Received: 1 June 2022 | Revised: 17 October 2022 | Accepted: 1 December 2022

DOI: 10.1111/spc3.12724

REVIEW ARTICLE

WILEY

Towards an understanding of performative allyship: Definition, antecedents and consequences

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Abstract

Adding rainbow filters in support of LGBTQ+ movements or changing profile pictures to black squares to show support for the BlackLivesMatter movement have become common contemporary expressions of solidarity. However, these actions are often criticized as being 'performative' and falling short of genuine social change. Despite its popularity, little is known about what performative allyship is and what its pitfalls or potential benefits may be. We review the existing psychological literature on intergroup relations and allyship to provide a definition and framework for studying performative allyship and its consequences for social change. We propose that the term performative allyship refers to easy and costless actions that often do not challenge the status quo and are motivated primarily by the desire to accrue personal benefits. The literature suggests that engaging in performative allyship may have a negative impact on the physical and mental well-being of disadvantaged groups, but also on allies. We discuss negative and some positive consequences of engagement in performative allyship on disadvantaged groups, allies and society at large and provide directions for future research.

KEYWORDS

advantaged groups, allyship, disadvantaged groups, motivation, social change

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Actions such as changing profile pictures and retweeting posts on social media to illustrate support for social movements (e.g., BlackLivesMatter, LGBTQ+) or for people affected by injustice (e.g., war, social unrest) are a common occurrence. These actions may be genuine expressions of solidarity, but they are often criticized as being 'performative' or inauthentic displays of support (Kalina, 2020; Philips 2020). This is because they are seen as contributing more to the status and public image of those who engage in them (e.g., in terms of increased popularity) and less so to those they are aimed to help. The term performative activism and performative allyship have become very popular in recent years (i.e., there are over 3 million results on the Google search engine in May 2022), with the majority of titles 'warning' the reader about the negative consequences of engaging in performative allyship and advices on how to become a 'better' ally. Surprisingly and despite its popularity, there is little work that has examined the topic of performative allyship within the psychological literature. This paper contributes to the literature by reviewing the existing social-psychological work on allyship and activism to provide a definition and a framework to study performative allyship and its consequences.

Popular opinion and writing on performative allyship rests on two assumptions. First, it implies that performative allyship is opposed to true or authentic allyship (Phillips, 2020). According to the Cambridge dictionary, *performative* is an adjective that denotes an action that has an artistic or acting performance. Applied to allyship and activism, the term gains a pejorative meaning, because it refers to actions that are enacted in front of an audience with the goal to gain popularity and respect rather than to challenge inequality (Kalina, 2020). Second, it implies that performative allyship has either no or more worryingly, harmful effects on progress towards social equality. We tackle both of these assumptions in the review. We start by examining the motivations and actions that can be considered as performative in contrast to authentic or true allyship. Moreover, we take a multiple perspectives approach (Kutlaca et al., 2020) and analyse the negative and some positive consequences performative allyship has on members of disadvantaged groups, performative allies and society at large.

1 | PERFORMATIVE ALLYSHIP: DEFINITION AND RELATED CONCEPTS

To understand what performative allyship might be, we draw on social-psychological theorizing on social change. Broadly speaking, social change in intergroup relations (Simon & Klandermans, 2001; Subašić et al., 2008) refers to the struggle over power and status between members of social groups who occupy lower status positions (i.e., disadvantaged groups like women, racial/ethnic minorities, LGBTQ+) and those who occupy high status positions (i.e., advantaged groups like men, white people, heterosexuals). The research in this area typically focuses on examining when and why disadvantaged groups engage in collective action to achieve social change and improve their group status (Van Zomeren et al., 2008; Wright et al., 1990). The core premise of the social psychological models of collective action is that individuals' participation in actions is not driven primarily by desire to improve one's individual outcomes but by concern for their fellow group members (Van Zomeren et al., 2008).

Importantly, there is a growing awareness in the literature that actions geared toward social change involve more than just members of disadvantaged groups and those who oppose them (Simon & Klandermans, 2001; Subašić et al., 2008). The broader society, which includes members of other disadvantaged and advantaged groups, may show support for the disadvantaged group's cause and even take an active role in challenging the status quo. The individuals outside of the disadvantaged groups who become engaged in individual and collective actions geared toward social change are referred to as allies (Ashburn-Nardo, 2018; Brown & Ostrove, 2013; Louis et al., 2019; Radke et al., 2020). Empirical and theoretical work on allyship recognizes the benefits of allies' participation in actions geared toward social change (Louis, 2009; Radke et al., 2020), but it also highlights the problems with their involvement (Droogendyk et al., 2016; Iyer & Achia, 2020; Radke et al., 2020, 2021). The core issue is that allies may engage in actions for reasons other than to benefit the disadvantaged groups (Louis et al., 2019; Radke et al., 2020), or they may act in ways that either do not contribute or may even be harmful in the long run for disadvantaged groups (e.g., by providing help that keeps the disadvantaged group in the dependant position, Becker et al., 2018; Nadler

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& Halabi, 2006). According to popular views, performative allyship is a form of inauthentic allyship (Kalina, 2020; Philips, 2020), but what is not clear is whether different motivations, actions or a combination sets apart genuine from performative allies.

Existing work in psychology, political sciences and economics has identified several forms of inauthentic prosocial behaviours. For instance, with the proliferation of social media, research on political activism has examined the benefits and pitfalls of 'slacktivism' or relatively costless, tokenistic display of support for a social cause (Morozov, 2009). Similarly, the pejorative term 'virtue signalling', promoted by the journalist James Bartholomer (2015) is used to describe the public expression of moral values or support for a cause, but with the goal to improve one's reputation and image (Westra, 2021). The literature on moral behaviours examines the phenomenon of moral grandstanding, which refers to the use of speech on moral, political and social issues with the goal to improve one's public image and social rank (Grubbs et al., 2019). Likewise, the research on public goods finds that people donate for non-altruistic reasons namely, to experience positive affect and feel good about themselves (i.e., warm glow, Andreoni, 1990). Two key features unite all of these concepts: altruistic motives may not be enough to explain why people engage in prosocial behaviours and some behaviours may not contribute to the social cause they are intended to serve.

In contrast to concepts like slacktivism or virtue signalling that do not take into account group identities of people engaging in these actions, in this paper we approach performative allyship from an intergroup relations perspective (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). We recognize that some members of disadvantaged groups are not committed to social change and tend to free-ride on the achievements of others (Radke et al., 2018; Van Zomeren et al., 2008). However, performative allyship in our view refers to motivations and actions of people who participate in actions geared toward social change on behalf of disadvantaged groups. Those may include members of advantaged groups, but also members of other disadvantaged groups. Work on intergroup relations finds that members of advantaged groups are reluctant to question the status quo and give up their privileged status (Becker, 2020; Jost et al., 2017; Osborne et al., 2019; Radke et al., 2020). This is especially the case when it comes to showing support for system-challenging actions, which are perceived as threatening to the advantaged group's image (Teixeira et al., 2020). Thus, it is not surprising that advantaged groups' acts of solidarity may raise suspicions over their true intentions and motives (Parker, 2020). At the same time, work on relations between minority groups finds that members of disadvantaged groups also engage in competitions over economic resources, and/or public support (Burson & Godfrey, 2020; Noor et al., 2017), which suggests that they too may not always engage in solidarity out of genuine concern for other groups. This paper, however, focuses on members of advantaged groups given that their high social status provides them with more power to challenge the status quo (Louis, 2009), and their actions may have more detrimental effects on disadvantaged groups (Droogendyk et al., 2016; Radke et al., 2020).

In sum, we propose that the term performative allyship refers to a combination of motivations and actions. Previous work identified two types of disingenuous motivations, ingroup-focused and personal motivations (Radke et al., 2020). We discuss both, though we suspect that the personal motivation is the key ingredient of performative allyship. Moreover, we propose that the stronger the personal motivation to engage in allyship the higher the likelihood of engaging in actions that are easy, not costly, publicly visible, and do not challenge the status quo (Osborne et al., 2019; Radke et al., 2018; Subašić et al., 2008). We elaborate on these two points below.

2 | PERFORMATIVE ALLYSHIP: MOTIVATION

Theoretical work distinguishes between four key motivations to explain why advantaged group members may show support and solidarity with disadvantaged group members (Radke et al., 2020). Importantly, the model assumes that people may hold all four motivations simultaneously (to a differing extent), even though they may be in conflict. Two motivations stem from genuine concern for the status of disadvantage group members. First is the outgroup-focused motivation, which is rooted in the identification and solidarity with the disadvantaged group's plea. Second is the moral motivation, which is driven by individual principled rejections of inequality because it goes against one's

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moral beliefs and values. The outgroup-focused and moral motivations prioritize the needs of disadvantaged groups and motivate engagement in actions to challenge the status quo (Radke et al., 2020).

In contrast, the other two motivations prioritize group or personal needs of advantaged group members over the needs of disadvantaged groups. The ingroup-focused motivation reflects the concern for the status of the advantaged group. For instance, theoretical and empirical work on intergroup helping finds that advantaged groups may engage in helping behaviours in order to protect their high status (Nadler, 2002) and/or improve the group's public image in terms of likeability and competence (Van Leeuwen, 2007; Van Leeuwen & Täuber, 2012). This is especially true for those who identify highly with their advantaged group identity and are thus more motivated to protect their group's status (Nadler et al., 2009).

Personal motivation assumes that some advantaged group members act for disadvantaged groups because they want to improve their personal public image, gain popularity and/or economic resources. According to Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), people can satisfy their personal needs indirectly by satisfying their group's needs (e.g., bask in their group's glory). However, in our view, the personal motivation is at the core of performative allyship given its focus on primarily and directly satisfying individual needs and accruing personal benefits rather than safeguarding the status of the advantaged group.

What are examples of personal motives that may lead to performative allyship? Our aim is to inspire further research on personal motivations, and we expect this list not to be exhaustive. Radke et al. (2020) proposed that people who strongly adhere to individualistic worldviews, emphasize their uniqueness and pursuit of personal goals (Oyserman et al., 2002), or have narcissistic personality traits are more likely to engage in allyship actions with the main goal to accrue personal benefits. Moreover, the literature on volunteering and radicalization also finds that personal motives play a role. For instance, research on motivations to volunteer finds that in addition to acting upon their humanitarian values, people may engage in volunteering because they want to enhance their self-esteem, pursue experiences that will benefit their careers, gain further knowledge and skills, enlarge their social network and escape their internal struggles (Konrath et al., 2012; Omoto & Snyder, 1995). Likewise, even extreme acts of sacrifice for a cause (e.g., willingness to sacrifice one's life and life of others) can be driven by the selfish pursuit of satisfying one need for social worth (Kruglanski et al., 2022). Even though these personal motives may satisfy different individual needs (e.g., to be liked and improve one's image, to better one's career and self-esteem, to cope with personal issues), what they have in common is that they direct the attention to self and away from the needs of the disadvantaged group (Plant & Devine, 1998; Radke et al., 2020).

An interesting avenue for future research would be to examine how prevalent personal motivations are. There are hints in the literature that suggests most people who engage in allyship behaviours may endorse some type of personal motivations, however this may not be necessarily their only motivation for action. For instance, a meta-analysis found that volunteers are motivated to self-enhance, improve their career prospects and protect their well-being, however these self-centred motivations are still on average less endorsed than humanitarian ones (Chacon et al., 2017). Similarly, the research on the motivations to respond without prejudice reveals that people care about protecting their public image (i.e., external motivation) as well as about egalitarian moral values (i.e., internal motivation; Plant & Devine, 1998). A recent study examined the prevalence of these different motives among 3390 German and Dutch individuals (Bamberg & Verkuyten, 2021) and found that the majority of people (about 60%) endorsed both motives to the similar extent. Only, a small number (i.e., about 6%), predominantly held external motives. In our view, these findings paint an optimistic picture, and we think it may be possible to devise strategies to strengthen the genuine and other-oriented motives over the personal and self-serving. We outline some possible ways how to achieve this in the following sections.

3 | PERFORMATIVE ALLYSHIP: ACTION

Popular criticism of performative allyship assumes that these individuals mostly engage in actions that are easy, visible and not costly, whereas social change requires people to devote considerable amount of time and energy

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and be ready to endure personal costs by engaging in actions that challenge status quo (e.g., getting arrested at a protest; Kalina, 2020; Philips, 2020). Research on collective action differentiates between normative actions, or actions that are in line with societal norms (e.g., protesting, signing petitions, posting on social media), and non-normative actions, or actions that go against those norms (e.g., blocking a road, saving refugees from the sea) and may sometimes even involve violence (e.g., rioting; Tausch et al., 2011). Moreover, some normative and non-normative collective actions are enacted in public (e.g., attending a protest, rioting) and others are done privately (e.g., signing a petition, sending threats). Even though both normative and non-normative collective actions contribute to social change, non-normative actions by virtue are more likely to disrupt the existing system (Tausch et al., 2011; Teixeira et al., 2020). However, non-normative actions require more commitment and willingness to bear costs than normative actions (Becker et al., 2011). In general, previous work suggests that the personal motivation predicts higher likelihood of engagement in normative than non-normative actions, as former actions impose less costs and require less commitment, and immediately satisfy personal needs (Radke et al., 2020). This should be particularly the case for easy public displays of solidarity, such as posting on social media.

An important question for research is to examine whether engagement in easy, visible and normative actions leads to less engagement in more effortful actions geared toward social change. There is some support for this notion in the literature. Empirical work on moral licensing finds that engaging in easy moral action may lead to future unethical behaviour in the same or another domain (Merritt et al., 2010). Moreover, a study looking at engagement in everyday moral acts with a community sample found that people who committed a moral act previously had a larger likelihood of committing an immoral act later that day (Hofmann et al., 2014). Similarly, research on slacktivism shows that people who engage in public displays of support for a social cause (as opposed to private) are less likely to subsequently volunteer for a charity (Kristofferson et al., 2014).

However, the opposite may also be true. Recent analyses on moral licensing cast doubt on the strength of the effect due to the publication bias and general lack of well-powered studies, in addition to few replication studies that found no support for it (Blanken et al., 2014, 2015). A recent review on slacktivism found that online actions can also translate into offline engagement (Greijdanus et al., 2020). Additionally, research in political science finds that posting on social media about politics can increases one's offline political participation (Bode et al., 2014; Gil de Zúñiga et al., 2014), suggesting that online behaviours do not substitute, but complement offline behaviours (Bode, 2017).

In our view, future research should closely examine when engagement in easy, less costly actions may lead to less commitment to social change. We suspect this may be the case among people for whom personal motivations dominate. For the majority who may hold both personal and other-oriented motives, it may be possible to increase their engagement in actions geared toward social change. One could draw inspiration from work on health behaviours, which finds that people tend to compensate for their unhealthy eating habits by engaging subsequently in more healthy behaviours if they have the opportunity (Petersen et al., 2019). Perhaps providing more opportunity to engage in actions that challenge the status quo or by increasing awareness about the inconsistencies in their behaviours could help transform performative allies into genuine ones.

4 | CONSEQUENCES OF PERFORMATIVE ALLYSHIP

One of the key issues with performative allyship is that it can negatively affect the well-being of disadvantaged group members and dilute the goals of the social movement (Estevan-Reina et al., 2021; Hasan-Aslih et al., 2019). In the following paragraphs, we identify these negative consequences, but also investigate the ways in which performative allyship can be used to promote social change. We tackle this question from multiple perspectives (Kutlaca et al., 2020) starting with the effects performative allyship has on disadvantaged groups. Next, we explore whether performative allyship benefits or potentially harms those who engage in it. Lastly, we discuss how and when performative allyship may contribute to societal changes.

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4.1 | The effects on disadvantaged groups

Even though previous work on prejudice confrontations and collective action speaks about various benefits of engaging advantaged groups in actions geared toward social change, it also raises important issues with their involvement. For example, research on confrontation of sexism finds that men who confront sexism for non-egalitarian reasons decrease women's well-being (Estevan-Reina et al., in 2021). Iyer and Achia (2020) show that social justice organizations led predominantly by high instead of low status groups fail to attract disadvantaged group members. This is most likely because, advantaged groups often insist on their voices being heard, instead of amplifying the voices of disadvantaged group activists (Droogendyk et al., 2016), which makes disadvantaged groups fearful of allies' intentions to take over the movement and make themselves centre of attention (Radke et al., 2021).

A common denominator across various lines of work is that the focus on the personal and group-based needs of advantaged groups may be harmful for disadvantaged groups. This further implies that even when the actions may not necessarily be easy and costless (e.g., volunteering), acting out of selfish reasons may render the action as performative in the eyes of disadvantaged groups, and may negatively affect them by decreasing their well-being and leading to disengagement. This should be particularly the case among disadvantaged group members who are more suspicious of advantaged group's motives. Previous work on interracial interaction finds that Black people who are more suspicious are better at detecting when White people are externally motivated (i.e., motivated to protect their image) to respond without prejudice (LaCosse et al., 2015). At the same time, they may also find the interaction encounters more threatening and emotionally taxing (Kunstman et al., 2016; Kunstman & Fitzpatrick, 2018). Kunstman and Fitzpatrick (2018) suspect that the chronic stress that disadvantaged group members who are highly suspicious experience in interactions with advantaged group members may hamper their psychological and physical health (e.g., lead to problems with cardiovascular and immune system).

However, the picture may not be all that bleak and sometimes even performative displays of support can validate disadvantaged group's experiences and improve their well-being. Matsick et al. (2020) examined how LGBTQ+ viewers perceive rainbow filters used by heterosexual allies online and found that increased presence of rainbow filters was associated with a higher sense of belonging. Relatedly, token signs of support for prejudice confrontation among bystanders can lead to more feelings of psychological safety and improved well-being among targets of discrimination (Hildebrand et al., 2020). Moreover, in two experimental studies Chu and Ashburn-Nardo (2022) examined the effects confrontation of racism by White Americans have on Black Americans' self-esteem. They found that confrontation increased Black Americans' self-esteem irrespective of whether it was driven by internal or external motives. Still, externally motivated White confronters raised more suspicion among targets, which had a negative indirect effect on their well-being.

Overall, the existing literature suggests that advantaged group members who engage in performative allyship may have detrimental effects on disadvantaged group members, especially among those who may be more vigilant and sensitive to their involvement. Future research should tease up to what extent personal motivation, the characteristics of the action (e.g., less vs. more effortful) and the interaction between actions and motivation affect disadvantaged groups' physical and mental health. We expect the strongest negative effects when personal motivation is paired with easy action, but it is possible that motivation is a more important factor than the action in the eyes of disadvantaged group members.

4.2 | The effects on performative allies

It is fair to assume that people who engage allyship for personal reasons expect their needs to be fulfilled. An intriguing question for research and practice is whether this expectation is true. In other words, are performative allies rewarded or punished for their behaviours? The findings across the literature are mixed. In the context of sustainability, individuals who perform a symbolic sustainable behaviour (e.g., use a hybrid-electric vehicle to cover long

distance regularly which is objectively more polluting) rather than an objectively sustainable behaviour (e.g., rarely driving an SUV to cover short distance), received more accolades for their actions and were perceived by the public as more 'sustainable' (Sütterlin & Siegrist, 2014). Likewise, LGBTQ+ members perceived a heterosexual woman as being a better activist if she used the rainbow profile filter than when she did not (Matsick et al., 2020). Thus, there is some support that token gestures of solidarity receive public approval. Nonetheless, if performative allies fail to engage in actions and are exposed for their hypocrisy, their reputation may be tarnished. Research on hypocrisy finds that false signalling is more strongly condemned by the public than outright lying (Jordan et al., 2017). We expect a particularly stronger backlash among disadvantaged group members who are more suspicious of advantaged group's motives (LaCosse et al., 2015).

There are two further implications that we would draw attention to. On the one hand, if people receive a lot of praise for their symbolic and performative engagement in a social cause, this may reinforce personal over altruistic concerns, which could lead to less engagement in more costly actions. This can easily happen in the context of social media, where one receives a large number of likes just for changing their profile picture. This fits with work grounded in self-determination theory that finds that extrinsic rewards can undermine the intrinsic motivation to help others (Cerasoli et al., 2014; Deci & Ryan, 2000). However, perhaps receiving praise for easy actions is not always detrimental, because other work suggests that rewards can have a positive effect on people's tendency to cooperate (Balliet et al., 2011). Furthermore, it would be interesting to explore ways to facilitate change among those who engage only in performative allyship. Research on social dilemmas suggests that punishing non-cooperative behaviours may facilitate cooperation (Balliet et al., 2011). Future work could examine whether reputational costs paired with being made aware of one's responsibility and privileges might deter from further engagement in performative allyship, though it may be important to avoid eliciting defensive reactions.

Another question is whether the focus on satisfying personal needs is beneficial for mental and physical well-being of performative allies. Literature on motivations to volunteer provides a few interesting insights. Konrath and colleagues (2012) analysed the association between motivations to volunteer and mortality risk in a random sample of 10,317 Wisconsin high school graduates who took part in the Wisconsin Longitudinal Study since their graduation in 1957.[1] Overall, volunteering was related to lower mortality risk, but only among those who volunteered for humanitarian reasons. In contrast, those who volunteered for self-oriented reasons had a similar mortality risk to non-volunteers. The authors speculated that altruistic motives help volunteers cope better with stressful situations that are common in volunteering by activating physiological (e.g., oxytocin, Brown et al., 2012) and psychological mechanisms (e.g., increased sense of meaning and social resources) that alleviate stress. Moreover, an analysis on 4085 volunteers in Australia found that two self-oriented motivations, focusing on the career and trying to escape one's own struggles, predicted a range of poorer outcomes: lower levels of self-esteem, wellbeing, self-efficacy and lower trust in others (Stukas et al., 2016). In other words, these data suggest that a strong focus on self may in the long run be damaging and that altruistic motivations also benefit allies.

Nevertheless, there are a few opposing findings. A study with Australian volunteers (Stukas et al., 2016) finds that some self-oriented motives are beneficial: being motived to connect with other people or gain further knowledge and understanding was related to positive outcomes to a similar extent like other-oriented humanitarian motivation. Interestingly, the motive to enhance one's self-esteem was unrelated to well-being, yet it predicted higher future intentions to volunteer. A number of other studies showed that some self-focused motives surprisingly do not necessarily lead to disengagement, but can facilitate long-term commitment (Omoto & Snyder, 1995), and doing more than what one is asked for (Cornelis et al., 2013).

Drawing on these findings, we propose several avenues for future research. First, some types of personal motives may have more harmful effects than others on the well-being and long-term engagement of allies. We suspect that the desire to solve one's personal problems through engagement in allyship can have long term negative effects on people's health. Second, the literature does not unequivocally show that self-focus leads to less participation and we propose that it may sometimes help people regulate stress and foster long-term commitment. The literature on burnout in activists finds that one of the reasons people disengage is due to social norms that govern activists' circles,

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which prioritize sacrificing everything for the cause (Gorski, 2019; Gorski & Chen, 2015). Those who are able to navigate better between their own and other's needs may be at less risk of a burnout and capable of fostering passion and commitment to social change.

4.3 | Societal effects

The final question we reflect on in this review is whether performative allyship has the potential to contribute to positive social change or not. Previous literature suggests that genuine forms of allyship, such as confrontation of prejudice and discrimination, can lead to positive changes among the perpetrators (Czopp et al., 2006; Czopp & Monteith, 2003), and to increased support for disadvantaged groups among the bystanders (Subašić et al., 2018). Should we expect similar effects for performative allyship? Our view is that sometimes even tokenistic acts of support may have positive effects by raising awareness and by affirming egalitarian norms.

For instance, one avenue for future research is to examine whether performative allies can contribute to social change by sharing messages that capture public attention. Research on moral contagion showed that online messages containing moral and emotional words are more likely to go viral. Studies using Twitter data found that tweets, which included moral-emotional words, were 20% more likely to be shared on average that non-moral tweets (Brady et al., 2017, 2020). In the context of BlackLivesMatter movement, Casas and Williams (2019) found that sharing protest images on Twitter as opposed to posts without any images is more likely to be retweeted and even more so if those images are able to induce emotional responses like enthusiasm and fear. Similarly, the work on public responses to terrorism finds that sharing images may be a particularly effective strategy to mobilize people to support the victims (Iyer et al., 2014).

In addition to raising awareness, advantaged group members who engage in performative allyship may use their normative influence to mobilize others, even though they may not be doing this deliberately. The work on virtue signalling on social media suggests that virtue signallers can help define which behaviours are morally (un) acceptable (Wenstra, 2021) and change people's minds by shifting social norms towards more equality (Zaki & Cikara, 2020). The literature on collective action points to similar conclusions. A recent study found that larger expected presence (in contrast to absence) of advantaged group members at a protest led to more public support for the social movements fighting against racism and sexism (Kutlaca et al., 2021). One of the reasons was that the public believed that the societal norms around advantaged group's involvement in fight against inequality have changed. Therefore, we are hopeful that there is a scope even for performative allies to facilitate social change by using their influence to help social movements reach out to broader audiences (Louis, 2009; Subašić et al., 2008).

5 | CONCLUSION

This review aimed to provide a definition and a theoretical framework to study performative allyship. In our view, performative allyship is best understood as a form of allyship that is more strongly motivated by personal needs than by a genuine concern for the disadvantaged group, which consequently leads to engagement in easy, visible and costless actions that do not challenge the status quo. We further propose that the focus on self may have negative effects on well-being and motivation of disadvantaged group members, but also on performative allies. Nevertheless, we argue that performative allies can contribute to social change by increasing awareness and reinforcing egalitarian norms and values.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank our students and especially Arto De Graef who helped with the literature search.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

Data sharing not applicable to this article as no datasets were generated or analysed during the current study.

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ENDNOTE

[1] Konrath and colleagues (2012) used three time points in their analyses: 1992, which included questions about participants' physical and mental health; 2004 time point, which included questions about volunteering (motivations and frequency of volunteering) and personality traits. The main dependent variable, mortality status, was assessed as a dichotomous variable (alive/deceased) in 2008 wave.

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How to cite this article: Kutlaca, M., & Radke, H. R. M. (2023). Towards an understanding of performative allyship: Definition, antecedents and consequences. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, *17*(2), e12724. https://doi.org/10.1111/spc3.12724

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