying in perceived normativity lead to different perceived outcomes in terms of outgroup gain and social image damage. We did not examine which specific mechanism triggers the effects on perceived outcomes. Indeed, beyond 'strict' normativity, (non)normative actions are also likely to differ in aspects such as perceived extremity or perceived anger from the protesters. These, and other aspects, are what we would call "natural confounds". However, and importantly, the fact that actions might *differ* on a series of (often related) dimensions does not imply that all aspects are *equally relevant* for perceived outcomes of outgroup gain and social image damage. We conducted three experiments to test the predictive role of various aspects on which normative and non-normative protest might differ on perceived outcomes of collective action and to specify what we are the critical factors determining perceived outcomes.

### **Experiments 1c, 1d and 1e**

Normative and non-normative actions are likely to vary on several dimensions. In general, because non-normative actions are less frequent and negative (at least from the advantaged group's point of view), they are likely to trigger a generalized 'negativity effect' (Fiske, 1980). This effect should be visible on a number of dimensions. However, the main goal here is to examine to what extent these dimensions affect perceived outcomes. Our theoretical reasoning around the effects of (non)normative actions on perceived outcomes of protest is that there are two main ingredients responsible for this effect. This is of course not to say that other dimensions differentiating normative and non-normative protest will not be important in predicting people's reactions. In other words, our predictions are restricted to the specific variable analyzed in our research program: perceived outcomes of collective action.

The first critical aspect that should predict perceived outcomes, is what we will call *strict normativity*. This aspect refers to the extent to which actions are perceived to fall outside the 'norms of protest' of the larger societal system, at both the descriptive (i.e., frequency) and prescriptive (appropriateness) levels (Cialdini & Trost, 1998). Advantaged groups are arguably responsible for the system and generally identify with it (e.g., Sidanius & Pratto, 1999). In this sense, (non-normative) actions that question the larger system are likely to be seen as damaging the image of those more tightly linked to it. At the same time, because they are not normal and acceptable forms of protest, these actions should lead to lower perceptions of likelihood of outgroup gain.

The second predicted active ingredient is perceived attributions of blame to the advantaged group. Protesters performing non-normative actions are likely to come across as blaming the advantaged for the inequality more than protesters performing normative actions. Indeed, non-normative protest clearly is the more difficult choice for protesters and is therefore more likely to be a way to emphasize the oppression from the advantaged. In other words, in the case of non-normative protest (compared to normative one) the outcome that

“people will think we have driven them to such a desperate action” becomes more likely than “they are going to get benefits with this protest”.

We developed three experiments to test these predictions. We measured a series of dimensions that differentiate normative and non-normative protest. We designed the first experiment to be as abstract as possible in order to avoid any contextual effect, i.e., as a “proof of concept”. The second and third experiments aimed at replicating the results in more ecological settings by presenting participants with specific inequality contexts to which disadvantaged groups reacted with normative vs. non-normative actions. In addition, participants' ingroup was portrayed as the advantaged one. This aspect also allows us to examine to what extent results obtained in rather abstract, empty contexts, generalize to more concrete ones that explicitly involve participants' ingroup. In light of the modest reliability of the perceived outcomes scales used in the previous experiments, we also changed the items in order to secure better measures.

### **Experiment 1c**

#### **Method**

We recruited 52 participants from the United Kingdom through Prolific Academic. They received £0.85 as compensation. Participants read this short introduction:

“One way for groups to call attention to their disadvantaged position in society compared to other more advantaged groups is to protest. Recent examples include Black Lives Matter, #MeToo, Femen, Occupy or the "Yellow Vests". These collective protests take different forms. Groups engage in a series of collective actions with the goal of improving their situation in society. The actions chosen by different disadvantaged groups in different circumstances vary a great deal. In this short study, we would like to know how the general population perceives different labels of different types of protest (and not the “technical” definitions of such



protests). With this goal, we ask you to imagine that society has labelled two different collective protests. One was labelled: **NORMATIVE**, a 'normal' way to protest and the other was labelled **NON-NORMATIVE**, an 'unusual' way to protest".

They were then given a moment to imagine what these actions might be before answering a series of measures about the two types of labels. The questionnaire comprised three different logical parts: perceptions of actions, perceptions of protesters, and possible consequences of actions. Finally, participants were thanked and re-directed to the Prolific Academic website for compensation.

### Measures

All responses were on 7-point scales (1= not at all likely; 7=extremely likely).

**Perceived harm.** Participants stated to what extent each type of action would be likely to cause "physical", "psychological", "economic" and "material" harm to people ( $\alpha_{\text{normative}}=.75$ ;  $\alpha_{\text{non-normative}}=.82$ ).

**Perceived legality.** Participants stated to what extent each type of action would be likely to be considered "a crime" and "civil disobedience" ( $r_{\text{normative}}=.50$ ;  $r_{\text{non-normative}}=.58$ , both  $ps<.001$ ).<sup>1</sup>

**Perceived extremity/intensity.** Participants stated to what extent each type of action would be likely to be "violent", "extreme" and "radical" ( $\alpha_{\text{normative}}=.71$ ;  $\alpha_{\text{non-normative}}=.80$ ).

**Perceived normativity.** Participants stated to what extent each type of action would be likely to be "a common way to protest", "frequently used by people in general as a way to protest", "approved by society in general as a means of protest" and "perceived as an appropriate way to protest by people in general" ( $\alpha_{\text{normative}}=.70$ ;  $\alpha_{\text{non-normative}}=.71$ ).

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<sup>1</sup> An extra item mentioned "legally sanctioned". As this item proved very ambiguous, we excluded it from all the scales on legality.

**Perceived risk of protesters.** Participants stated to what extent protesters involved in each type of action would be likely to “suffer physical harm”, “be legally prosecuted” and “be putting themselves at risk” ( $\alpha_{\text{normative}}=.79$ ;  $\alpha_{\text{non-normative}}=.86$ ).

**Perceived extremity of protesters.** Participants stated to what extent protesters involved in each type of action would be likely to be “extremists” and “fanatics” ( $r_{\text{normative}}=.74$ ;  $r_{\text{non-normative}}=.71$ , both  $ps<.001$ ).

**Meta-perceptions of protesters.** We also measured to what participants thought that protesters were likely “to be angry”, “to feel treated unfairly” and “to think the advantaged group is to blame for inequality”. These variables were measured with one item each.

**Perceived outcomes of protest.** Given the modest reliability scores of these scales in Experiments 1a and 1b, we improved this measure (see Appendix B). Participants were to indicate the extent to which they thought that each type of action would lead to a series of consequences. Six items measured perceptions of the likelihood of actions leading to outgroup gain (e.g., “The protesting group will get the results it wants”, “The protesting group will be successful in its aims”, “The protesting group will be able to improve the situation of the disadvantaged group”). Six items measured perceptions of damage to the advantaged group’s social image (e.g., “The protesting group will make the advantaged group seem unfair to the rest of the world”, “The protesting group will damage the reputation of the advantaged group.”, “People will think that the advantaged group discriminates against disadvantaged groups.”;  $\alpha_{\text{outgroup-gain normative}}=.72$ ;  $\alpha_{\text{social image damage normative}}=.89$ ;  $\alpha_{\text{outgroup-gain non-normative}}=.83$ ;  $\alpha_{\text{social image damage non-normative}}=.84$ ).

## Results and discussion

**Perceptions of “normative” and “non-normative” labels of protest.** We started by looking at differences between types of protest on the perceptions of actions and protesters. To do so, we conducted a series of paired-sample t-tests. Results showed that the two labels

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differed significantly on all measured variables (lowest  $p=.013$ ) except on the extent to which protesters were perceived as angry and as feeling as having been treated unfairly (see Table 1).

Table 1. Perceptions of Normative and Non-normative protest (Experiment 1c).

Perceptions of collective actions	<i>M</i> (SD)	<i>M</i> (SD)	95% CI	<i>t</i> (51)	<i>p</i>
	Normative	Non-Normative			
Harmfulness	2.67 (1.08)	4.53 (1.35)	-2.37; -1.36	-7.40	<.001
Legality	2.81 (1.33)	5.28 (1.43)	-3.03; -1.91	-8.91	<.001
Extremity/Intensity	2.97 (1.11)	5.42 (1.22)	-2.99; -1.91	-9.12	<.001
Normativity	5.68 (.98)	2.79 (1.08)	2.42; 3.37	12.26	<.001
Risky for protesters	2.87 (1.13)	5.21 (1.32)	-2.86; -1.82	-8.97	<.001
Extremity of protesters	3.37 (1.49)	5.13 (1.45)	-2.39; -1.14	-5.69	<.001
Anger of protesters	5.67 (1.40)	5.88 (1.63)	-.68; .25	-.91	.366
Feelings of unfairness of protesters	5.77 (1.50)	5.73 (1.65)	-.54; .62	.13	.895
Protester's attributions of blame to the advantaged	5.00 (1.60)	5.60 (1.49)	-1.06; -.13	-2.57	.013

**Perceived outcomes of protest.** In order to examine the previously found effect of type of action on perceived outcomes of protest, we conducted a repeated measures ANOVA with outcome (outgroup gain vs. social image damage) and type of action (normative vs. non-normative) as within-participant factors. This analysis showed a main effect of action,  $F(1, 51)= 13.10, p=.001, \eta^2= .20$ , and the predicted outcome by action interaction,  $F(1, 51)= 12.00, p=.001, \eta^2= .19$ ). As before, the main effect of action outcome was not significant,  $F(1, 51)= 2.69, p=.109, \eta^2= .05$ ). The interaction revealed that participants did not perceive

normative actions to lead to outgroup gain ( $M= 4.11$ ,  $SD=.90$ ,  $CI [3.87, 4.36]$ ) more than to social image damage, ( $M= 3.88$ ,  $SD=1.18$ ,  $CI [3.54, 4.19]$ ),  $t(51)=1.01$ ,  $p=.319$ , despite the means pointing in the predicted direction. In contrast, and as predicted, they considered that non-normative actions lead more to social image damage ( $M= 3.83$ ,  $SD=1.24$ ,  $CI [3.46, 4.14]$ ) than to outgroup gain ( $M= 3.08$ ,  $SD=1.18$ ,  $CI [2.80, 3.38]$ ),  $t(51)= -3.80$ ,  $p<.001$ .

The main question addressed by this experiment is to what extent differences in the perception of actions and protesters predicts the perceived outcomes by type of action interaction. To examine this question, we first computed a score corresponding to the interaction on perceived outcomes. We first subtracted outgroup gain from social image damage for each type of action, and then subtracted these scores for normative from the ones for non-normative actions. Secondly, we computed the difference between the scores of normative and of non-normative action for all the dimensions that revealed the presence of a significant difference between normative and non-normative actions. We then included all these predictors in a multiple regression model with the interaction score as our criterion. The only significant predictor was the difference in perceived normativity,  $B=.643$ ,  $CI [.277; 1.010]$ ,  $t(44)=3.54$ ,  $p=.001$ . The difference in perceived harm and the difference in the extent to which the advantaged are to blame were both marginally significant,  $B=.443$ ,  $CI [-.085; .972]$ ,  $t(44)=1.69$ ,  $p=.098$ ;  $B=-.316$ ,  $CI [-.689; .057]$ ,  $t(44)=-1.71$ ,  $p=.095$ , respectively. The difference of legality ( $p=.599$ ), of extremity/intensity of action ( $p=.865$ ), of extremity of protesters ( $p=.600$ ), and of risk of protesters ( $p=.338$ ) all failed to reach significance (see Table 2).

In light of these results, we tested a simplified model (see Table 2) in which those predictors with  $p >.10$  were excluded, thereby increasing power by reducing degrees of

freedom. Bayesian information criteria<sup>2</sup> (BIC) showed that the simplified model (BIC= 69.844) describes the data better (given a balance between explained variance and amount of model parameters) than the full, more complex one (BIC= 82.394),  $\Delta$ BIC=12.55. This simplified model showed effects of perceived normativity,  $B=.650$ , CI [.312; .988],  $t(48)=3.87$ ,  $p<.001$ , and the extent to which the advantaged are to blame,  $B=-.353$ , CI [-.672; -.003],  $t(48)=-2.22$ ,  $p=.031$ . Perceived harm was not significant,  $B=.209$ , CI [-.131; .549],  $t(48)=1.23$ ,  $p=.223$ . Interestingly, perceived normativity and blaming the advantaged were not correlated ( $r=-.08$ ,  $p=.584$ ). Taken together, these results provide the first empirical evidence for the fact that 1) normativity of protest is a syndrome that involves a series of dimensions, that 2) perceived “strict” normativity and blame are the two active ingredients explaining the predicted effects on perceived outcomes of actions, and that 3) these two variables have independent contributions on perceived outcomes of different types of actions.

Table 2. Full and simplified models of effects of perceptions of collective action on perceived outcomes (outgroup gain vs. social image damage) for normative and non-normative action (Experiment 1c).

<b>Difference between Normative and Non-normative actions</b>				
<b>FULL MODEL</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>t(44)</b>	<b>p</b>	<b>95.% CI</b>
Harmfulness	.443	1.69	.098	-.085; .972
Legality	-.125	-.53	.599	-.601; .351
Extremity/Intensity	-.050	-.17	.865	-.643; .542
Normativity	.643	3.54	.001	.277; 1.010
Risky for protesters	-.234	-.97	.338	-.721; .253

<sup>2</sup> A index of model fit (i.e., the BIC) was chosen in this case (compared to the more traditional R square change) because our goal was to select the model that describes the data better using a trade-off between goodness of fit and complexity in a context where our full model and our restricted model differ a great deal in terms of their number of predictors. We chose to use the BIC instead of the AIC because the novelty of the present question imposes a more conservative test and the BIC is stricter than the AIC in how it penalizes for the inclusion of predictors, therefore reducing the likelihood of over-fitting (i.e., choosing an unnecessary complex model).

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Extremity of protesters	.092	.53	.600	-.260; .445
Protester's attributions of blame to the advantaged	-.316	-1.71	.095	-.689; .057
<b>SIMPLIFIED MODEL</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>t(48)</b>	<b>p</b>	<b>95.% CI</b>
Harmfulness	.209	1.234	.223	-.131; .549
Normativity	.650	3.866	.000	.312; .988
Protester's attributions of blame to the advantaged	-.353	-2.220	.031	-.672; -.033

### Experiments 1d & 1e

#### Method

We recruited 302 two participants through Prolific Academic and offered them £0.85 as compensation. The two experiments varied in terms of the intergroup context used (gender and ethnicity,  $N=147$  and  $N=155$ , respectively) and the country in which the data was collected (United Kingdom and United States, respectively). Participants were members of the group portrayed as the advantaged one. This means that they were all men in the gender scenario and White Americans in the ethnic one. In both experiments, we presented participants with an inequality situation and with two possible responses to the inequality in the form of collective protest from the disadvantaged group. These “responses” were designed to be conceptually similar across experiments and to reflect normative vs. non-normative collective action. After reading the information about the inequality and the two possible responses, participants answered the dependent variables, were thanked, and re-directed to the Prolific Academic website for compensation.

#### *Experiment 1d: Gender inequality scenario and manipulations.*

The disadvantaged group's action described a collective action performed by the alleged feminist movement “Wages for Housework” (WH). The fictitious newspaper article reported statistics inspired by a Time-Use report of the OECD Family database (OECD, 2011). This article described gender differences in time spent on different activities. The

main differences between males and females concerned time spent on paid and unpaid work. Specifically, participants read: “The main differences concern the relation between “paid” and “unpaid” work (i.e. housework) with men being comparatively paid more often than women. On average, European men spend 21% of their time performing “paid work” and 8% performing “unpaid work”. For women, this pattern reverses with 12.2% of their time being spent on paid work and 15.8% on unpaid work. In the United Kingdom these gaps are even larger”. They then learned that, in reaction to the results of this survey, British women formed the WH movement in order to demand a monetary compensation for the time spent performing “unpaid work activities”.

Finally, participants read the actions performed by the WH campaign. These actions constituted our experimental manipulation. In the *normative* condition, participants read: “At home, women had been presenting their partners with a list of tasks they perform regularly without being paid and giving them the choice to contribute with a portion of their salary or by scheduling a more equal division of these tasks. At work, they had been putting together petitions demanding a reduction in work hours for the same pay as men and putting into place “work to rule” procedures. In the *non-normative* condition, the actions involved the “refusal to have sexual intercourse with their male partners and the selling of their personal possessions, such as gadgets, clothes or books, without informing them (“after all they are also ours”). At work, the actions were painting the letter WH on their male colleagues’ cars and creating fake Twitter accounts in their CEOs’ names expressing overtly sexist opinions, such as “women are a weaker workforce”.

### *Experiment 1e: Ethnic inequality scenario and manipulations.*

This scenario was the same as the one used in Experiment 1b. It was only adapted to fit an inequality intergroup context between White Americans (the ingroup) and Hispanics (the disadvantaged group).

**Measures.** All the measures used were similar to Experiment 1c. All presented acceptable reliability except for the two items measuring legality (i.e., crime and civil disobedience).

These two items separately were analyzed separately.

## Results

**Perceptions of “normative” and “non-normative” protest.** We started by looking at differences between types of protest on perceptions of actions and protesters. To do so, we conducted a series of mixed model ANOVAs with type of protest (normative vs. non-normative) varying within participants and experiment between them (see Table 3). Results showed a main effect of type of protest on all measured variables (lowest  $p=.001$ ) except on the extent to which protesters were perceived as angry ( $p=.148$ ). Furthermore, these differences varied as a function of experiment in the case of harm, extremity/intensity, normativity, risk of protesters, and the extent to which protesters were perceived to blame the advantaged ingroup, and was marginal for perceptions of civil disobedience. These significant interactions simply indicate that the gender intergroup context had a stronger effect on perceptions of actions than the ethnic one. We take these differences between experiments into account in subsequent analyses.

Table 3. Perceptions of Normative and Non-normative protest (Experiments 1d and 1e).

Perceptions of collective actions	<i>M</i> ( <i>SD</i> )		<i>F</i> (1, 300)	<i>p</i>	$\eta^2$
	Normative	Non-normative			
Harmfulness*	2.38 (1.12)	4.52 (1.46)	502.15	<.001	.63
Criminal	1.91 (1.18)	5.54 (1.81)	788.10	<.001	.72
Civil disobedience <sup>†</sup>	3.17 (1.74)	4.95 (2.00)	142.20	<.001	.32
Extremity/Intensity*	2.54 (1.10)	5.02 (1.46)	623.62	<.001	.68
Normativity*	5.18 (1.41)	2.52 (1.13)	698.14	<.001	.70
Risky for protesters <sup>†</sup>	2.50 (1.20)	4.96 (1.50)	623.62	<.001	.68
Extremity of protesters	2.74 (1.41)	5.44 (1.54)	634.22	<.001	.68
Anger of protesters	5.05 (1.50)	5.19 (1.91)	2.11	.148	.01



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Feelings of unfairness of protesters	5.17 (1.51)	4.75 (1.99)	19.69	<.001	.06
Protester's attributions of blame to the advantaged*	4.31 (1.75)	4.67 (2.00)	10.50	.001	.03

\* Effect significantly moderated by Experiment ( $p < .05$ ).

† Effect marginally moderated by Experiment ( $p < .08$ ).

**Perceived outcomes of protest.** In order to examine the effect of type of action on perceived outcomes of protest, we conducted a mixed model ANOVA with outcome (outgroup gain vs. social image damage) and type of action (normative vs. non-normative) varying within participants and experiment between them. This analysis again showed a main effect of action,  $F(1, 300) = 242.86, p < .001, \eta^2 = .45$ , and the predicted outcome by action interaction,  $F(1, 300) = 187.79, p < .001, \eta^2 = .39$ . Participants perceived normative actions to lead to outgroup gain ( $M = 4.50, SD = 1.17, CI [4.36, 4.63]$ ) more than to social image damage, ( $M = 3.83, SD = 1.23, CI [3.69, 3.97]$ ),  $F(1, 300) = 417.63, p < .001, \eta^2 = .58$ . As predicted, participants perceived non-normative actions to lead to social image damage ( $M = 3.50, SD = 1.53, CI [3.33, 3.67]$ ) more than to outgroup gain ( $M = 2.47, SD = 1.18, CI [2.34, 2.60]$ ),  $F(1, 300) = 11.97, p = .001, \eta^2 = .04$ . The predicted interaction did not vary as a function of experiment,  $F(1, 300) < 1, p = .989, \eta^2 < .00$ .

As before, we computed a difference score representing the action by perceived outcome interaction and a series of difference scores representing differences on the measured dimensions as a function of normative and non-normative actions. In addition, we computed the interaction terms between these differences and experiment for all the effects with  $p < .10$ . We entered the score representing the interaction on perceived outcomes as criterion, and all the other variables (and interactions) as predictors in a multiple regression (see Table 4). Results showed that differences in perceived outcomes of normative and non-normative actions were significantly predicted by differences in 'strict normativity,

perceptions of protesters as blaming the ingroup and, unexpectedly, by the interaction between strict normativity perceptions and experiment. The effects of experiment and perceptions of protesters as being treated unfairly were marginal.

As before, we proceeded to compare this to a simplified model (see Table 4) in which only predictors with  $p < .10$  were included (i.e., 'experiment', normativity, blame, unfairness and the interaction between normativity and experiment). Again, Bayesian information criteria (BIC) showed that the simplified model (BIC= 421.248) describes the data better than the full, more complex one (BIC= 457.103),  $\Delta\text{BIC}=35.85$ . Results from the simplified model showed that the only significant predictors of differences in perceived outcomes were strict normativity,  $B=.451$ , CI [.324; .577],  $t(296)=7.03$ ,  $p < .001$ , perceptions of attributions of blame to the ingroup by the protesters,  $B=-.287$ , CI [-.406; -.167],  $t(297)=-4.71$ ,  $p < .001$ , and experiment,  $B=-.269$ , CI [-.495; -.043],  $t(296)=-2.34$ ,  $p=.020$ . Importantly, the interaction between normativity and experiment was far from significant ( $p=.580$ ) and, as before, perceptions of attributions of blame to the ingroup and normativity were uncorrelated ( $r=-.024$ ,  $p=.680$ ). These results fully replicate the ones found in Experiment 1c.

Table 4. Full and simplified models of effects of perceptions of collective action on perceived outcomes (outgroup gain vs. social image damage) for normative and non-normative action (Experiments 1d and 1e).

<b>Difference between Normative and Non-normative actions</b>				
<b>FULL MODEL</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>t(285)</b>	<b>p</b>	<b>95.% CI</b>
Harmfulness	-.120	-1.06	.291	-.344; .103
Criminal	-.127	-1.54	.126	-.289; .036
Civil disobedience	-.008	-.14	.890	-.124; .108
Extremity/Intensity	-.114	-.95	.341	-.349; .121
Normativity	.206	2.40	.017	.037; .375
Risk of protesters	-.054	.528	.665	-.297; .190
Extremity of protesters	.068	-.433	.513	-.136; .272
Feelings of unfairness of protesters	-.119	-1.72	.085	-.256; .017

## HIGH-STATUS GROUPS' SUPPORT FOR COLLECTIVE ACTION

Protester's attributions of blame to the advantaged	-.262	-4.36	<.001	-.381; -.144
Experiment	-.219	-1.87	.063	-.449; .012
Experiment x Harmfulness	-.185	-1.64	.103	-.408; .038
Experiment x Civil disobedience	.037	.639	.523	-.078; .152
Experiment x Extremity/Intensity	-.006	-.054	.957	-.236; .223
Experiment x Normativity	-.167	-2.04	.043	-.328; -.006
Experiment x Risk for protesters	-.033	-.33	.743	-.232; .166
Experiment x Protester's attributions of blame to the advantaged	-.059	-.98	.331	-.178; .060
<b>SIMPLIFIED MODEL</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>t(296)</b>	<b>p</b>	<b>95.% CI</b>
Normativity	.451	7.03	<.001	.324; .577
Feelings of unfairness of protesters	-.130	-1.89	.060	-.265; .006
Protester's attributions of blame to the advantaged	-.287	-4.71	<.001	-.406; -.167
Experiment	-.269	-2.34	.020	-.495; -.043
Experiment x Normativity	-.036	-.555	.580	-.162; .091

### Experiments 2a, 2b and 2c

Experiments 1a to 1e tested the first assumption of our proposed model, namely that different types of collective action evoke different outcomes. In a second set of experiments, we aimed at testing our main prediction regarding the interactive influence of type of collective action of the low-status group and level of identification with the high-status group on *support* for collective action. In addition, we wanted to rule-out alternative accounts for the predicted effects.

This is the first research addressing reactions of high-status groups to different types of collective action in a clear intergroup context implying power struggles. Given the absence of literature on this issue, we decided to take a multi-sample and multi-group approach to generalize results across intergroup contexts. This approach fits well with the growing spirit of cumulative knowledge in psychology (e.g., Cumming, 2014; Curran & Hussong, 2009).

Specifically, we started by testing our hypotheses across three samples in two countries using two different intergroup contexts.

### **General Method and Procedure**

Participants agreed to take part in an on-line study on reactions to collective events. After participants consented, they read a broad summary of the tasks they were to perform and completed the ingroup identification measure. They were then randomly assigned to one of two experimental conditions, depending on whether the low-status group had allegedly carried out normative or non-normative collective action. All the actions were adapted from the pre-tested actions used in Experiment 1a (see Appendix A).

In all three experiments, we embedded the experimental manipulation in a fictitious article of one of the main newspapers in participants' countries. Participants read about disadvantages between their group (the high-status group) and another, low-status, group. The article further described a collective protest movement launched by the low-status group demanding social change and social equality. Finally, a description followed with the actions already carried out by this movement and constituted our experimental manipulation. In the normative condition, participants read that the low-status group had relied on legally recognized forms of protest such as strikes or distribution of petitions. In the non-normative condition, these actions involved illegal actions such as hacking or blocking roads. Our manipulation of non-normative actions excluded forms of physical violence because this goes beyond non-normative action and possibly into extreme or radical actions associated with stereotypes of certain groups. There is evidence that violent and non-violent forms of non-normative collective action are perceived differently (Saab, Spears, Tausch, & Sasse, 2016; Tausch et al., 2011).

After reading the newspaper article, participants wrote their impressions about it and completed the dependent measures. We randomized the order of items within each scale.

Because the main goal of these experiments was to test effects on support for collection action, participants answered the outgroup support measure before any other measures. We opted not to measure our predicted mediator in this first set of experiments in order to capture individuals' spontaneous reactions and to avoid leading them to think about the expected outcomes of the action, as this could artificially trigger the predicted pattern of responses. After answering all dependent measures and demographics, participants were debriefed. They also had the opportunity to contact the researcher in charge if they had any queries.

**Experiment 2a: sample and procedure.** We invited 92 Portuguese men ( $M_{\text{age}}=41.40$ ,  $SD=11.25$ ) to participate in our study either *via* Facebook or by sending them the link to our questionnaire *via* their email address that they left at their barbershop. This recruitment procedure allowed us to target a heterogeneous sample.<sup>3</sup> Two participants failed to answer our dependent measure ( $N_{\text{normative condition}}=40$ ;  $N_{\text{non-normative condition}}=50$ ). The experimental scenario and manipulations were the same as the one used in Experiment 1d (i.e., gender-based).

**Experiment 2b: sample and procedure.** We relied on the same general procedure as in Experiment 2a with the exception that the intergroup context was the same as in Experiment 1b, that is, the low-status group was citizens of North-African origin in Belgium. The fictitious newspaper article described the same movement and actions as in Experiment 1b ( $N_{\text{normative condition}}=67$ ;  $N_{\text{non-normative condition}}=67$ ). We contacted 133 Belgian university students ( $M_{\text{age}}=21.53$ ,  $SD=2.67$ , 106 women, 1 missing) *via* a Facebook group dedicated to

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<sup>3</sup> The original sample comprised 132 participants. A sample of 92 participants is used here given that we originally had three experimental conditions: a normative, a mixed, and a non-normative one. The mixed condition portrayed both normative and non-normative actions and was included for exploratory purposes.

announcing experiments in psychology and informed them that they would be part of a lottery in which they could win 20 euro in exchange for their participation.

**Experiment 2c: sample and procedure.** We used the same procedure and scenario as in Experiments 1b and 2b. Participants were 163 Belgian political sciences students ( $M_{\text{age}}=22.01$ ,  $SD=3.49$ , 108 women, 2 missing) who received the link for the experiment through a student mailing list and were compensated in the same way as in Experiment 2b ( $N_{\text{normative condition}}=80$ ;  $N_{\text{non-normative condition}}=83$ ). Experiment 2c only differed from 2b in terms of the type of sample.

#### Measures<sup>4</sup>

Unless stated otherwise all variables were answered on 7-point scales.

**Ingroup identification.** We measured ingroup identification with men or Belgians (depending on the intergroup context) by means of Leach et al.'s (2008) scale before presenting the experimental scenario ( $\alpha_{\text{Experiment 2a}}=.87$ ;  $\alpha_{\text{Experiment 2b}}=.92$ ;  $\alpha_{\text{Experiment 2c}}=.93$ ).

**Support for outgroup's collective action.** This variable represented our main dependent variable. The scale comprised 10 items in Experiment 2a and 11 items in Experiments 2b and 2c. Participants indicated the extent to which they agreed with a series of statements involving attitudinal support and behavioral support intentions (see Appendix C). Sample items include: "I support [the low-status group] in their claims", "I encourage [the low-status group] to fight for its rights", "I would sign a petition in favor of the [low-status group movement]", "I would join a demonstration supporting the cause of the [low-status group]"; "Paint/Keep watch while somebody paints the motto of the [low-status group] on the

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<sup>4</sup> Other measures were included in all the experiments reported in the present article. They were included for exploratory purposes and are not the focus of the present research nor affect the reported results. More information is available upon request to the first author.

cars of authorities responsible by labor laws/on the walls of recruitment agencies” ( $\alpha_{\text{Experiment 2a}} = .87$ ;  $\alpha_{\text{Experiment 2b}} = .91$ ;  $\alpha_{\text{Experiment 2c}} = .88$ ).

A series of principal axis factor analyses with oblique rotation systematically revealed the presence of two factors corresponding to attitudinal support and behavioral intentions. The two factors were highly correlated ( $r_s = .67, .64$  and  $.57$ , for Experiments 2a, 2b and 2c respectively) and reliability for scales involving all the items was very good. We therefore decided to compute a general index of support that include all the items designed to assess this variable. We however systematically checked whether the results varied as a function of the type of index, that is, attitudes and behavioral intentions (see Results sections). The items slightly varied across experiments.

**Alternative accounts.** We argue that normative and non-normative collective actions are perceived as having different *relative* outcomes (outgroup gain vs. ingroup social image-damage) and that, compared to low-identifiers, high-identifiers are relatively more sensitive to image concerns than to status/resource loss. The combination of these phenomena leads these two types of members to respond differently to the different types of actions. Before directly testing this explanation, we examined two alternative accounts to the predicted mechanism.

*Subtyping of protesters.* An alternative account for predicted effect is that high-identifiers' lower support is due to the fact that they (more so than low-identifiers) engage in dismissive strategies when confronted with extreme behaviors from low-status groups. One of these strategies is to pathologize (or over-exclude) low-status group members involved in non-normative actions. If this is the case, subtyping of protesters should be especially high in the non-normative condition and among high-identifiers. In other words, high-identifiers should perceive protesters in the non-normative condition as being not representative of the low-status group and depict them as extremist and deviant. This subtyping strategy would

justify less support in this condition among high-identifiers. We therefore measured subtyping with 4 items (e.g., “to what extent do you agree with the fact that the people involved in the [low status movement] are: “representative of the general group they belong to”; “have a lot in common with the general group they belong to”;  $\alpha_{\text{Experiment 2a}} = .91$ ;  $\alpha_{\text{Experiment 2b}} = .91$ ;  $\alpha_{\text{Experiment 2c}} = .87$ ). For ease of interpretation, we reversed scores so that higher values indicate more subtyping.

*Perceived legitimacy of the low-status movement.* Another alternative explanation of the pattern of results obtained on support rests on the idea that high-identifiers (more so than low-identifiers) downgrade the legitimacy of non-normative collective action given that these strategies of protest deviate from societal norms upheld by the high-status group. This delegitimization would justify less support from high-identifiers in the non-normative condition. Participants stated to what extent they thought that the low-status movement was fair, reasonable, and legitimate. We also added the item ‘justified’ to Experiments 2b and 2c. Reliability scores were good in all samples ( $\alpha_{\text{Experiment 2a}} = .94$ ;  $\alpha_{\text{Experiment 2b}} = .85$ ;  $\alpha_{\text{Experiment 2c}} = .89$ ).

## Results

We analyzed the data using an Integrative Data Analysis procedure (Curran & Hussong, 2009). We thus merged the data of the three experiments which secured a final sample of 383 participants after removal of missing values ( $N_{\text{normative}} = 186$ ;  $N_{\text{non-normative}} = 197$ ;  $M_{\text{support}} = 3.55$ ;  $SD = 1.19$ ). Unless stated otherwise, we conducted all analyses using multiple regression with outgroup action (-1=non-normative; 1=normative), identification (mean-centered), and experiment (2 orthogonal contrasts representing the 3 experiments) as well as all interactions between these variables as predictors.

**Support for outgroup’s collective action.** Analyses on support showed the predicted interaction between outgroup action and level of identification with the high-status group;



$B=.126$ , CI [.004; .249],  $t(371)=-2.03$ ,  $p=.043$ . No other effects reached significance (lowest  $p=.38$ ). Importantly, our predicted interaction did *not* vary as a function of the experiment (see Supplemental material S1 for the full model). We therefore conducted the remainder of the analyses excluding the contrasts representing different experiments. Doing so did not affect the significance of the critical interaction,  $B=.133$ , CI [.021; .245],  $t(380)=2.34$ ,  $p=.020$ , (see Figure 3).<sup>5</sup>

To probe the outgroup action by identification interaction, we looked at the effect of action for high (+1SD) and low identifiers (-1SD). As predicted, high identifiers supported the normative more than the non-normative action,  $B=.193$ , CI [.024; .362],  $t(380)=2.25$ ,  $p=.025$ . Among low identifiers, the effect of type of action did not reach significance,  $B=-.093$ , CI [-.263; .077],  $t(380)=-1.07$ ,  $p=.283$ . Looking at the data the other way around, identification had a non-significant positive impact on ingroup members' outgroup support in the *normative* condition,  $B=.141$ , CI [-.027; .310],  $t(380)=1.65$ ,  $p=.100$ , whereas it tended to decrease support in the *non-normative* one,  $B=-.125$ , CI [-.272; .023],  $t(380)=-1.67$ ,  $p=.097$ .

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<sup>5</sup> A repeated measures ANOVA with the attitudinal vs. the behavioral intentions indexes of support as within-participant factor confirmed that type of index did not moderate the critical interaction ( $p=.64$ ).

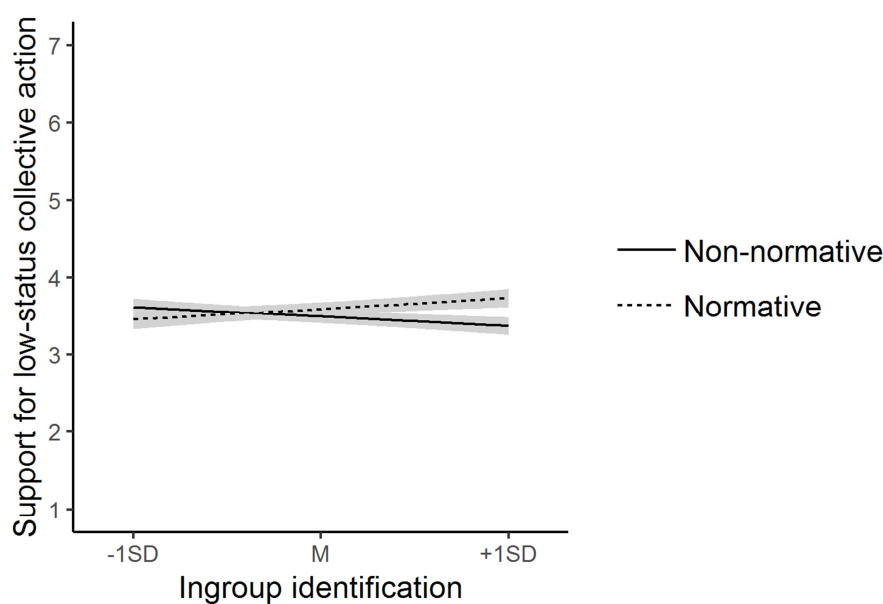


Figure 3. Support for low-status collective action among high-status groups as a function of the type of outgroup action and the level of ingroup identification in the merged data of Experiments 2a, 2b and 2c (grey areas around the slopes represent standard errors).

**Alternative accounts.** *Perceptions of the outgroup: Subtyping of protesters.* A multiple regression analysis using subtyping as our criterion only revealed a main positive effect of identification ( $B=.168$ , CI [.028; .308],  $t(371)=2.36$ ,  $p=.019$ ) and a significant effect of the second contrast for experiment ( $B=.205$ , CI [.045; .364],  $t(371)=-2.52$ ,  $p=.012$ ). No other effects reached significance (lowest  $p=.131$ , see Supplemental material S2 for the full model). Moreover, including subtyping and its interaction with type of action in the analysis on support did not change the critical interaction,  $B=.149$ , CI [.036; .261],  $t(369)=2.60$ ,  $p=.010$ . Taken together, these findings strongly suggest that subtyping fails to provide an (alternative) explanation for the differential support for the low-status collective action that we observed between the low- and high-identifiers.

*Perceptions of the collective action: legitimacy of the low-status campaign.* The present data suggests that this strategy does not seem to operate. First, and most importantly, identification did not affect the perceived legitimacy of the collective movement,  $B=.042$ , CI [-.204; .121],  $t(371)=-.504$ ,  $p=.615$ . Secondly, the interaction between type of action and

identification on legitimacy of the collective action clearly failed to reach significance,  $B=.108$ ,  $CI [-.054; .270]$ ,  $t(371)=1.31$ ,  $p=.191$  (see Supplemental material S2 for the full model).

### **Discussion**

Experiments 2a, 2b and 2c showed that support of high-status groups for collective action was a function of both the high-status group members' level of identification with their ingroup and the type of action carried out by the low-status group. In line with predictions, high-identifiers supported normative outgroup actions more than non-normative ones, whereas low-identifiers do not seem to be sensitive to the type of collective action. Furthermore, factors such as increased subtyping of protesters or decreased perceived legitimacy of the action by high-identifiers in the non-normative condition fail to provide viable accounts of these findings. Importantly, the consistency of the pattern of findings across the various experiments stresses the generalizability of our predictions across countries and intergroup contexts.

### **Experiment 3**

The main goal of Experiment 3 was to examine the viability of our model in full. To this end, we tested the predicted mechanism underlying differential support for normative and non-normative action among low and high-identifiers, namely the differential association of normative and non-normative collective action with outgroup gain and social image-damage outcomes, respectively. This experiment was also designed to provide a more conservative test for the effect of action on expected outcomes by using a between-participants rather than a within-participant design (as it was the case in Experiments 1a to 1e). In addition, we conducted Experiment 3 in yet another country and intergroup context. Finally, we examined a third alternative explanation for the effects of identification by looking at the role of participants' political orientation.

## Method and Procedure

The final sample comprised 365 White Americans ( $M_{\text{age}}=36.27$ ,  $SD=11.66$ , 162 women). We contacted participants contacted *via* the Amazon Mechanical Turk website and gave them \$1.50 for their participation. We excluded one participant who failed to summarize the article and two outliers presenting studentized residuals equal or higher than  $|3|$  SD in analysis on support from all the analyses.

The experimental scenario portrayed the same job hiring discrimination issue and the same actions as in Experiments 2b and 2c ( $N_{\text{normative}}=185$ ;  $N_{\text{non-normative}}=182$ ). We adapted the newspaper story to the American context with the Hispanic community as the low-status outgroup. The procedure was the same as before except that participants had to give their opinion on the hypothesized mediators, namely the expected outcomes low-status group campaign, as well as on the perceived legitimacy of it before answering to the support measure. In addition, the demographics section included measures of political orientation and employment status.

## Measures

We measured ingroup identification as White American ( $\alpha= .94$ ;  $M=4.11$ ,  $SD=1.17$ ), legitimacy of the collective action ( $\alpha= .97$ ;  $M=4.70$ ,  $SD=1.79$ ), and support ( $\alpha= .91$ ;  $M=3.28$ ,  $SD=1.30$ ) with the same items as in the previous experiments.

**Political orientation.** Participants reported on two 11-point bipolar scales to what extent they considered themselves to be left vs. right wing and liberal vs. conservative ( $r=.92$ ,  $p<.001$ ). The inclusion of this variable in the analyses did not affect any of the predicted results and will not be mentioned further.

**Employment situation.** Participants indicated their employment status by selecting one of the following options: student ( $N=28$ ), employed ( $N=275$ ), unemployed ( $N=40$ ),

retired ( $N=11$ ) and other ( $N=12$ , one missing). This variable did not affect the results reported below and will not be mentioned further.

**Expected outcomes of the low-status movement.** We measured perceived likelihood of outgroup gain ( $\alpha = .86$ ) and social image damage ( $\alpha = .87$ ,  $r = -.059$ ,  $p = .262$ ) with the same scales as in Experiments 1c to 1e.

## Results

Unless stated otherwise, we conducted all analyses using a multiple regression model with type of action (1=normative; -1=non-normative), identification (mean centered), and the interaction between these variables as predictors. Contrary to previous experiments, ingroup identification was correlated with perceived legitimacy of the collective action ( $r = -.152$ ,  $p = .003$ ). In order to control for the (potentially confounding) effect of perceived legitimacy while securing an unbiased estimate of the effects of our two independent variables (Yzerbyt, Muller, & Judd, 2004), we included legitimacy perceptions (mean-centered) and its interactions with our independent variables in the analyses.

**Support for the outgroup's collective action.** A regression analysis on support showed no effect of type of action,  $B = .017$ ,  $CI [-.068; .103]$ ,  $t(357) = .40$ ,  $p < .690$ , and a negative effect of ingroup identification,  $B = -.168$ ,  $CI [-.242; -.095]$ ,  $t(357) = -4.49$ ,  $p < .001$ . This effect was qualified by the predicted type of action by identification interaction,  $B = .078$ ,  $CI [.004; .152]$ ,  $t(357) = 2.07$ ,  $p = .039^6$ . In addition, we found a main effect of perceived legitimacy of the collective action,  $B = .550$ ,  $CI [.502; .599]$ ,  $t(357) = 22.27$ ,  $p < .001$ . Unexpectedly, this effect was qualified by an identification by legitimacy interaction,  $B = -.045$ ,  $CI [-.084; -.006]$ ,  $t(357) = -2.26$ ,  $p = .025$ . Probing this interaction simply revealed that legitimacy was a stronger predictor of support among low-identifiers than among high-

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<sup>6</sup> Again, this interaction did not vary as a function of the type of support subscale (i.e., attitudes or behavioral intentions,  $p = .752$ ).

identifiers ( $B=.603$ , CI [.534; .671],  $t(357)=17.20$ ,  $p<.001$ ; ( $B=.500$ , CI [.437; .563],  $t=15.70$ ,  $p<.001$ , respectively). Importantly, however, both the legitimacy by type of action interaction and the three-way interaction between identification, type of action and legitimacy were far from significance ( $p=.806$  and  $p=.704$ , respectively). We therefore conducted the remainder of analyses without these two predictors.

The critical type of action by identification interaction again revealed that identification had a negative effect on support in the non-normative condition ( $B=-.243$ , CI [-.347; -.139],  $t(359)=-4.59$ ,  $p<.001$ ) whereas this effect was weaker in the normative condition ( $B=-.092$ , CI [-.194; .010],  $t(359)=-1.77$ ,  $p=.077$ ). Looking at the data differently, high-identifiers tended to support more the normative relative to the non-normative action ( $B=.103$ , CI [-.016; .222]  $t(359)=1.71$ ,  $p=.089$ ) whereas low-identifiers were not affected by the type of low-status collective action ( $B=-.073$ , CI [-.193; .047],  $t(359)=-1.20$ ,  $p=.230$ ). These results fully replicate the previous findings.

**Expected outcomes of outgroup's collective action.** To recap, we propose that: 1) normative and non-normative actions trigger differential inferences concerning the outcomes of the collective actions (outgroup-gain vs. social image-damage), independently of participants' level of ingroup identification. Experiments 1a to 1e provided support for these two assumptions in within-participant designs. In the present experiment, we measured expected outcomes in a between-participants design. As before, we computed a difference score by subtracting expected outgroup gain from social image-damage. This score represents perceptions of the prevalence of outgroup-gain relative to social image-damage and corresponds to our predicted mediator for the different patterns of support for normative versus non-normative action among high and low identifiers.

We ran regression analyses on this score using the same predictors as in the reported analyses on support, that is, ingroup identification, type of action, their interaction along with

legitimacy and its interaction with identification. Indeed, this model was the most parsimonious across outcomes (i.e. mediator and dependent variable).

As before, the analysis of the first predicted path between the independent variable, that is, type of low-status action (coded -1 for non-normative and 1 for normative), and the hypothesized mediator (i.e., perceived outcomes), revealed the presence of a main effect of type of action in the predicted direction ( $B=.189$ ,  $CI [.024; .353]$ ,  $t(359)=2.26$ ,  $p=.025$ ;  $M_{\text{normative}}=.345$ ,  $SE=.118$ ,  $M_{\text{non-normative}}=-.003$ ,  $SE=.119$ ). In addition, we found main effects of identification ( $B=-.243$ ,  $CI [-.386; -.101]$ ,  $t(359)=-3.356$ ,  $p=.001$ ) and legitimacy ( $B=.338$ ,  $CI [.244; .431]$ ,  $t(359)=7.09$ ,  $p<.001$ ). Again, and as predicted, identification did not moderate the effect of type of action ( $B=.088$ ,  $CI [-.054; .230]$ ,  $t(359)=1.22$ ,  $p=.223$ ).

**Expected outcomes of collective action as the underlying mechanism – mediated moderation.** We argue that the observed effects of ingroup identification on support are due a differential sensitivity of high and low identifiers to the expected outcomes of normative and non-normative collective action. Specifically, whereas high-identifiers should be especially reluctant to support actions perceived as *more likely to damage* the ingroup's social image *than* to improve the outgroup's position, low identifiers should not be especially sensitive to the type of outgroup collective action. Importantly, we hypothesize that it is differential *sensitivity* and not different *perceptions* of the two types of actions that underlie the interactive effect of identification and type of action on support. We should therefore observe a mediated moderation (Muller, Judd, & Yzerbyt, 2005) in which the moderator (i.e., identification) affects the link between the mediator (i.e., expected outcomes of the collective action) and the dependent variable (i.e., support for the low-status collective action).

According to Muller and colleagues (2005), “for mediated moderation, there is overall moderation, produced by the mediating process, and when this process is controlled for the residual moderation of the treatment effect is reduced” (p. 856).

The analyses reported above already provided support 1) for the moderation of the overall effect, namely, the interaction between identification and type of action on support, and 2) for the link between the independent variable and the proposed mediator, namely, the effect of type of action on expected outcomes. The last step requires testing a full mediated moderation model on support for collective action showing 1) a decrease in the interaction once the proposed mediator is included in the equation as well as, 2) ascertaining the significance of the interaction between identification and expected outcomes. To do so, we added the difference score of expected outcomes as well as its interaction with identification to the model that included type of action, identification, and their interaction as predictors of support of outgroup's collective action.

Results showed a main effect of expected outcomes ( $B=.057$ ,  $CI [.005; .110]$ ,  $t(359)=2.14$ ,  $p=.033$ ). More importantly, we also found the predicted expected outcomes by identification interaction ( $B=.046$ ,  $CI [.007; .085]$ ,  $t(359)=2.30$ ,  $p=.022$ ). Supporting our process hypothesis, the type of action x identification interaction was no longer significant,  $B=.056$ ,  $CI [-.018; .129]$ ,  $t(359)=1.49$ ,  $p=.136$ ). Consistent with our hypotheses, bootstrap CIs using Hayes' Process Macro Model 59 (2013) confirmed that the indirect effect of type of action on support via expected outcomes was significant for high-identifiers (indirect effect  $=.032$ ,  $CI [.003; .072]$ ) but not for low-identifiers (indirect effect  $=.00$ ,  $CI [-.011; .012]$ ).

### **Discussion**

Experiment 3 provided support for our hypothesized model in yet another intergroup context. We replicated the interaction between identification and type of collective action on support (Experiments 2a, 2b and 2c) as well as the effect of type of action on expected outcomes of collective action (Experiments 1a to 1e). This effect emerged in a between-participants design.



Differential expectations concerning collective action outcomes (i.e., outgroup gain vs. social image-damage) interacted with ingroup identification in predicting support for collective action among high-status group members. Specifically, the indirect effect of type of action on support through expected outcomes was only significant for highly identified individuals. These members (compared to low-identifiers) supported *less* collective action that was perceived as more likely to damage to their ingroup's social image than to lead to outgroup gain (i.e., non-normative action).

One of the main goals of the present research was to explore the relative impact of expected consequences of normative and non-normative collective action. However, one of the other novel aspects of the present research is the analysis of collective action as potentially damaging the social image of the high-status (perpetrator) group. As a final step, we therefore addressed the specific impact of social image-damage on support for low-status collective action among high-status groups. In order to do so, we conducted a last experiment in which we directly manipulated the extent to which the collective action negatively affected the ingroup's social image.

### **Experiment 4**

Experiment 4 aimed to conceptually replicate the effects of non-normative action by focusing on the extent to which the low-status outgroup collective action damaged the ingroup's social image. High-identifiers' decreased support for non-normative action should be particularly linked to these members' concern with the ingroup's image. Indeed, high-identifiers have been shown to be more sensitive to this type of threat than their low identified counterparts (e.g., Branscombe, Ellemers, Spears, & Doosje, 1999; Doosje, Branscombe, Spears, & Manstead, 1998). Instead of manipulating the type of action (as before), we varied the extent to which the collective action campaign had allegedly attracted negative attention to the ingroup's illegitimate domination (i.e., the international visibility of

the collective action campaign). In addition to providing a deeper analysis of support as depending on the social image-damage potential of collective action, this strategy constitutes a more conservative test of our model because it prevents participants from potentially contrasting outgroup gain and social image-damage outcomes.

Another potential limitation of previous experiments concerns the self-report nature of the support measure. We therefore decided to add two indirect measures of support. The first refers to allocation of resources to the low-status outgroup's cause as well as to other disadvantaged minorities. This measure provides participants with the opportunity to "be legitimately concerned" with other causes and for a justification for denial of support to the critical protesting outgroup. The second is a behavioral measure designed to capture support intentions. Building on this sophisticated index of support offers a way to reduce measurement error and improve the robustness of findings.

### **Method**

**Participants and design.** We recruited 171 participants from the United Kingdom through the Crowdfunder website. Each participant received \$0.50 as compensation. The study was presented as surveying people's opinions about social movements and, more specifically, about a recent immigration campaign. The experiment consisted in a 2 (international visibility of collective action: High vs. Low) by ingroup identification design. Participants had to read and summarize one of two articles allegedly published by a popular American newspaper. We excluded 13 participants who failed to perform this task correctly (i.e., they either did not write anything or wrote about something unrelated to the topic) and one participant with studentized residuals higher than  $|2.5|$  SD in two of the four indexes of support from analyses on all dependent variables. The final sample thus consisted of 157

participants ( $M_{\text{age}}=36.06$ ,  $SD=11.71$ ; 85 women;  $N_{\text{high international visibility}}=80$ ,  $N_{\text{low international visibility}}=77$ ).

### Procedure

After giving their consent, participants filled the ingroup identification scale with British people and were randomly assigned to one of two experimental conditions.

**Manipulation of damage to ingroup's social image.** In order to manipulate the extent to which the collective action could damage the ingroup's social image, we manipulated the international visibility of the collective action campaign. We did so by varying both the headline of the newspaper article and some elements in the text. In the *high international visibility* condition, the headline read: "Have British people become racist? The eyes of the world turn to the UK". In the *low international visibility* condition, the second part of the headline was omitted. In addition, embedded in the text was some information about the impact of the campaign on the media. In the *high international visibility* condition, participants learned that: the collective action campaign had received "*substantial attention*", "*the most popular newspapers of almost every European country*" had mentioned the campaign in their headlines, the campaign posts had been shared "more than *500,000* times on social media and had "*received thousands of views*" (italics added). In the *low international visibility* condition, the terms in italics were replaced by: "*some*", "*several specialized journals in some European countries*", "*500*" and "*hundreds*", respectively. The remainder of the article was the same in both conditions and ostensibly described a collective action campaign called "UK welcomes Syrian refugees". The campaign was initiated by a group of war refugees recently hosted by other European countries with the goal to denounce the treatment received by refugees in the UK. The article went on citing the 1951 Convention on the Status of Refugees and declarations of a United Nations spokesperson condemning the actions of the UK. In addition, the text mentioned that "no fewer than 350 individuals have

been denied access to the UK, amongst whom a high number of families with children". This information helped prevent participants from spontaneously assuming that the problem affected more people in the high compared to the low international visibility condition. After they had summarized the newspaper article, participants answered our dependent measures, were debriefed, thanked, and given a code to obtain the financial compensation for their participation.

### Measures

**Ingroup identification.** We again used the Leach and colleagues' (2008) scale to measure identification, this time assessing identification as British ( $\alpha=.97$ ;  $M=4.77$ ,  $SD=1.33$ ).

**Perceived social image-damage.** This variable was measured with the same six items used in Experiments 1c to 1e and 3 ( $\alpha=.95$ ;  $M=4.37$ ,  $SD=1.50$ ).

**Support for the (low status) outgroup's action.** In addition to the self-report measure used before, we added a more indirect measure of support in the form of the allocation of resources as well as a behavioral measure of support (see Appendix C).

*Self-reported intentions to support.* We used the same 11 items as before to measure self-reported support ( $\alpha=.96$ ;  $M=3.80$ ,  $SD=1.68$ ).

*Allocation of resources.* As an introduction to this measure participants read: "As you probably know, every year the government needs to establish a general budget for national emergencies. Once this general budget is determined, these funds need to be allocated to different sectors. Below we present you the top 4 ones. Please slide each one of the bars to express your opinion on how one should distribute the budget. Keep in mind that, in total, you are asked to distribute 100% of the emergency budget." The four sectors presented were refugees (the critical one), homeless, victims of natural disasters, and victims of epidemics

(fillers). None of the filler sectors was affected by our predictors or by their interaction (lowest  $p=.329$ ).

*Behavior.* At the end of the questionnaire, participants could provide their email address in order to receive a link to sign a petition supporting the “UK welcomes refugees” campaign. They were reassured of the fact that there was no way to link the email to their individual responses and that its only use was to circulate the petition.

**Political orientation.** Given the political divide around the refugee issue at the time of the experiment, we controlled for political orientation. Participants reported their political orientation using a slider on a scale from 0 (left) to 100 (right-wing;  $M=43.23$ ,  $SD=23.45$ ).

**Alternative accounts.** We measured the importance of the issue and the quality of the newspaper article to ensure that the international visibility manipulation did not trigger heuristics related to these aspects. For example, the problem could appear more important in the high international visibility condition than in the low international visibility one or an article portraying widely reported phenomena could appear better than one focusing on a less attention-grabbing issue. Finally, as in the previous studies, we measured the legitimacy of the collective action movement. We conducted analyses to check whether our independent variables affected these variables, as all of them could potentially constitute alternative explanations for results.

*Importance of the issue.* This variable was measured with 3 items on a 7-point scale. Participants indicated to what extent the issue portrayed in the article was “worthy to consider in the public discourse”/“political arena” and “important” ( $\alpha=.94$ ;  $M=4.97$ ,  $SD=1.66$ ).

*Quality of the newspaper article.* Seven items referred to the quality of the article (e.g., “The article is easy to understand”, “This is article is boring”;  $\alpha=.89$ ;  $M=4.53$ ,  $SD=1.32$ ).

*Legitimacy of the collective action movement.* This variable was measured with the same 4 items used in previous experiments along with a new one (“appropriate”,  $\alpha=.97$ ;  $M=4.41$ ,  $SD=1.84$ ).

## Results

All the interactions involving our predictors on the alternative accounts mentioned above were non-significant (lowest  $p=.294$ ). These alternative accounts will therefore not be mentioned further (see Supplemental materials S4).

**Perceived social image-damage.** As stated above, we predicted that the collective action would be perceived as more likely to damage the ingroup’s social image in the high international visibility condition compared to the low international visibility one. This should translate into a main effect of condition. Despite showing the predicted trend, this effect did not reach significance ( $B=.168$ ,  $CI [-.068; .404]$ ,  $t(154)=1.41$ ,  $p=.162$ ). It is possible that our international visibility manipulation led participants to deny the social-image threat in order to deal with it. Indeed, denial of threat is often a way to deal with it and this should be especially the case in more blatant self-report measures (Bettencourt, Miller, & Hume, 1999; Teixeira, Demoulin, & Yzerbyt, 2013). In order to (partly) address this issue, we conducted a post-hoc experiment on a sample that would not be sensitive to this specific social-image threat (Americans). We asked participants to evaluate the same experimental material used here. The results showed that in the high visibility condition the action was perceived as more likely to damage the social-image of the targeted group (i.e., British people) than in the low visibility condition. This validates our manipulation and suggests that the absence of significant results concerning the manipulation-check among participants belonging to the advantaged ingroup might be due to denial of threat (see Supplemental material S5 for a detailed explanation of methods and results).

**Support for the (low status) outgroup's action.** Unless stated otherwise, we conducted all multiple regression analyses with identification (centered), international visibility (coded 1 for high and -1 for low) and their interaction as predictors. As before, we followed Yzerbyt and colleagues' (2004) recommendations regarding the use of covariates. Because political orientation was not only systematically correlated with our dependent variables and controls but also with ingroup identification ( $r=.162, p=.042$ ), our model included this variable and its interactions with our independent variables.

In order to examine the predicted effects on support, we first conducted a multivariate analysis of variance with the four support indices as dependent variables (i.e., attitudes, behavioral intentions, resource allocation, and behavior). This procedure provides a more powerful test of our hypotheses by reducing measurement error. In addition, because the four indicators are part of the same latent variable (i.e., support) this approach seemed the most appropriate.

Analyses showed the predicted international visibility by identification interaction,  $F(7, 149) = 3.01, p=.020, \eta^2=.076$ ,<sup>7</sup> as well as a main effect of political orientation,  $F(7, 149) = 7.73, p<.001, \eta^2=.175$ . No other effects reached significance (lowest  $p=.249$ , see Supplemental material S6 for the full model). We therefore conducted the remainder of the analyses excluding the interaction between political orientation and our independent variables. To probe the critical interaction, we standardized the scores of the support indexes

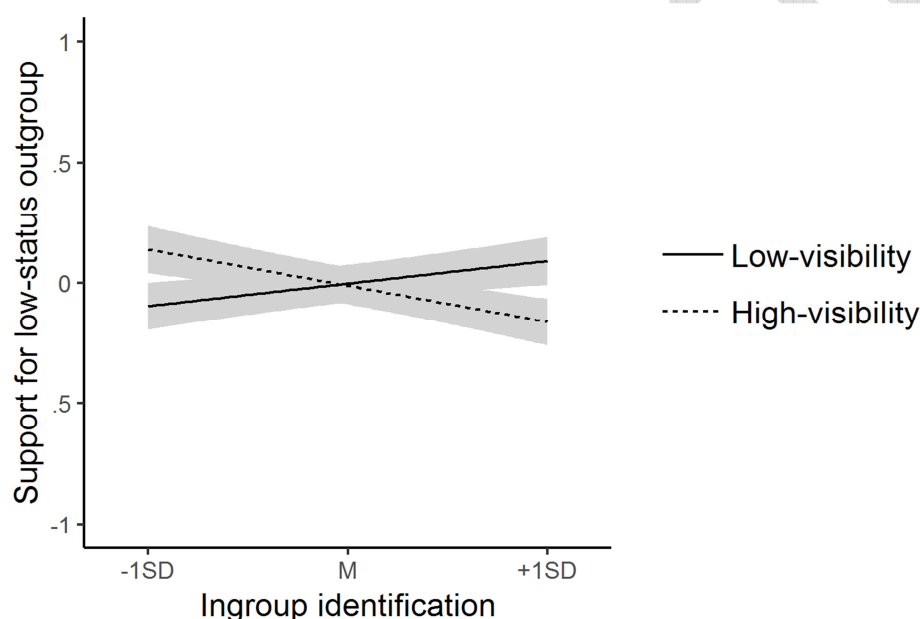
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<sup>7</sup> We realize that this analytical option implies a trade-off between robustness of hypotheses testing and a potential violation of the normality assumption regarding our (dichotomous) behavioral dependent variable. We therefore additionally conducted a logistic regression analysis on the behavioral data. This analysis yielded the same results as the MANOVA, namely, a negative effect of political orientation ( $B=-.038, Wald = 12.34, p<.001$ ) as well as the predicted international visibility by identification interaction ( $B=-.396, Wald=5.67, p=.017$ ).

## HIGH-STATUS GROUPS' SUPPORT FOR COLLECTIVE ACTION

and created a composite score of support. We then proceeded with regression analyses following the same procedure as above. These changes did not affect the critical interaction, ( $B=-.123$ ,  $CI [-.206; -.039]$ ,  $t(152)= -2.91$ ,  $p=.004$  (see Figure 4).

As predicted, in the high international visibility condition identification had a negative effect on support ( $B=-.151$ ,  $CI [-.269; -.034]$ ,  $t(152)=-2.55$ ,  $p=.012$ ). This effect was not significant in the low international visibility condition ( $B=.094$ ,  $CI [-.025; .213]$ ,  $t(152)=1.57$ ,  $p=.119$ ). Furthermore, high identifiers supported the low-status outgroup *less* in the high compared to the low international visibility condition ( $B=-.167$ ,  $CI [-.323; -.012]$ ,  $t(152)=-2.13$ ,  $p=.035$ ). This pattern reversed for low-identifiers ( $B=.158$ ,  $CI [.003; .313]$ ,  $t(152)=2.02$ ,  $p=.045$ ).



*Figure 4.* Support for protesting low-status outgroup among high-status group members as a function of the international visibility of the outgroup's collective action and the level of ingroup identification. The support measure represents the aggregated standardized score of self-reported support, resources allocated to the outgroup and behavioral support (grey areas around the slopes represent standard errors).



### **Discussion**

In this last experiment, we manipulated the international visibility of collective action and tested more directly the undermining role of social image concerns on support among high-identifiers. Our results conceptually replicated previous experiments across different support measures and in yet another intergroup context, in this case, refugees in the UK. When the collective action attracted worldwide attention to the inequality perpetrated by the ingroup, compared to when it went relatively unnoticed, high-identifiers supported it less. We found a reversal of this pattern among low-identifiers who supported the outgroup *more* in the high international visibility condition than in the low international visibility one. We will return to this issue later.

Importantly, perceived legitimacy, importance of the issue, quality of the newspaper or political orientation fail to account for the effects found on support. A difference between this experiment and the previous ones is that here we used a more proximal manipulation of social image-damage (i.e., it did not need to be inferred from the type of collective action). Indeed, compared to non-normative actions, the high international visibility manipulation used in this experiment left less room for doubt about the consequences of the collective action. In other words, this last experiment was more of a “harm-already-done” situation than the previous ones.

### **General Discussion**

Our central thesis is that the type of social change strategy enacted by low-status groups (i.e., normative vs. non-normative actions) shapes support for collective action among high-status group members varying in identification with the ingroup. In addition, we proposed that the effects of identification are due to differential sensitivity among high and low identifiers to the expected outcomes of normative and non-normative actions. Given the absence of literature on this issue, it seemed especially important to generalize results across

intergroup contexts. Specifically, we tested our main hypotheses across five samples in four countries using three different intergroup comparison contexts (Experiments 2a to 4).

Three experiments (2a to 2c) provided evidence for the predicted interaction in two intergroup contexts and two countries. High-identifiers with high-status groups supported non-normative collective action less than low-identifiers whereas no differences emerged for normative actions. Our data reveal that perceived differences in perceived legitimacy of the actions or subtyping of protesters fail to account for this effect.

Five experiments (1a to 1e) tested the predicted effect of type of low-status action (i.e. our independent variable) on perceived outcomes of the action (i.e., the proposed mediator). Participants perceived normative action as more likely to reduce intergroup inequality than to damage the high-status group's social image whereas they saw non-normative action as more likely to tarnish the high-status group's reputation than actually reduce inequality. Perceptions of outcomes of collective action were relatively consensual among people as this pattern replicated across relatively minimal "empty" contexts (Experiments 1a and 1c) and more meaningful ones (Experiments 1b, 1d and 1e) and did not differ for low and high identifiers advantaged group members (Experiments 1b and 3).

In addition, a subset of this first package of experiments examined *why* normative and non-normative protest are perceived as having asymmetrical outcomes regarding inequality reduction and social image damage to the advantaged group (Experiments 1c to 1e). This is the first research to examine how various dimensions on which normative and non-normative protest co-vary relate to perceptions of these actions, offering a better understanding of the mechanisms by which different types of collective action impact audiences. Results showed that differences in perceptions of outgroup gain and social image damage, resulting from normative and non-normative protest, are due to two *specific* aspects, namely: the extent to which the action deviates from 'normative' protest (at the descriptive and prescriptive levels),

and the extent to which the protesters are perceived as blaming the advantaged for the inequality. Again, these perceptions were consensual among involved (Experiments 1d and 1e) and non-involved perceivers (Experiment 1c). Non-relevant aspects for perceptions of outcomes of collective action included perceived extremity, legality, harm, extremity of protesters, perceived anger from protesters, and perceived perceptions of protesters being treated unfairly.

Experiment 3 provided support for our proposed mediated moderation model and ruled out a third alternative explanation (i.e., political orientation). The heightened association of non-normative action with social image-damage relative to outgroup-gain outcomes (compared to normative action) explained differences in support among high and low identifiers. Finally, Experiment 4 directly manipulated that aspect of the mediator judged to be especially novel for research on support for collective action: the extent to which the collective action damaged the high-status ingroup's social image. In line with predictions, high-identifiers in the more image damaging condition (the one in which the outgroup's collective action was presented as highly visible, and thus shaming, worldwide) supported the action less than the ones in the less damaging condition.

### **The Experience of Advantage in the Face of Collective Action**

This article is to our knowledge the first to examine high status groups' support for collective action when actually confronted with it. The limited research that has measured collective action tendencies among high-status group members has done so in the *absence* of concrete collective protest, and is mainly correlational (e.g., Iyer & Ryan, 2009; Mallett, Huntsinger, Sinclair, & Swim, 2008; van Zomeren, Postmes, Spears, & Bettache, 2011). Our results contrast with this earlier work. Broadly speaking, the existing research found evidence for what could be referred as an "empathy-based" account of support for social change. Van Zomeren and colleagues (2010) found identification with the low-status outgroup but not

with the ingroup to increase support for collective action. In the same vein, Iyer and Ryan (2009) found perceived illegitimacy and pervasiveness of inequality to predict positively men's support for collective action in support of gender equality, and Mallet and colleagues (Studies 1 and 2, 2008) found a positive association between perspective-taking and collective action on behalf of a low-status outgroup. In a nutshell, factors making inequality more serious and less justifiable and leading high-status individuals to see the situation from the disadvantaged group's perspective increased support for social change directed action.

Our findings are more in line with a threat-based account of support (or lack thereof). For example, we found identification with the ingroup *negatively* to predict support for non-normative collective action over and above the positive effect of legitimacy of the protest. This contrasts with the empathy-based research findings. Furthermore, we also found this negative effect of identification when the collective action attracted worldwide attention for the wrongdoings of the ingroup. These results are in line and extend previous research showing that concern about the condemnation of the ingroup for wrong-doings positively predicts self-defensive responses and negatively predicts pro-social ones (Gausel, Leach, Vignoles, & Brown, 2012).

One explanation for inconsistencies between our findings and previous research might be that, by focusing on situations in which actual collective action unfolds, we maximized the impact of threats to status and values of the ingroup compared to research looking at collective action intentions "in principle" in the absence of collective action movements or concrete actions. In this sense, the *mere* presence of collective action in society may *qualitatively* change high-status groups' psychological responses to inequality. Collective protest increases the perceived illegitimacy of inequality among sympathizers (Thomas & Louis, 2014) and is, by definition, designed to raise awareness in audiences for the need to change the current state-of-affairs (Haslam & Reicher, 2012). As such, the presence of

collective protest is not only likely to increase the perceived likelihood of social change, and therefore a loss of status for high-status groups, but it also attracts attention to the undeserved privileges of high-status groups, potentially damaging their image (Iyer & Leach, 2009; Lowery, Chow, Knowles, & Unzueta, 2012). This idea is also in line with findings showing increased physiological threat responses among high-status groups discussing change in status quo in intergroup contexts (Scheepers, Ellemers, & Sintemaartensdijk, 2009).

In sum, measuring high-status groups' reactions to social inequality in the presence of collective protest may trigger very different reactions compared to cases where protest remains a mere possibility, a situation that is prone to more politically correct or more normative answers. A similar point has been made by Leach, Iyer, and Pedersen (2007) who distinguished between the abstract goal of systemic compensation to structurally disadvantaged groups and the willingness to undertake specific actions to achieve it among advantaged groups. The authors' point was that determinants of pursuit of abstract goals are not necessarily the same as determinants of willingness to engage in specific behaviors aimed at bringing these goals about (see also, Durrheim & Dixon, 2004; Jackman & Crane, 1986).

Taking these issues into account, empirical analyses of support for social change among high-status groups should therefore simultaneously consider the actual willingness to act (and actual behavior when possible, see Experiment 4) and the specificity of the events that embody social change attempts. In this sense, low-status groups are not without influence and shape the context in which high-status groups react to privilege by the very actions they choose to initiate in order to challenge structural inequality.

Speaking to the role of the low-status group's choice of protest strategy in determining support, normative and non-normative actions were associated with different outcomes (Experiments 1a, 1b and 3) and these expected outcomes differently predicted support among low and high identifiers. Non-normative collective action was least supported

by high-identifiers *because* it was perceived as tainting the high-status ingroup social image (Experiments 3 and 4). These findings emerged independently of the strong effects of perceived legitimacy of collective action and political orientation.

A key goal of the present research was to uncover psychological mechanisms explaining support for different types of action. Among high-identifiers, support was *mainly* determined by the extent to which collective action was perceived as likely to damage the image of the advantaged group relative to its potential to actually reduce inequality and therefore decrease privilege of the high-status ingroup. This is both counterintuitive and consequential. Although one might assume that collective action is mostly threatening to the advantaged group's interests (status or resources), our data show that this is not necessarily the case. These findings nicely dovetail with research on the needs model of reconciliation and, more specifically, with the idea that, in situations of structural inequality, high-status groups are more sensitive to threats to their moral stance than to competence ones (Nadler & Shnabel, 2015).

### **Implications for the Effectiveness of Low-Status Collective Action**

Based on the current findings one might conclude that low-status groups with grievances should *always* follow the "Martin Luther King" normative courses of action in order to gather support for their cause. But, considering the 'big picture', is a more provocative Malcom X approach necessarily less effective in bringing about social change? Three aspects are worth mentioning here.

First, the perceived outcomes of different actions did not vary as a function of the level of identification of the perceiver (Experiments 1b and 3) and emerged even in the absence of a clear intergroup context (Experiments 1a and 1c). This suggests a consensus about the potential of non-normative actions, relative to normative ones, in communicating illegitimate domination and questioning the broader social order. Yes, this aspect decreased

support among high-identifiers with the high-status group, but not among low-identifiers. Indeed, even if the findings were only significant in the last experiment (in which the damage to the ingroup's social image was more directly manipulated), low-identifiers always exhibited the opposite pattern, that is, they had a relatively positive reaction to non-normative actions.

Secondly, our research suggests that non-normative action increases the international visibility and awareness of unfairness, and this might even be more the case if the high-status group reacts to it in antagonistic ways. In this respect, it is worth considering that effectiveness of collective action not *only* depends on support from the advantaged. For example, a consequence of increased perceptions of unfairness is an increase in support for collective action among third parties such as sympathizers (Thomas & Louis, 2014) or bystanders (Saab et al., 2015) but also an increase of intra-group solidarity among low-status group members themselves (van Zomeren, Postmes, & Spears, 2008). One can imagine that advantaged groups reacting negatively to non-normative protest, actually reinforces perceptions of illegitimacy of inequality among these other audiences. Sympathizers, bystanders or third parties are then more likely to voice their support for inequality reduction and increase pressures among the advantaged to comply with social change.

So, assuming that non-normative action can be effective in gathering support among some audiences, can its negative effects among high-identifiers be tempered? It is possible that, by attracting attention to the high-status group responsibility for inequality, non-normative action might "naturally" activate a self-focus among high-status groups. High-identifiers, being more attached to the positive value of the ingroup might respond with more resistance to this threat than low identifiers (for a similar discussion, see Doosje et al., 1998). If this is indeed the case, it is possible to minimize the negative effects of non-normative action on support among the advantaged by deliberately focusing collective action on the

disadvantaged group's position. This idea is in line with research by Lowery and colleagues showing the positive impact of framing racial inequality as "black disadvantage" instead of "white privilege" on support for affirmative action, and this especially among highly-identified whites (Lowery, et al., 2006; see also Iyer et al., 2003; Leach et al., 2002).

A third important aspect concerning actual effectiveness of (non)normative protest that remains to be addressed brings us back to our initial example of MLK and Malcom X. As our iconic comparison nicely illustrates, normative and non-normative protest often occur in parallel. There are often more and less 'radical' factions speaking for the same, broadly conceived, disadvantaged group. The *mere* existence of one (non)normative faction is very likely to impact acceptability of the other. Competing hypotheses co-exist in this respect. For example, normative protest may trigger *more* support among the advantaged if it occurs alongside non-normative protest because of fear of escalation of conflict. Indeed, there is a history of radical liberation struggles pushing the ones in power towards the more moderate (in their eyes "least worst") alternative. This idea is line with research showing that advantaged groups prefer to discuss commonalities compared to differences with outgroup members (Saguy et al., 2009). However, it can also be that the presence of non-normative protest (or protesters) attracts more attention and serves as rhetorical "proof" among the advantaged for dismissal of the low-status demands. An example of this is the recent "Yellow Vests" movement in France or the independence movement of Catalunya in Spain. In both cases, members of the protesting group had to publicly disavow their radical elements because the prevailing public (and advantaged) discourse was dismissing them as a minority of provocateurs. We did not find evidence for more subtyping for non-normative protesters, which speaks to this analysis, but we did not examine contexts in which normative and non-normative protest co-occur, so this scenario remains a possibility.

### **Conclusion**



Collective action mostly occurs in the context of structural inequality and is very often initiated by disadvantaged groups. The present work aimed to advance the understanding of the dynamics of collective action by examining responses of high-status groups to *specific* forms of action by low-status groups. This approach has the advantage of providing a more complete and dialectical picture of social change dynamics. The higher potential of non-normative action to taint the high-status group's social image determined lack of support among high-identifiers. Collective action is usually conceived as a means of struggle for the reduction of inequality, threatening advantaged group interests. This work shows that (non-normative) collective action might also and even *mainly* be perceived as a way of questioning the moral stance of the high-status group and be threatening *precisely* because of this. Taken together, the present findings call for a broader view of collective interests incorporating both resource *and* identity motives as determinants of the acceptability of social change actions.

Pre-print

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**Appendix A**

**List of Normative and Non-normative actions (Experiment 1a)**

---

1. Block the access 24/7 to buildings belonging to the majority and that symbolise the disadvantages suffered by the minority. (NN)
2. Organize information sharing sessions to discuss the inequality. (N)
3. Help to organize and take part in a strike. (N)
4. Create fake Twitter accounts in the name of public figures from the high-status group conveying a negative message about the low-status group. (NN)
5. Help to organize and participate in a demonstration. (N)
6. Hacking websites re-directing users to sites informing them about the cause defended by the collective campaign. (NN)
7. Create and distribute a petition. (N)
8. Spray protest messages (e.g., "more equality now!") on buildings. (NN)
9. Create a group on Facebook defending the low-status cause. (N)
10. Distribute flyers about the inequality in shopping areas. (N)
11. Harm the image of people who oppose the cause of the low-status group by spreading negative rumours about them, for example, in social media. (NN)
12. Get naked in public as a sign of protest. (NN)

---

*N=normative; NN=non-normative, according to pre-testing.*

**Appendix B**

**Items Measuring Expected Outcomes of Low-Status Outgroup Collective Action**

**(Experiments 1c to 1e)**

*Imagine now **the possible consequences** of each type of protest. To what extent is each one likely to have the following consequences: (not at all likely=1; very likely=7)*

---

**Outgroup gain Outcome**

---

The protesting group will get the results it wants.

The protesting group will be successful in getting more jobs.

The protesting group will be able to improve their situation.

The protesting group will lose this fight. (reversed)

The protesting group is "shooting itself in the foot." (reversed)

The protesting group will be seen as overreacting. (reversed)

The protesting group will be seen as having "a chip on their shoulder" because of this campaign. (reversed)

---

**Social image-damage Outcome**

---

The protesting group will make the advantaged group seem unfair to the rest of the world.

The protesting group will damage the reputation of the advantaged group.

The image of the advantaged group is going to be stained.

People will think that the advantaged group discriminates against disadvantaged groups.

The advantaged group will be discredited.

People will think that the advantaged group is prejudiced.

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**Appendix C**

**Items Measuring Support for Low-Status Outgroup Collective Action *per* Experiment**

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**Experiments 1d and 2a**

---

*After reading the article, to what extent do you agree with the following statements?  
(1=Completely disagree, 7= Completely agree)*

- I support women in their claims on the issue of 'wages for housework'.
  - I think women should be heard on the issue of 'wages for housework'.
  - I think women should strive to decrease the gap between women and men.
  - I encourage women to fight for their rights on the issue of 'wages for housework'.
- 

*In light of your opinion regarding the cause 'Wages for Housework', to what extent would you be willing, in principle, to participate in the following actions? (Not at all willing to participate=1; Very much willing to participate= 7).*

- Help creating flyers advocating women's right to demand wages for their housework.
  - Sign a petition in favor of wages for women's unpaid work.
  - Boycott work meetings happening after 4 pm.
  - Block the parking card swipe machine of your company or university so that your male colleagues cannot get in.
  - Paint the WH initials on the cars of authorities responsible for labor laws.
  - Deface work material (such as hard-drives or PCs) of managers who do not support the 'wages for housework' cause.
- 

**Experiments 2b and 2c**

---

*After reading the article, to what extent do you agree with the following statements?  
(1=Completely disagree, 7= Completely agree)*

- I support North-African citizens in their claims.
- I think North-African citizens should be heard on this.



## HIGH-STATUS GROUPS' SUPPORT FOR COLLECTIVE ACTION

I support the 'same qualifications, same job' campaign.

I encourage North-African citizens to fight for their rights.

I think that the situation is not that serious for North-African citizens. (reversed)

I think that authorities should not take the demands of the 'same qualifications, same job' campaign into account. (reversed)

---

*In light of your opinion regarding the cause of the North-African citizens' campaign group, to what extent would you be willing, in principle, to participate in the following actions? (Not at all willing to participate=1; Very much willing to participate= 7)*

Distribute flyers supporting the 'same qualifications, same job' campaign group.

Join a demonstration supporting the 'same qualifications, same job' campaign group.

Make a financial donation to the cause of the 'same qualifications, same job' campaign group.

Publicly expose companies who practice discriminatory hiring against North-African citizens through social media.

Keep watch while somebody paints the motto 'same qualifications, same job' on the walls of employment agencies.

---

### **Experiments 1e and 3**

---

*In light of your opinion regarding the cause of the Hispanic campaign group, to what extent do you agree with the following statements? (1=Completely disagree, 7= Completely agree)*

I support the Hispanic campaign group in its claims.

I think the Hispanic campaign group should be heard on this.

I think the Hispanic campaign group should strive for this cause.

I encourage the Hispanic campaign group to fight for its rights.

I think that situation is not that serious for Hispanics (reversed).

---

*In light of your opinion regarding the cause of the Hispanic campaign group, to what extent would you be willing, in principle, to participate in the following actions? (Not at all willing to participate=1; Very much willing to participate= 7)*

## HIGH-STATUS GROUPS' SUPPORT FOR COLLECTIVE ACTION

Make a financial donation to the cause of the Hispanic campaign group "same qualifications, same job".

Keep watch while somebody paints the motto 'same qualifications, same job' on the walls of employment agencies.

Join a demonstration supporting the cause of the Hispanic campaign group 'same qualifications, same job'.

Publicly expose companies who practice discriminatory hiring through social media.

Distribute flyers supporting the rights of the Hispanic community to demand equal access to the job market.

---

### Experiment 4

---

*After reading the article, to what extent do you agree with the following statements?*

*(1=Completely disagree, 7= Completely agree)*

I support the 'UK welcomes Syrian refugees' campaign in its claim.

I think that the 'UK welcomes Syrian refugees' campaign should be heard.

I encourage the 'UK welcomes Syrian refugees' campaign to fight for the rights of Syrian refugees.

I think that authorities should not take the demands of the 'UK welcomes Syrian refugees' campaign into account. (reversed)

I support the 'UK welcomes Syrian refugees' campaign.

---

*In light of your opinion regarding the cause of the 'UK welcomes Syrian refugees' campaign group, to what extent would you be willing, in principle, to perform in the following actions?*

Share links informing people of the 'UK welcomes Syrian refugees' actions.

Sign a petition supporting the demands of the 'UK welcomes Syrian refugees' campaign group.

Express support for the 'UK welcomes Syrian refugees' campaign group in posts on social media such as Twitter or Facebook.

Participate in a demonstration supporting the 'UK welcomes Syrian refugees' campaign.

Display the logo of the 'UK welcomes Syrian refugees' campaign group on your car/bike/backpack.

## HIGH-STATUS GROUPS' SUPPORT FOR COLLECTIVE ACTION

Participate in an information session about the 'UK welcomes Syrian refugees' actions and claims.

---

*As you probably know, every year the government needs to establish a general budget for national emergencies. Once this general budget is fixed, these funds need to be allocated to different sectors. Below we present you the top 4 ones. Please slide each one of the bars to express your opinion on how this budget should be distributed. Keep in mind that, in total, you are asked to distribute 100% of the emergency budget (it will stop when you reach this limit but you can also readjust allocations to reflect your preference).*

- a) Refugees
  - b) Homeless
  - c) Victims of natural disasters (fires, floods, earthquakes, ...)
  - d) Victims of epidemics
- 

*If you would like to receive the link for the petition created by the 'UK welcomes Syrian refugees' campaign demanding the granting of asylum to the Syrian refugees, please leave your email below. We will just use it to circulate the petition: it will not be linked to your individual responses or used to contact you for any other matter (i.e. also preserving your anonymity).*

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