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Mobilization Without Organization: The Case of Unaffiliated Demonstrators

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Abstract: Collective action literature tends to focus on how people are affiliated to mobilizing structures and on how being affiliated to these networks facilitates collective action participation. Much less attention is given to the fact that sometimes large proportions of the participants are not affiliated to the organizers' networks. In this article, we discuss the dynamics of participation in street demonstrations for participants who are not affiliated to the organizers. How were they mobilized; what was their collective identity; and what was their motivation? Reporting data from a unique study of 69 street demonstrations in seven European countries, we compare the dynamics of participation by unaffiliated and affiliated demonstrators ($n = 14{,}787$). Fifty-one per cent of the demonstrators appeared to be unaffiliated to the organizers. The 69 demonstrations span the whole range from hardly anybody who is unaffiliated to the organizers to almost everybody. The article theorizes about why the proportion of unaffiliated demonstrators varies between demonstrations and how being unaffiliated impacts on the processes of mobilization, identification, and motivation. Our findings show that unaffiliated demonstrators are mobilized in different manners than affiliated demonstrators; moreover, patterns of identification differ, as do the strength and nature of their motivation.

In the Fall 2009, we surveyed a street demonstration in Rotterdam against a proposal by the Dutch government to restrict retirement rights. More than 85 per cent of the participants were members of the labour unions that staged the demonstration while 15 per cent were not. A few months later, we covered a demonstration against austerity measures in the cultural sector of the Dutch society. This time, we observed the opposite pattern. No more than 11.5 per cent of the participants were members of organizations that staged the event while 88.5 per cent were not. The literature on protest participation is very clear with regard to the impact of affiliation to organizer networks on the dynamics of protest participation. Citizens who are affiliated to the networks of the organizers are likely to be targeted by mobilization attempts of the organizers, to be persuaded by their appeals, and to participate. But what if people are *not* affiliated? Fifteen of every hundred participants in the retirement demonstration and close to ninety in the culture demonstration were *not* affiliated to the organizers' networks. How did *they* got involved? Were they mobilized *without* organizations? These questions are especially interesting, as it is suggested in the literature that mobilization without organization is the recruitment process of the future (Bennett and Segerberg, 2012). These authors propose that increasingly traditional 'collective action' mobilized via social networks and organizations is replaced by 'connective action' mobilized via social media and virtual networks. Be this as it may, we *do* hold that being affiliated or unaffiliated has profound consequences for the dynamics of participation at the individual level but also at the campaign level. A mobilization campaign that miscalculates the proportion of unaffiliated sympathizers might fail to employ the right mix of mobilization techniques and appeals.

This article deals with the case of unaffiliated demonstrators. The questions that will occupy us are (i) Why do street demonstrations differ in terms of the proportion of unaffiliated participants? And (ii) How are unaffiliated participants different from affiliated? So far, the answers to such questions are lacking, as they require a comparison of street demonstrations and their participants. However, studies of street demonstrations are either exploring single cases which are by definition not comparative or protest event studies which fail to

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address the individual level of analysis. However, a recent comparative study of 69 street demonstrations in seven countries provides answers to the focal questions of this article.

We will begin by hypothesizing that the proportion of participants in a demonstration who remain unaffiliated to the organizers' network, depends on characteristics of the mobilizing structure the organizers manage to assemble. We will then theorize about the impact of being unaffiliated on the dynamics of mobilization, identification, and motivation. We will report results from our demonstrations study to test our hypotheses. In a concluding section, we will discuss our findings.

Forging Mobilizing Structures: The Antecedents of Unaffiliation

Why is it that some street demonstrations comprise more unaffiliated participants than other? We hold that this originates in two characteristics of the mobilizing structure organizers assemble: (i) the extent to which that mobilizing structure overlaps with the organizational fields potential participants are embedded in; and (ii) the organizational density of the potential the organizers are trying to mobilize.

Organizers forge mobilizing structures from the organizational fields in society (McAdam *et al.*, 1996; Boekkooi, 2012). Theoretically, every citizen is unaffiliated to the organizers at the start of a campaign. They become affiliated because organizers assemble mobilizing structures, which comprise organizations and networks citizens are embedded in. Boekkooi (2012) emphasizes that mobilizing structures are not given, but must be assembled over and again, be it not from scratch, as abeyance structures and existing organizations may function as starting nodes. Individuals who are not embedded in the parts of the organizational field organizers succeed to co-opt, unwittingly end up remaining unaffiliated to the organizers (Verhulst, 2011).

At the same time, the organizational density of mobilization potentials vary. Next to formal organizations, informal, loosely coupled networks exist within a multi-organizational field (Diani, 2013). Such formal and informal structures serve as the connecting tissue between organizers and participants (Ohlemacher, 1996). Street demonstrations address issues and grievances the participants share. Some grievances may concern single-identities other multiple-identities. Most single-identity protests are reactions to identity politics, that affect specific groups—women, students, migrants, farmers, etc. Multiple-identity protests react to issues that affect a broad range of citizens—for instance, environmental issues, peace and war, or global justice. The single–multiple identity distinction is akin to Verhulst's (2011) distinction between particularistic and universalistic issues. Universalistic issues Verhulst defines as 'issues that have no specific reference to a well-defined social group [. . .] particularistic mobilizing issues, on the other hand, are intrinsically related to specific social groups' (p. 55). As they not rooted in specific groups, multiple-identity protests tend to mobilize more heterogeneous, less densely organized crowds than single-identity protests. Therefore, we expect more unaffiliated demonstrators in multiple-identity protests.

We hold these two mechanisms responsible for variation in the number of unaffiliated participants between demonstrations. First, as mobilizing structures are assembled from the organizational fields in society, individuals who are little embedded in those organizational fields are more likely to remain unaffiliated (Hypothesis 1). Second, unlike single-identity protests, multiple-identity protests have no reference to specific social groups; therefore, they tend to comprise relatively high proportions of unaffiliated participants (Hypothesis 2).

Mobilization, Identification, and Motivation: The Consequences of Being Unaffiliated

We move now to the individual level of analysis, raising the question of the consequences of being unaffiliated. Passy (2003) denotes three functions social networks perform in the context of collective action mobilization: the structural–connection function, the socialization function, and the decision-shaping function. The first concerns the conduits connecting organizers and participants; the second the role social networks play in the formation of collective identity; the third the role someone's network plays in the formation of motives to participate. Being unaffiliated impacts on each of these functions. We will elaborate that argument in the following sections on mobilization, identification, and motivation.

Mobilization

Weak ties, strong ties, organizational networks, interpersonal communication, mass media, and recently social media are all employed in campaigns to mobilize participants in collective action. (Diani, 1997; Diani and McAdam, 2003; Walgrave and Klandermans, 2010; Bennett and Segerberg, 2012; Corrigall-Brown, 2012). Individuals who are not affiliated to the mobilizing

structures organizers assemble, must rely on mobilization without organization via mass media, social media, interpersonal networks, and the like (Boekkooi *et al.*, 2011; Boekkooi, 2012).

Walgrave and Manssens (2000) argue that in case of widespread, deeply felt indignation, mobilization without organization might occur. Corroborating this reasoning, Walgrave and Klandermans (2010) show that in countries where the public opinion strongly opposed the imminent invasion in Iraq mass media were more effective as mobilization channels than in countries with lower levels of opposition. The recent demonstrations in various parts of the world all revealed the significance of social media. Bennett and Segerberg (2012) coined the term connective action for this kind of protest events performing mobilization without organizations employing social media and personalized networks. They contrast such events with mobilization campaigns following the traditional logic of collective action, employing manners of mobilization via movement organizations and networks.

Of the various typologies of recruitment channels discussed in the literature (Snow *et al.*, 1980; Klandermans and Oegema. 1987; Walgrave and Klandermans, 2010), we chose a distinction proposed by Boekkooi (2012) between 'closed', 'semi-open', and 'open' communication channels. An organization that targets its own members when it comes to mobilization is an example of the employment of closed channels. Mass media (radio, newspapers, television) are examples of open channels, but also interpersonal networks. Mobilization via interpersonal networks including social media is open as well, as it can go on from the one person to the next as long as the chain is not broken. Semi-open channels are channels such as websites, the Internet, flyers, or posters, which in principle can reach everyone, but in practice reaches limited circles (Earl and Kimport, 2011). Boekkooi (2012) showed how mobilization attempts snowball through an organizer's organizational field. The first to be reached are the members of the organizer's organization. The next in line are the people tied to organization members (through family, friendship, or work and studies) whether or not via social media. Finally, people who are not connected via any of these interpersonal strong or weak ties can only be reached via impersonal media such as online media, radio, television, and newspapers. Assuming that it takes longer for a mobilization attempt to arrive if the social distance between participant and organizer is larger, Boekkooi hypothesized and showed that less affiliated participants decide to participate at a later point in time.

Organizers employ all three types of channels to target 'their' audiences. Affiliated participants can be reached by all three, but we expect that unaffiliated participants were predominantly reached via semi-open or open rather than closed channels (Hypothesis 3). As semi-open and open channels supposedly reach people later than closed channels, we expect that unaffiliated participants decided to participate in the demonstration at a later point in time than affiliated participants (Hypothesis 4).

Identification

It is generally assumed that participants in collective action share a politicized collective identity (Stryker *et al.*, 2000; Simon and Klandermans, 2001; Tindall, 2004; Corrigall-Brown, 2012; Klandermans, 2014). Indeed, identity formation was one of the functions of social networks Passy (2003) listed. A collective identity is a place shared with other people. Most collective identities remain latent, but contextual factors may bring a collective identity centre stage. This is not always a matter of free choice. Circumstances may force a collective identity into awareness whether people like it or not, as, for instance, the Yugoslavian and South African histories have illustrated dramatically. Awareness of a collective identity does not necessarily make that identity politically relevant. We hold that for people to become involved in political protest on behalf of a group, the collective identity of that group must politicize.

The basic hypothesis regarding politicized collective identity and protest is fairly straightforward: a strong and politicized collective identity makes participation in political protest on behalf of the collective more likely (Reicher, 1984; Kelly and Breinlinger, 1996; Stryker *et al.*, 2000; Simon and Klandermans, 2001; Klandermans *et al.*, 2002; van Zomeren *et al.*, 2004; Klandermans, 2014). We assume therefore that demonstrators who are affiliated to one of the organizations that staged the demonstration, identify with the organizers. But if they are not identifying with the organizers, with whom do unaffiliated demonstrators then develop a sense of shared identity? Swaab *et al.* (2008) suggest that there are two theoretically distinct pathways to the formation of shared identity. The classic perspective on shared identities is that they are inferred deductively from the broader social context within which the group members act. A shared identity can thus be deduced through recognition of superordinate similarities such as membership of the same organization. However, a sense of shared identity can also be induced by intragroup processes in which individuals get acquainted with one another on an interpersonal basis and form inductively a sense of shared identity. Thus, we may find participants in a demonstration who deduce a collective identity in a top-down manner from their membership of an

organization which is staging the demonstration next to participants who induce a collective identity in a bottom-up manner from their interaction with like-minded people at the demonstration. We propose that affiliated demonstrators are more likely to identify strongly with the organizers and unaffiliated demonstrators with the other participants (Hypothesis 5).

Motivation

Next to identification van Stekelenburg and Klandermans (2007) distinguish instrumental and ideological motives, and anger as parameters in a motivational framework for collective action participation. The model they propose assumes that people participate in collective action because they want to promote or protect interests or principles. Identification processes occupy a central position in the model, as it takes as its point of departure that some measure of collective identity is needed for people to share interests or principles with other members of society. The authors presume that threatened interests feed instrumental motives while violated principles spur ideological motives, and anger amplifies and accelerates protest activity. The angrier people are the more they are motivated to take action and the more likely that their motivation is turned into action.

The question that interests us here is whether unaffiliated and affiliated participants differ in terms of motivation. Regarding motivational strength, we find two opposite arguments in the literature. van Stekelenburg and Klandermans (2014) show that people who are members of an organization that is staging the demonstration have stronger motivation to participate than people who are not members (Hypothesis 6A). However, as highly motivated people are easier to mobilize without organization (Walgrave and Klandermans, 2010; Verhulst, 2011; Boekkooi, 2012), one would expect unaffiliated participants to be more motivated than affiliated participants (Hypothesis 6B). Whether a demonstration appeals to instrumental or ideological motives depends on the issue rather than affiliation. Therefore, we do not expect unaffiliated and affiliated demonstrators to differ in that respect.

We tested these hypotheses in a comparative study of street demonstrations on a diversity of issues in seven different countries. In the pages to come, we will describe the study and test our hypotheses.

The CCC-Study[1]

Caught in the Act of Protest: Contextualizing Contestation (CCC) is a comparative study of street demonstrations in seven European countries (Belgium, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom). This article is based on the 69 demonstrations we covered between November 2009 and November 2012. In total, 14,410 participants returned the questionnaires distributed during the demonstration. All questionnaires and procedures are standardized. Identical questions and indicators are employed in each country and for each demonstration.

Sampling Demonstrations

At the start of the project, we did not know what to expect in terms of demonstrations. We agreed that between 2009 and 2012, each national team was to study between 8 and 12 demonstrations with at least 3,000 participants according to an agreed upon grid. But history overtook us, the financial–economic crisis burst onto stage. Each European government was taking austerity measures, and each was confronted with protests in opposition. As a consequence, a substantial proportion of the demonstrations covered are anti-austerity demonstrations. Next, the team discussed at length whether to cover ritual parades such as May Day Parades, Gay Prides, and Climate Day Marches. We decided to include those, as almost always such parades have moments of politicization to it. Finally, our sample included a third category of demonstrations regarding a variety of socio-cultural issues such as anti-abortion, anti-racism, anti-nuclear energy, anti-neoliberal reforms, more democracy, and cultural issues. Appendix Table A1 gives an overview of the 69 demonstrations our analyses are based on.

Table 1 reveals that we covered 29 ritual parades, 20 anti-austerity protests, and 20 socio-cultural demonstrations with totals of respectively 5,142, 3,984, and 5,284 respondents. Naturally, this is not a random sample. In some countries, our sample was nearly all demonstrations that took place in the period our fieldwork lasted; in others, it was a selection of the demonstrations staged. An inventory of the demonstrations that were not included did not reveal any systematic gap. On the whole, we think that these 69 demonstrations provide a fair picture of street demonstrations as we know them.

Collecting Data and Sampling Participants[2]

Our protest surveys employ printed questionnaires (500–1,000) handed out at the demonstration to be returned to the university using prepaid envelopes. To control for response biases, we also conducted short (2–3 minutes) interviews with a subsample of the respondents (100–200) at the demonstrations, comprising questions identical to those in the printed questionnaire.[3] The refusal

Table 1 Number of demonstrations and demonstrators by type of demonstrations

Type of demonstrations	Number of demonstrations	Number of participants
All	69	14,410
Ritual parade	29	5,142
Anti-austerity	20	3,984
Socio-cultural issues	20	5,284

rate for the face-to-face interviews is low (on average 10 per cent). By comparing the face-to-face interviews with the returned questionnaires, we can make fairly accurate estimates of the response bias. Overall 31 per cent of the participants turned in their questionnaire. The response rate for the 69 demonstrations fluctuated between 13 and 52 per cent. Analyses to assess response biases did not reveal any deviating outcomes.

We designed a sampling strategy such that each participant had the same likelihood of being selected. Although circumstances inevitably necessitate variation, we aimed to keep sampling procedures as identical as possible for the various demonstrations. A demonstration is covered by a team consisting of a fieldwork coordinator, three to four so-called pointers, and 12–15 interviewers. Each pointer has a team of four to five interviewers. The pointers select the interviewees, while interviewers conduct the interviews and hand out the questionnaires. Separating these two roles appeared to be crucial in preventing sampling biases (Walgrave *et al.*, 2012). As interviewers tend to select people they believe to be willing to cooperate, they end up producing biased samples. The fieldwork coordinator oversees the employment of the pointer–interviewer teams. In demonstrations that move through the streets, teams start at different points of the procession and work towards each other approaching every x-th person in every y-th row. At demonstrations that stay at the same area, the space is divided into smaller areas; in each area a pointer selects interviewees taking the density of the crowd in that area into account. The result of all this is samples that we believe to be representative of the demonstrators present.

Measures[4]

Affiliation to organizers and embeddedness in organizational fields

We distinguished affiliation to organizations that staged the demonstration from embeddedness in broader organizational fields. As for affiliation to organizers, we first asked respondents to name organizations that are staging the demonstration they were taking part in. Respondents who mentioned one or more organizations were asked whether they are a member of any of those organizations. As for embeddedness in multi-organizational fields, we asked our respondents in how many organizations they have been actively involved during the past 12 months.

Communication channels

We asked our respondents via which communication channels they found out about the demonstration. They could tick as many as applied of the following list: radio, television, newspapers, alternative online media, advertisements, flyers, and/or posters, partner and/or family, friends and/or acquaintances, people at one's school or workplace, (Fellow)members of an organization or association, an organization's channels (magazine, meeting, website, mailing list), and online social networks (e.g. Facebook, twitter). Next, we asked them which of these channels was the most important as a source of information. Finally, we assessed if someone was specifically asked by some other person to take part in the demonstration (no-one, partner or family, relatives, friends, acquaintances, colleagues or fellow students, co-members of an organization they are a member of). They could again tick as many as applied.

Decision time

We asked our respondents when they made a firm decision to take part in the demonstration (the day of the demonstration, a few days before the demonstration, a few weeks before the demonstration, over a month ago).

Identification

We made a distinction between identification 'with any organization staging the demonstration' and identification 'with the other people present at the demonstration' (not at all, not very much, somewhat, quite, very much). The two forms of identification correlate (0.48), but the pattern of correlations of the two with other variables is significantly different. Therefore, we treat them separately.

Instrumental and ideological motivation and anger

To assess what motivated the participant to take part, we asked them to agree or disagree with reasons to participate. We offered two reasons related to instrumentality: 'defend my interest' and 'pressure politicians' and two reflecting ideology: 'express my view' and 'raise public awareness' (strongly disagree, disagree, neither,

agree, strongly agree). The two instrumental reasons correlate .22; the two ideological .37. We collapsed the four into measures of motivational strength—instrumental and ideological (ranging from 2 'not at all motivated' to 10 'very much motivated'. Finally, we asked participants whether they felt angry when they thought about the issue of the demonstration (not at all, not very much, somewhat, quite, very much).

Results

Half the participants (51.2 per cent) in the demonstrations covered by our study were *not* affiliated to any of the organizations that were staging the demonstration; the other half (48.8 per cent) were members of one or more of these organizations.[5] The proportion of unaffiliated demonstrators in the seven countries fluctuated around 50 per cent, with a high of 61.4 per cent in Spain and a low of 38.7 per cent in Belgium. The differences between the individual demonstrations are enormous (see Appendix Table A1). The demonstrations varied widely in terms of affiliation of the participants to the organizers, from 97.1 per cent unaffiliated demonstrators at a demonstration regarding the political impasse in Belgium (28) to 3.1 per cent unaffiliated demonstrators at an anti-austerity demonstration by workers in Brussels (4).

The Odds of Remaining Unaffiliated

To account for the odds that participants remain unaffiliated, we conducted logistic regression analyses. We formulated two hypotheses specifying mechanisms that could possibly be responsible for the failure to affiliate. First, mobilizing structures are assembled from the organizational fields of society. The less individuals are embedded in these organizational fields, the more likely that they remain unaffiliated (Hypothesis 1). Second, we presumed that compared with participants in single-identity protests, participants in multiple-identity protests are more likely to remain unaffiliated (Hypothesis 2).

Table 2 summarizes the results of the logistic regression analyses. The first three models concern control variables. Model 1 reveals that country differences account for 3 per cent of the variance in affiliation. Belgium has the lowest proportion of unaffiliated demonstrators, and is taken as standard of comparison; The Netherlands almost equals Belgium; Spain has the highest proportion. Demographics add 10 per cent to the variance explained (Model 2): female more likely remain unaffiliated than male; young demonstrators more likely than older demonstrators; higher educated more likely than lower educated, and higher social class more likely than lower. The third model shows that demonstrators are less likely to remain unaffiliated if they are leaning toward the political left. Together these variables account for 14 per cent of the variance.

Model 4 and 5 are tests of our hypotheses. Both find support. The less demonstrators are embedded in the multi-organizational fields of their society the more likely that they remain unaffiliated to the mobilizing structures of the demonstrations (Hypothesis 1). Social embeddedness accounts for 8 per cent of the variance. Indeed, 43.7 per cent of those who are embedded in multi-organizational fields remain unaffiliated, as compared with 72.8 per cent of those who are not embedded in the organizational fields of society. The odds that participants in ritual parades and especially participants in anti-austerity demonstrations remain unaffiliated appear much lower than those for participants in socio-cultural demonstrations (explains additional 5 per cent of the variance): socio-cultural demonstrations have the highest number of unaffiliated participants (65.7 per cent), followed by ritual parades (49.3 per cent) and anti-austerity protests (34.5 per cent). This is what we hypothesized (Hypothesis 2). Ritual parades and anti-austerity demonstrations are more likely to mobilize densely organized mobilization potentials than socio-cultural demonstrations. Ritual parades are staged by organizations that are historically associated with these events, such as unions, environmental organizations, women's organizations, and LGBT organizations. Anti-austerity demonstrations are more likely single-identity events that tend to be staged by identity organizations that defend the interests of the citizens affected by the austerity measures. The full model has a good fit (Nagelkerke's R^2 0.27; almost 70 per cent correct classifications, and satisfactory chi-squares in Hosmer–Lemeshow tests).

Mobilizing structures that fail to comprise parts of a society's multi-organizational field and mobilization potentials that are sparsely organized are responsible for large numbers of unaffiliated demonstrators; mobilizing structures that overlap with a society's organizational field and encompasse densely organized mobilization potentials make for low numbers of unaffiliated demonstrators.

Unaffiliated Than What?

Mobilization

We hypothesized that unaffiliated participants were predominantly reached via semi-open or open rather than closed channels (Hypothesis 3). Furthermore, we expected unaffiliated participants to decide to participate

Table 2 Logistic regression of affiliation on country, demographics, and social embeddedness[a]

Independent variables	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4		Model 5	
Netherlands[b]	−0.90	(0.07)^{ns}	0.02	(0.07)^{ns}	0.00	(0.08)^{ns}	0.18	(0.07)*	−0.22	(0.08)**
Sweden[b]	−0.64	(0.07)***	−0.49	(0.08)***	−0.58	(0.08)***	−0.57	(0.08)***	−0.46	(0.09)***
Spain[b]	−0.80	(0.07)***	−0.81	(0.07)***	−0.84	(0.07)***	−0.70	(0.08)***	−0.62	(0.09)***
United Kingdom[b]	−0.69	(0.07)***	−0.57	(0.07)***	−0.56	(0.08)***	−0.74	(0.08)***	−0.74	(0.08)***
Switzerland[b]	−0.46	(0.07)***	−0.30	(0.08)***	−0.38	(.08)***	−0.25	(0.08)***.	−0.08	(0.08)^{ns}
Italy[b]	−0.59	(0.09)***	−0.54	(0.09)***	−0.70	(0.10)***	−0.57	(0.10)***	−0.78	(0.10)***
Sex (female = 2)			−0.22	(0.04)***	−0.25	(0.04)***	−0.19	(0.04)***	−0.18	(0.04)***
Age			−0.03	(0.00)***	−0.03	(0.00)***	−0.03	(0.00)***	−0.03	(0.00)***
Education			−0.15	(0.01)***	−0.16	(0.01)***	−0.19	(0.04)***	−0.17	(0.02)***
Subjective social class			−0.20	(0.02)***	−0.17	(0.02)***	−0.17	(0.02)***	−0.13	(0.02)***
Left–right self-placement[c]					−0.09	(0.01)***	−0.07	(0.01)***	−0.07	(.0.01)*
Social embeddedness							0.60	(0.02)***	0.60	(0.02)***
Parade[d]									0.65	(0.05)***
Anti-austerity[d]									1.33	(0.06)***
Nagelkerke R^2	0.03		0.13		0.14		0.22		0.27	
Correct classification (per cent)	56.7		63.1		63.7		67.1		69.4	
Hosmer–Lemeshow Test[e]	0.00	(1.00)	8.55	(0.382)	6.80	(0.559)	3.83	(0.872)	14.78	(0.064)

*Note: ns = not significant; *P < 0.05; **P < 0.01; ***P < 0.001.*
[a]0 = not affiliated, 1 = affiliated; [b]Compared with Belgium; [c]0 = left, 10 = right; [d]Compared to socio-cultural demonstrations; [e]Chi-square (P).
n = 11,429.

in the demonstration at a later point in time than affiliated participants (Hypothesis 4).

Table 3, Panel A presents the percentages of affiliated and unaffiliated participants who through a specific channel learned about the demonstration. Weak ties, strong ties, interpersonal communication (whether or not via social media), impersonal media such as television or newspapers are all employed by smaller or larger proportions of the participants.

The figures for the two groups are what we expected. Large proportions (83.2 per cent)[6] of the unaffiliated demonstrators mentioned open channels, while, on the other hand, 79.1 per cent[6] of the affiliated demonstrators mentioned closed channels. In response to our question which of the listed channels was most important, 65.4 per cent of the affiliated participants mentioned a closed channel. The pattern of communication channels that was employed by the unaffiliated participants is more diverse. In all, 73.6 per cent mentioned one of the following channels as the most important: radio, television, newspapers, online media, friends, acquaintances, communication channels of an organization, and social media.

As for the question by whom people were asked to take part, the expected pattern emerged as well (Table 3 Panel B). More than forty per cent of the affiliated demonstrators were asked by fellow-members of an organization compared with 11.2 per cent of the unaffiliated; on the other hand, 38.1 per cent[6] of the unaffiliated demonstrators were asked by a partner, family-member, or friend against 19.4 per cent[6] of the affiliated demonstrators.

We collapsed the communication channels mentioned as the most important into the categories defined in the introduction: *open channels*, that is mass media (radio, television, newspapers) and interpersonal channels (partner, family, friends, people at school or workplace, social media); *semi-open channels* (online media, advertisement, flyers, posters), and *closed channels* (fellow members of an organization, an organization's magazine, website, mailing list).

Sixty-two per cent of the affiliated demonstrators mentioned closed channels as the most important as opposed to 19.7 per cent of the non-affiliated participants; 63.4 per cent of the unaffiliated demonstrators mentioned open channels as compared with 28.3 per cent of the affiliated participants. Semi-open channels were used primarily by 16.8 per cent of the unaffiliated demonstrators and by 9.7 per cent of the affiliated participants. The same analysis repeated for the seven countries separately revealed identical patterns in each country. Hypothesis 3 was clearly confirmed.

We hypothesized that it would take longer to reach would-be participants that were unaffiliated to the initial organizer and that therefore these persons would decide at a later point in time to take part in the event

Table 3 Mobilizing structure by affiliation: percentages[a]

Mobilizing structure	Affiliated (per cent)	Unaffiliated (per cent)
Panel A: Communication channels		
Open channels		
Radio/television	14.4	20.8
Newspapers	23.6	29.6
Online social networks (e.g. Facebook, twitter)	19.7	26.2
Partner, family	9.8	18.1
Friends, acquaintances	20.2	36.2
People at school or workplace	16.0	12.6
Semi-open channels		
Online media	17.0	27.1
Advertisements, flyers, posters	26.0	21.8
Closed channels		
(Fellow) members of organization, association	50.4	16.2
An organization's magazine, meeting, website, mailing list, etc.	51.0	23.0
Panel B: Asked to take part by		
No-one	28.6	34.8
Partner, family	9.0	16.4
Relatives	2.8	4.8
Friends,	13.4	26.5
Acquaintances	6.2	6.9
Colleagues or fellow students	14.2	10.8
(Fellow) members of organization, association	42.6	11.0
n	6878	6566

[a]*Respondents could tick as many as applied; therefore, percentages count to more than 100 per cent.*

(Hypothesis 4). This is what Table 4 (first section) shows. This table displays the results of a MANOVA with decision time, identification, and motivation as the dependent variables and affiliation as factor. Indeed, unaffiliated participants decided at a later point in time to take part in the demonstration than affiliated demonstrators. Affiliation accounted for six percent of the variance in decision time explained.

Identification

We assessed identification with the organizers and identification with the other participants and hypothesized that unaffiliated participants would more likely identify with the other participants, while affiliated participants would more likely identify with the organizers (Hypothesis 5). Unaffiliated participants appeared to identify less than affiliated participants with both the organizers and the other participants (Table 4). Affiliation accounts for 17 per cent and 3 per cent of the variance, respectively. Among the affiliated demonstrators, the levels of identification with the organizers are similar to the levels of identification with the other participants. The levels of identification among affiliated demonstrators are high (4.2 on a 5-point scale) both with organizers and with other participants. We encountered a very different pattern among the unaffiliated participants. As we hypothesized, their identification with the organizers is much lower than that of the affiliated participants. Theoretically important and confirming our hypothesis, their identification with the other participants is much higher than their identification with the organizers.

Summing up, as expected unaffiliated demonstrators identify primarily with the other participants, while affiliated demonstrators identified as much with the organizers as with the other participants.

Motivation

Table 4 (third part) displays the means and standard deviations of instrumental motives, ideological motives, and anger. As one would expect, all means are high, both for the affiliated and the unaffiliated demonstrators. After all, these people *did* participate. Yet, unaffiliated demonstrators are the least motivated of the two both instrumentally and ideologically. This corroborates our Hypothesis 6A. Hypothesis 6B that unaffiliated demonstrators are more motivated because they are mobilized without organization did not find support. Note that both affiliated and unaffiliated demonstrators are more ideologically motivated than instrumentally. Note also that affiliated and unaffiliated demonstrators are equally angry.

In samples of the size we are dealing with, even small differences appear to be statistically significant. In an attempt to address the issue, we conducted the same MANOVA for each country separately. Appendix Table A2 displays the outcomes. The results for the seven countries are remarkably consistent, findings that underscore the robustness of the results.

Conclusions

The literature on collective action participation amply documents how being affiliated to the organizers fosters collective action participation. However, in every instance of collective action, we encounter substantial numbers of participants who are not affiliated. This raises the questions of how these unaffiliated participants became involved in the event and whether their

Table 4 Consequences of unaffiliatedness: means and standard deviations

Consequences	Unaffiliated ($n = 5,749$)		Affiliated ($n = 5,447$)		F (1 df)	R^2
Decision time[a]	2.6	(1.0)	3.1	(0.91)	672.3	0.06
Identification w. organizers[b]	3.4	(1.1)	4.2	(0.84)	2009.4	0.17
Identification w. other participants[b]	3.9	(0.89)	4.2	(0.83)	336.8	0.03
Instrumentality[c]	7.9	(1.8)	8.3	(1.7)	156.7	0.01
Ideology[c]	8.6	(1.5)	8.9	(1.3)	74.7	0.01
Anger[d]	4.2	(1.0)	4.2	(0.99)	14.6	0.00

[a]On a scale from 1 'the day of the demonstration' to 4 'over a month ago'; [b]On a scale from 1 'not at all' to 5 'very much'; [c]on a scale from 2 'not at all' to 10 'very much'; [d]On a scale from 1 'not at all' to 5 'very much'.

Note: N = 11,196. Except for anger, standard deviations among unaffiliated demonstrators are significantly larger (Levene's Test for Equality of Variances).

involvement differs from that of affiliated participants. Exploiting the data of a unique study of 69 street demonstrations in seven European countries, we have tried to answer these questions. How were *unaffiliated* demonstrators mobilized, who did *they* identify with, and what motivated *them* to participate? The first and perhaps most amazing finding is the tremendous variation in the proportion of unaffiliated demonstrators. The 69 demonstrations this article is based on span the whole range from hardly anybody who is unaffiliated to almost everybody. The case of unaffiliated demonstrators tables the issue of mobilization without organization, an issue which became prominent in the literature on protest mobilization with the arrival of new information and communication technology (Earl and Kimport, 2011; Bennett and Segerberg, 2012).

In this article, we have tried to understand why the odds of being affiliated vary between demonstrations and what are the differential dynamics of participation for affiliated and unaffiliated demonstrators. Regarding the first question, we focused on the impact of the social embeddedness of demonstrators and the organizational density of mobilization potentials. As expected the odds of remaining unaffiliated are lower among socially embedded citizens and in densely organized mobilization potentials.

For the second question, we focused on the dynamics of mobilization, identification, and motivation. Unaffiliated and affiliated demonstrators were reached via different channels. Unlike affiliated demonstrators, who were primarily reached through closed channels, unaffiliated demonstrators were reached via open channels and to a lesser extent via semi-open channels. Therefore, they were reached later than affiliated demonstrators and decided later to take part in the demonstration. These findings replicate Boekkooi's study that similarly reports that the timing of the decision to participate is related to the social distance between organizers and participants (2012). This is now replicated in a much larger sample of demonstrations and demonstrators adding to the robustness of this finding.

The observed patterns of identification were clearly different for affiliated and unaffiliated demonstrators. As expected, unaffiliated demonstrators identified much more with the other participants than with the organizers. Affiliated participants, on the other hand, identified both with the organizers and the other participants. Regarding identification we referred to a social psychological approach to identity formation that distinguishes a top-down and bottom-up pathway to shared identity (Swaab *et al.*, 2008). The two paths are akin to the processes of consensus mobilization—the deliberate attempt of organizers to disseminate their view—and consensus formation—the diffuse process of meaning construction in interpersonal interaction (Klandermans, 1988). The first, top-down process presumes organizations that disseminate their view and build a politicized collective identity relying on people's membership of the same organization; the second, bottom-up process presumes interpersonal interaction in which a politicized collective identity is formed in a much more diffuse search for common denominators.

The motivational configuration among the two types of participants varied as well. We employed the motivational framework developed by van Stekelenburg and Klandermans (2007), comprising identification, instrumental and ideological motivation, and anger as the drivers of participation. We dealt with identification already and concentrate now on motivations and emotions. Compared with affiliated demonstrators, unaffiliated were lower on both instrumental and ideological motivation. Anger is the same for the affiliated and unaffiliated participants. The assumption that unaffiliated participants would display stronger motivation, as they were mobilized without organization (Walgrave and Manssens, 2000; Boekkooi, 2012), was not affirmed.

Some organizers mobilize densely organized mobilization potentials, while others encounter potentials that are hardly organized. Mobilizing densely organized mobilization potential requires other mechanisms than mobilizing sparsely organized potential. Much depends, of course, on the coalition that organizers have been able to forge (Boekkooi, 2012). Semi-open and open channels are more difficult to control. Mobilizing sparsely organized potentials implies that one must calculate with strong identification with other participants and weaker identification with organizers. This implies a process of collective identity formation which is bottom-up rather than top-down. Mobilization without organization implies challenges for organizers. Our study suggests that they encounter that challenge more often than one is inclined to believe. Social embeddedness of individual citizens and organizational density of mobilization potentials define the situation. Once staged the dynamics of participation are influenced by the proportion of unaffiliated and affiliated participants. Organizers who misinterpret the situation underestimate the time needed to mobilize the constituency or might fail to mobilize substantial numbers.

As unique as it may be, our study has limitations as well. So far, our country sample encompasses Western democracies only. We have made, however, a beginning with the inclusion of Latin American countries (Mexico and Costa Rica) and hope to be able to add more in the future. We have a standing invitation to researchers to join, provided that they stick to the procedures. Furthermore, we aimed for a fair representation of street demonstrations during the period covered. As random sampling of street demonstrations is impossible, we tried to cover the diversity of street demonstrations as we know them. Similarly, we did our utmost to develop sampling procedures that give every participant an equal chance to be selected. Yet, street demonstrations are too chaotic to draw perfect samples. Less than ideal return rates are yet another source of biases. We applied all kinds of tests and procedures to estimate the bias resulting from it (Walgrave *et al.*, 2012). Altogether, we feel that the biases stay within acceptable limits.

What does our study contribute to our knowledge? First, the observation that demonstrations differ in many respects and that these differences have consequences for the dynamics of mobilization, identification, and motivation. We took one factor centre stage, namely, the fact that each collective action includes participants who are affiliated to the organizers *and* participants who are not. We assessed two reasons why this occurs: the less socially embedded the citizens are, the more likely it is that they remain unaffiliated to the mobilizing structure an organizer erects, and, the more sparsely organized a movement's mobilization potential is, the higher the proportion of participants that remains unaffiliated. As for affiliated demonstrators, our findings replicate the existing knowledge, which underscores the validity of our results. The innovative contribution to our knowledge regards the unaffiliated demonstrators and our understanding of what drives *their* participation. We reasoned that the relative prominence of affiliated and unaffiliated participants has profound consequences for the dynamics of mobilization, identification, or motivation. The fact that our hypotheses found support in a sample of 69 very different demonstrations in seven different countries and in separate analyses per country underscores the general validity of our findings.

A movement's mobilization potential may be sparsely organized, or an organizer may fail to co-opt key organizations, or both. Obviously, a mismatch, that is to say a campaign that miscalculates the proportion unaffiliated would-be participants in the mobilization potential might fail, as it employs the wrong mix of mobilization techniques. Potential participants are not reached or are reached too late. To appreciate campaign dynamics, it is important to know whether participants are affiliated or unaffiliated and what the affiliated–unaffiliated ratio in the mobilization potential is like. If most people are unaffiliated inevitably the mobilization campaign turns into one without organization and become dependent on the dynamics of connective rather than collective action (Bennett and Segerberg, 2012).

Notes

1 A detailed description of the project and its tools can be found in the project-manual (Klandermans *et al.*, 2011). The manual is available on request; see the project website (www.protestsurvey.eu). See also van Stekelenburg *et al.* (2012).

2 See Walgrave *et al.* (2012), for an extensive discussion of the various biases resulting from sampling and non-response.

3 The measures included were—decision time, affiliation to organizations that stage the demonstration, political interest, satisfaction with democracy, participation in demonstrations in the past, sex, age, and education.

4 We applied translation–backtranslation to ensure that the questions were identical in the various

languages. The English version of the questionnaire can be found in the project's manual.

5 966 respondents failed to answer the question about affiliation to the organizers. Therefore, the analyses reported are based on 13,444 cases—6,878 non-affiliates and 6,566 affiliates.

6 This percentage concerns those who mentioned at least one of these channels.

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Appendix A

Table A1 Sixty-nine demonstrations: Unaffiliated demonstrators (Percentages)

Ritual parades	
2-Women's March	
6 'World March of Women (Bern)'	43.3
30 'Million Women Rise (London)'	74.8
59 'Women demonstration Geneva (Geneva)'	57.0
4-Peace march	
53 'Marcia Perugia-Assisi (Assisi)'	64.3
6-Gay pride	
58 'Gay pride Geneva'	67.4
66 'Gay pride Bologna'	67.8
67 'Rainbow Parade (LGBTQ festival) (Gothenburg)'	74.7
72 'Pride Demonstration (Zürich)'	63.0
73 'London Pride Parade (London)'	79.4
74 'Pink Saturday Parade (Haarlem)'	79.6
76 'Prague Pink Saturday'	95.1
7-Climate Day	
1 'Climate Change (Brussels)'	36.2
3 'Climate March (Copenhagen)'	61.1
8 'National Climate March (London)'	30.6
10 'Climate demo (Utrecht)'	30.7
26 'National Climate March 2010 (London)'	49.8
9-Mayday	
9 'May day labor march London'	52.9
13 '1st May March Antwerp'	8.6
14 'May Day Zürich'	58.3
15 'May Day Left Party Stockholm'	66.9
21 '1st May,Labor Day Barcelona'	27.0
38 'May Day Social Democratic Party Stockholm'	24.6
39 'Euromayday Milan'	87.3
45 'May Day Left Party Malmö'	66.0
46 'May Day (SAP/Lo) Malmö'	23.4
50 'May Day Vigo'	29.2
40 'May Day Florence'	30.8
60 'May Day Geneva'	25.0
64 'May Day Left Party Gothenburg'	67.8
65 'May Day Social Democratic Party/Lo Gothenburg'	17.0
Anti-austerity demonstrations	
11-Austerity universalistic	
7 'Against the Europe of capital crisis and war (Barcelona)'	52.9
20 'No to austerity (Brussels)'	4.8
22 'Against Labor Law (Madrid)'	58.4
52 'For employment, not capital reforms defend our rights (Vigo)'	26.1
55 'We have alternatives ((Brussels)'	7.7
12-Austerity particularistic workers	
2 'Retirement demonstration (Rotterdam)'	14.2
4 'March for Work (Brussels)'	3.1
18 'Demonstration against the new labour law (Santiago de Compostela)'	9.1
31 'Culture demo Amsterdam (Amsterdam)'	76.7
32 'Culture demo Utrecht (Utrecht)'	88.5
33 'Together strong for public work (The Hague)'	17.2
36 'TUC's March for the Alternative: Jobs, Growth, Justice (London)'	33.3
41 'General Strike (Florence)'	32.0

(continued)

Table A1 Continued

42 'Non-Profit Demonstration (Brussels)'	12.4
49 'Military demo (The Hague)'	20.0
54 'Stop budget cuts (care & wellfare) (The Hague)'	18.2
13-Austerity particularistic students	
12 'Student demo 1 (Amsterdam)'	72.1
25 'Fund Our Future: Stop Education Cuts (London)'	28.6
27 'Second Student National Demo (London)'	60.7
34 'Student demo 2 (The Hague)'	84.1
Socio-cultural issues	
14-Nuclear energy	
43 'Anti-nuclear demonstration (Stockholm)'	55.2
47 'Anti Nucleair demo (Amsterdam)'	36.8
57 'Anti Nuclear Manifestation (Beznau)'	50.8
62 'Fukushima never again (Brussels)'	40.0
63 'Anti-nuclear (Mühleberg)'	38.5
15-Anti-racism	
23 'No to Hate Crime Vigil (London)'	86.8
24 'Unite Against Fascism National Demo (London)'	36.6
29 'Against racist politics (Stockholm)'	85.1
48 'Stop racism and exclusion (Amsterdam)'	73.5
16-Democracy	
11 'Take Back Parliament (London)'	72.7
28 'No Government, Great Country (Brussels)'	97.1
37 'Not in Our Name (Brussels)'	55.3
51 'Real Democracy Now! We are not good in the hands of politicians and bankers! (Madrid)'	97.8
56 'Occupy London (London)'	84.7
75 'Occupy Netherlands (Amsterdam, Utrecht, Rotterdam)'	78.6
77 'No Monti Day (Rome)'	49.3
17-Anti-abortion	
5 'Demonstration Against Abortion (Madrid)'	85.6
18-Region	
16 'Self-determination is democracy (Barcelona)'	64.6
17 'Demonstration against language decree (Santiago de Compostela)'	9.1
19 'We are a nation, we decide (Barcelona)'	84.6

Table A2 Consequences of unaffiliatedness by country: means and standard deviation

Consequences	Netherlands		Belgium		Spain		United Kingdom		Switzerland		Italy		Sweden	
	Non-aff	Aff	Non-aff	Aff	Non-aff	Aff	Non-aff	Aff	Non-aff	Aff	Non-aff	Aff	Non-aff	Aff
Dec. time	2.4 (0.93)	2.8 (0.84)	2.5 (0.85)	3.0 (0.88)	2.7 (0.94)	3.2 (0.89)	2.6 (1.0)	3.3 (0.91)	2.8 (1.0)	3.3 (0.92)	2.9 (1.0)	3.2 (0.86)	2.7 (1.1)	3.3 (1.0)
Id. par.	3.6 (1.0)	4.0 (0.90)	3.8 (0.85)	4.2 (0.80)	4.1 (0.77)	4.3 (0.70)	4.0 (0.88)	4.4 (0.73)	3.9 (0.88)	4.2 (0.75)	3.6 (0.92)	4.1 (0.76)	3.7 (0.80)	4.2 (0.78)
Id. org.	3.1 (1.1)	4.2 (0.90)	3.1 (1.2)	4.3 (0.81)	3.5 (1.1)	4.2 (0.85)	3.6 (1.1)	4.4 (0.78)	3.5 (1.1)	4.3 (0.79)	3.3 (1.0)	4.1 (0.87)	3.3 (0.98)	4.2 (0.88)
Ideol.	7.8 (2.1)	8.4 (1.7)	8.6 (1.4)	9.0 (1.2)	8.9 (1.2)	8.9 (1.2)	8.9 (1.2)	9.3 (1.1)	8.6 (1.4)	8.9 (1.2)	9.1 (1.2)	9.2 (1.0)	8.6 (1.6)	8.9 (1.3)
Instr.	7.4 (2.2)	8.1 (1.8)	7.8 (1.7)	8.5 (1.5)	8.7 (1.4)	8.9 (1.4)	7.9 (1.6)	8.2 (1.5)	8.3 (1.5)	8.6 (1.4)	7.3 (1.8)	7.8 (1.7)	6.9 (2.0)	7.4 (1.9)
Anger	3.8 (1.2)	4.0 (1.1)	4.0 (0.99)	4.3 (0.99)	4.3 (0.98)	4.3 (1.0)	4.2 (0.96)	4.4 (0.90)	4.1 (1.0)	4.2 (1.0)	4.5 (0.78)	4.6 (0.71)	4.3 (0.94)	4.5 (0.81)
n	994	1275	585	957	1,211	769	1029	814	828	790	420	313	683	529

Note: Dec. time = decision time; Id. par. = identification with other participants; Id. org. = identification with organizers; Ideol. = ideological motives; Instr. = instrumental motives.