



**LUNDS**  
UNIVERSITET

Institutionen för psykologi  
*Psykologprogrammet*

## **Pressure to Protest**

### **Need to Belong and Rejection Sensitivity Predict Youth Participation**

**Julia Aspernäs**

Psykologexamensuppsats. 2017

Handledare: Anna Lindqvist  
Examinator: Erwin Apitzsch

## Abstract

Younger people are over-represented in political protests, and tend to mobilise via social ties. As previous research has found participation to be predicted by the pressure to conform to social norms, i.e. by need to belong (NTB), and rejection sensitivity (RS), the current study aimed to investigate whether those relations would be stronger among younger people than older. Furthermore, the effect of NTB and RS were expected to vary across normative and non-normative protest activities, which were studied separately. Results from hierarchical multiple regressions on a representative sample of the Swedish population ( $N = 2,034$ ), showed age-differences in the effects of NTB and RS on participation, with virtually opposite directions in normative and non-normative protests. Participation in normative protest activities was negatively predicted by RS, and positively by NTB. The latter was moderated by age and only true for younger people. Contrarily, RS positively predicted participation in non-normative protest activities, and more strongly so among younger people. Moreover, the positive effect of RS was stronger among those low in NTB. Results were discussed in terms of youth identity exploration, peer-pressure, and individualistic culture, as well as societal exclusion and recruitment to violent extremism.

*Keywords: protest, collective action, non-normative, individualism, identity, rejection sensitivity, need to belong, peer-pressure, violent extremism*

## Contents

Introduction .....	1
Political protest .....	1
Personalised politics .....	2
The networked young citizen .....	4
Social identity .....	5
Identity development .....	5
Social identity theory .....	6
Predictors of participation.....	7
Normative and non-normative protest activities .....	8
Aims of the study.....	11
Hypotheses.....	11
Method.....	11
Procedure .....	11
Participants .....	11
Instruments and variables .....	12
Need to belong .....	12
Rejection sensitivity .....	13
Protest activities.....	13
Data analysis.....	14
Results .....	14
Descriptives .....	14
Normative protest activities .....	14
Non-normative protest activities.....	16
Discussion.....	18
Normative protest activities .....	18
Non-normative protest activities.....	22
General discussion .....	23
Limitations.....	26
Conclusion .....	27
References .....	28
Appendices .....	35
Appendix 1: The Need to Belong Scale (NTBS).....	35
Appendix 2: The Rejection Sensitivity Questionnaire (RSQ).....	36
Appendix 3: Questions and items regarding political participation .....	38

## Introduction

Political activism is changing. Throughout the West, institutional forms of political engagement, such as party or union activity, have decreased in favour of citizen-initiated protests (e.g. Bennett, 2007, 2008; van Biezen, Mair, & Poguntke, 2012; Loader, Vromen, & Xenos, 2014; Norris, 2002; Putnam, 2000; Sloam, 2013). Swedish political parties lost half of their members between 1990 and 2010 (Erlingsson & Persson, 2014), and demonstrations, petitions, and boycotts continue to rise in popularity (Norris, 2002; SOU, 2015).

Younger people are over-represented among protesters (Loader et al., 2014; SOU, 2015; Wennerhag, 2012). In 2013, 10 % of Swedish citizens aged 16-29 had participated in a demonstration, as compared to 5 % for the population as a whole (SOU, 2015). Similarly, more violent protest activities, such as vandalising, are also more common among younger people than older (SOU, 2015).

Some researchers suggest that participation in protest activities can be explained by a social pressure to conform to perceived norms related to social group belongingness (Bäck & Bäck, 2014; Bäck, Bäck, & García-Albacete, 2013; Bäck, Bäck, & Knapton, 2015). As social ties are more important for younger people's mobilisation than older (Loader et al., 2014), and youth identity exploration is associated with a heightened susceptibility to peer-pressure, and experimenting with world views (Arnett, 2000; Baumeister & Muraven, 1996; Brown, 1990; Kroger, 2004), the current study aims to examine if part of their over-representation in protest activities can be explained by social pressure. More specifically, the aim is to examine whether the need to belong, and rejection sensitivity, can predict participation in protest activities, and if these relations are moderated by age.

Furthermore, there will be an expansion of previous attempts to connect incentives of social group belongingness to societal exclusion (Bäck et al., 2015), by distinguishing between normative and non-normative protest activities. These are in the current study suggested to be motivated by qualitatively different types of social incentives, hence the effects of need to belong and rejection sensitivity are expected to vary across the two different types of protests.

### **Political protest**

Protest activities consist of citizen-initiated political manifestations, and constitute a political category of their own, distinct from other forms of engagement, such as party activity, or voting (Bäck, Teorell, & Westholm, 2011). Not having to attend to political parties' mutually agreed upon sets of ideas allows for freedom to custom-make the political content, and, thus, they typically focus on single-issues. They consist of a wide range of

activities, such as demonstrations, occupations, signing online petitions, consumer boycotts, and violent riots.

The literature on predictors of protest activities does not reflect the heterogeneity of the category, and suggests a need for studies with a clearer distinction between more and less extreme forms of protests (Becker & Tausch, 2015). Jackson (2015) suggests using Wright, Taylor and Moghaddam's (1990) term *non-normative* rather than, for example, 'violent' protests, as it is clearer what often is referred to; subversive acts with the aim to disrupt and change the dominant system. In this sense, *normative* refers to the norms of that system, i.e. laws and regulations. Non-normative activities violate these norms by using, for example, violence or terrorism to agitate, or, if you will, to protest. Consequently, protest activities not violating these norms are considered normative.

**Personalised politics.** Some researchers assert the importance of the individualisation of society, and consumer culture for the changes in political activism (Bauman, 2001; Bennett, 2012; Bennett & Segerberg, 2013; Ingleheart, 1997). The neo-liberal mantra of individual freedom and self-actualisation has contributed to the larger social mobility found in many post-industrial, typically Western, societies (Bauman, 2001; Bennett, 2012; Giddens, 1991, Sennett, 1998). However, combined with the deregulation of markets and fragmentation of societal institutions, the increased possibilities are, according to Bauman (2001), Bennett (2012), and Sennett (1998) a mere illusion of a more accessible world. Similar processes appear to have affected politics. As institutionalised forms of party activity have gone down, individualised, citizen-initiated engagement continue to rise (Bennett, 2007, 2008; Loader et al., 2014; Norris, 2002; Putnam, 2000). In an ironic co-occurrence, the globalised economy steadily marginalises the individual's power to influence politics, while continuously glorifying their ability to do so (Bauman, 2001; Bennett & Segerberg, 2013; Sörbom, 2002). Social movements per se are not novel phenomena, but while sometimes managing to bring about substantial political change, recent years' increase in political protest is suggested to be qualitatively different.

Corresponding with individualisation and the fragmentation of collective identity, the growingly popular protests are no longer as clearly framed with collective motives, but rather arranged around personal emotional identification and self-actualisation (Bauman, 2000; Beck & Beck-Gernsheim, 2002; Bennett, 2012; Giddens, 1991; Micheletti, 2003). Consumer culture has been an important enabler of this development. Sometimes directly, as with boycotts and *buycotts*, where citizens are encouraged to curb global negative effects of an international market with their shopping (Bennett, 2012). It has also, however, been apparent

in the strategic marketing of some protest activities, using digital media and social network sites to *sell* the political message with personalised slogans calling on the individual specifically to participate (Bennett, 2012; Bennett & Segerberg, 2013).

The Internet has been essential in making protests mainstream political activism (e.g. Bennett & Segerberg, 2013; Klandermans & van Stekelenburg, 2013). Global attention has been brought to recent years' large-scale protest movements, such as the Occupy Wall Street, and the way they mobilised via social media with personal action frames such as the *we are the 99 percent* (Bennett & Segerberg, 2013). On the more extreme end of non-normative activities, the world watched in chock as Daesh (ISIS) managed to recruit tens of thousands of foreign fighters online; professionally edited, slick videos intentionally targeted young men to join the glamorised 'rock star' life of jihadists (Awan, 2017). These movements have not been unique in their execution, but rather seem clear examples of what has become an increasingly common form of mobilisation. Aside from aiding with a more rapid and large-scale marketing, the Internet has been crucial to the development of the so called *personalised politics* (Bennett & Segerberg, 2013). Enmeshing the private content of people's Facebook feed, with political calls to act, donate, attend, and share, has proven a successful symbolic inclusiveness to make participation hard to resist (Bennett & Segerberg, 2013).

Protest activities have the perfect makeup for creating an individualised feel to the experience of political activism. As opposed to more institutional alternatives, such as party activity, the political content of protest activities is free to custom-make. Aside from being an efficient way to mobilise interest for narrower causes, it seems to also challenge human social vulnerabilities. This 'DIY-spirit' of the performative-type engagement, often manifested in one's social network feed, can make it difficult to resist participating if perceived to give social benefits (Bennett & Segerberg, 2013).

What the Internet essentially has contributed with is lowering the thresholds of participation. By offering easy access to large loose-tied networks, the supply of engagements to choose from is now literally at arm's reach through digital devices, such as smart phones (Bennett & Segerberg, 2013). Simply having a Facebook account, and using it frequently, is positively and significantly related to participation in protest activities, even after controlling for other known predictors, i.e. grievances, values, resources, and news media use (Vissers & Stolle, 2013).

The Internet is the younger generations' most important source for information and news (Madrigal, 2012; Nikolaeva, 2015), and with algorithms in social network sites that prioritise content that confirms one's pre-existing world view (Bakshy, Messing, & Adamic,

2015), younger people are most likely exposed to a rather homogenous, illusive source of information about world events. A study from 2015 that examined political engagement among Swedish citizens found that age significantly predicted political online engagement, in that younger people were more likely to participate than older people (SOU, 2015). No such effect was found for offline engagement.

**The networked young citizen.** People are more susceptible to social influence from people they are affiliated with, and who are similar to them (Cialdini & Goldstein, 2004), which increases likelihood to conform to their norms of behaviour (e.g. Asch, 1955). One study managed to get American citizens to vote when they were made to believe their Facebook friends had voted – even if they had not (Bond et al., 2012). This suggests the strong normative influence that social networks have on political behaviour, and that social ties are an important reason for individuals to engage in collective action. It is thus likely to assume that there are generational differences in not only who gets affected by this new form of powerful influence, but also in the notion of what political engagement entails.

Although protest movements are often portrayed as accessible forms of political activism, mobilisation to these highlight the importance of people's social network to be recruited. The so called *networked young citizen's* participation is more dependent on social ties than it is for older people (Loader et al., 2014), and they are more likely to actively encourage friends to participate in protest activities (SOU, 2015). Moreover, recruiters to violent extremist groups also often target people already in distant connection to their network (McCauley & Moskalenko, 2008). Altogether, these tendencies highlight the risk of developing rather homogenous, segregated communities in the younger part of the population with very little influence from other political perspectives. Social networks consisting of educated, politically interested people are likely to influence, and be influenced by, other educated, politically interested people, creating norms that encourage participation, with the opposite occurring in networks consisting of uneducated, politically uninterested people, with norms discouraging participation (Norris, 2000; SOU 2015).

This is causing some to voice concern about its consequences for democracy. The increasingly common types of normative protest activities, such as legal demonstrations and signing petitions, are still over-represented by educated, politically interested people, suggesting that the recent protests are not able to lower the threshold of participation for all, as often claimed (Gustafsson, 2013; SOU, 2015; Wennerhag, 2012). Non-normative protest activities, on the other hand, have been shown to be more common among members of marginalised groups (Vanbeselaere et al., 2003; Wright et al., 1990), and people who reject

democratic societal institutions (Dalton, 2004; SOU, 2015). Combined, these trends risk reinforcing patterns of inequality. The strength of a country's democracy to an extent depends on its representativeness, and its ability to regenerate political interest and participation in all parts of the younger population. Thus, considering the changes in activism and mobilisation, which are most apparent among younger people, it is of great importance to identify predictors of younger people's participation (Oscarsson & Persson, 2010).

Predictors of political participation have been thoroughly studied within the field of political science. According to Olson's (1965) now classic *Logic of collective action*, rational citizens should abstain from participation. Considering the relatively costly act, and the chance to freeride and enjoy the political outcome anyway, collective incentives of wanting to affect the political outcome do not fully explain the turnout, especially considering the small chances of one's individual effort making a crucial contribution. This *paradox of participation* has led to the study of the *selective incentives* exclusive to those participating in the act (Riker & Ordeshook, 1968), for example, the entertainment value it gives to partake in the act per se (Tullock, 1971). Expanding the idea of selective incentives, research drawing on social identity theory has found that participation can fulfil the need for social group belongingness (Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Bäck et al., 2013; Bäck & Bäck, 2014; Bäck et al., 2015).

### **Social identity**

**Identity development.** Identity development is in many ways a relatively new phenomenon, related to the aforementioned individualisation of society (Baumeister & Muraven, 1996). What used to be determined largely by the attributes given by social background, is now considered something one *acts* as a reflection of a supposed innate, authentic self (Baumeister & Muraven, 1996).

The endless possibilities of self-expression offered in consumer culture encourages people to create socially desirable identities that will market and 'sell' who they are (e.g. Bauman, 2001; Sennett, 1998). This can cause a pressure to engage in carefully chosen behaviours that match their surrounding in the most competitive way possible (Baumeister & Muraven, 1996). Some researchers claim that members of individualistic cultures are pressured to find strategies to live up to norms of showing off unique individual traits, yet balance need for belongingness by proving loyalty to ingroup norms (Hornsey & Jetten, 2004, 2005), creating an ironic struggle of standing out in order to fit in.

Identity development is a lifelong process, but tends to peak between the life stages of adolescence and adulthood, when one's social role is the most malleable and free (Arnett,



2000; Baumeister & Muraven, 1996; Kroger, 2004). In distancing oneself from family, and in lieu of having started one of one's own, peers become increasingly salient and important as reference groups, or even identity prototypes (Baumeister & Muraven, 1996; Brown, 1990). During this age-period, people are more sensitive to normative influence of conforming to groups they are motivated to be a part of, and adopt those values as their own (Brown, 1990).

Popularly denoted identity *crisis* (Erikson, 1968), the increased uncertainty makes many in this age-period explore and 'try on' different identities and world views (Arnett, 2000; Baumeister & Muraven, 1996). For example, younger people's political voting patterns have been shown to be more sensitive than older people's to temporary ideological trends (Oscarsson & Persson, 2010), suggesting they are more susceptible to be swayed in their political sympathies.

**Social identity theory.** A person's social identity consists of the social groups they belong to, i.e. identify with, and provides crucial human needs of belongingness (Baumeister & Leary, 1995) and self-esteem (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Thus, people are highly motivated to approach and maintain relations with desired social groups (Tajfel & Turner, 1979; 1986).

When identifying with a group, that group's norms become salient to the individual, who acquires membership by conforming to those norms (Kelly, 1993; Schachter 1951; Tajfel & Turner, 1986). In other words, people perceive their own and others' social identities through manifest behaviour in accordance with different groups' norms.

Social identity "create and define the individual's place in society" (Tajfel & Turner, 1986, p. 16), and is a well-documented predictor of collective action (e.g. Klandermans & van Stekelenburg, 2013; Tajfel & Turner, 1979). For example, street gangs offer a sense of belonging to those who conform to their norms of violence, and harm other rivalling gangs (e.g. Pinizzotto, Davis, & Miller, 2007; Stretesky & Pogrebin, 2007). Neglecting to behave in accordance with group norms carries the risk of sanctions, or, at worst, social exclusion (Schachter, 1951). Consequently, political behaviour, even non-normative, can in some cases be seen as attempts to acquire social group belongingness (Bäck & Bäck, 2014; Bäck et al, 2015).

Thwarted belongingness needs and exclusion can cause great distress and have been likened with physical pain (Eisenberger, Lieberman, & Williams, 2003). Rejection threatens needs of belongingness and self-esteem, but also our sense of control and meaningfulness (Williams & Zadro, 2005). If rejected, belongingness needs can become fortified to the individual who will go through great length to fulfil them (Williams & Zadro, 2005), for example, by conforming ingratiatingly to get acceptance to a group, even if that means

conforming to behaviours that they know to be wrong (e.g. Asch, 1955). The strive to avoid social exclusion is so strong that it can make people approach groups they normally would dislike (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). One study found that participants in a cyber ball game were distressed when ignored even by members of a despised group, such as the Ku Klux Klan (Gonsalkorale & Williams, 2006).

***Need to belong.*** Although the need to belong is a strong, global, human, innate need, there are individual differences in levels of need to belong (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). Individuals high in need to belong tend to be preoccupied with being liked. They show an empathic accuracy in reading other people (Gardner, Pickett, & Brewer, 2006; Pickett, Gardner, & Knowles, 2004), but their moral reasoning has been found to be attentive to what was best for those who would recognise and praise their efforts (Robinson, Joel, & Plaks, 2015), indicating their heightened social skills can be used with self-serving motives. They tend to compare themselves with others, and to be highly attentive and conform to other's opinions (Rose & Kim, 2011).

***Rejection sensitivity.*** Just as individuals have varying levels of the need to belong, they differ in their level of sensitivity to signs of rejection. Rejection sensitivity refers to the degree a person anxiously anticipates and expects social exclusion, and depends on the individual's previous experiences of being rejected (Downey & Feldman, 1996). Individuals high in rejection sensitivity have a readiness to perceive and over-react to signs of possible rejection, and behave as if they were true. They develop a sort of hyper-alertness, fearfully misinterpreting the actions of others, with distorted and exaggerated reactions.

### **Predictors of participation**

Studies on protest activities have found that rejection sensitivity and need to belong can predict participation. Rejection sensitive individuals were more willing to participate on behalf of a cause they supported, if they were made to believe that most others also supported that cause, than if they were made to believe their opinion deviated from the norm (Bäck et al., 2013). Interestingly, they were willing to participate even if they did not believe those protest activities were efficient ways to affect the political outcome (Bäck et al., 2013). This suggests a social pressure to conform to perceived norms out of fear of rejection (Bäck & Bäck, 2014), and that selective incentives of group belongingness are of greater importance for rejection sensitive people's participation, than collective incentives of changing the political outcome.

Furthermore, these results were expanded on to examine the connection between social belongingness and societal exclusion, or rejection. Using naturally occurring groups, a

quasi-experiment showed that rejection sensitivity predicted participation in protest activities in the societally excluded, lower status group, but not in the higher status group. Moreover, rejection sensitivity only predicted participation for those who also had a high need to belong. The results were interpreted as indicating that societal exclusion increases social concerns of group belongingness and make rejection sensitive people more willing to participate in order to not lose membership to their ingroup. Need to belong was interpreted as indicating the desire to join the group activity of protesting, in order to socialise with other participants and get a sense of belongingness (Bäck et al., 2015).

**Normative and non-normative protest activities.** Predictors of social incentives to participate have been studied with normative and non-normative protest activities lumped together. However, the literature on social exclusion shows that fortified belongingness needs are able to elicit both ingratiatingly, conforming behaviour, as well as hostile aggression, and indicates that predictors of social incentives may vary across different types of protests.

Williams and Zadro (2005) suggest that what type of response depends on which group belongingness-related need is being thwarted, and under what circumstances. More manageable threats of exclusion that target a person's self-esteem supposedly cause behaviours that increase social inclusion, such as conforming to the behaviour of a desired group to get their approval. On the other hand, more severe experiences of rejection that threaten a person's core sense of meaningfulness and control over their situation tend to evoke feelings of despair, and cause more aggressive behaviour to reclaim control and recognition.

Connecting this to political participation, this could be interpreted as the type of political action one engages in depending on what selective incentives it fulfils, perhaps due to perceived societal inclusion, or rejection. Participants of normative and non-normative protest activities normally consist of members of societal groups with varying levels of societal inclusion, which could affect the degree to which they perceive their belongingness needs to be thwarted, and, consequently, the type of protest activities they will engage in. More specifically, if societally excluded people feel more societally rejected, then their level of rejection sensitivity should have a larger effect on their participation than need to belong. Correspondingly, if societally included people have a greater general sense of societal belonging, then their level of need to belong should have a larger effect on their participation.

**Normative protest activities.** In previous studies on social incentives to protest, experimental manipulation of rejection made rejection sensitive people conform and become more willing to participate in a combination of normative and non-normative protest

activities (Bäck et al., 2013; Bäck et al., 2015). While need to belong was interpreted as indicating a desire to socialise (Bäck et al., 2015), an alternative interpretation is possible, where need to belong – just as rejection sensitivity – indicates conformance to social norms.

The typical participant in normative protest activities is a young, educated person, who trusts democratic societal institutions (SOU, 2015), i.e. normative institutions. It is possible that normative protest activities appeal to a more included societal group who does not face the same level of risk of societal exclusion. Their thwarted needs of group belongingness could rather mainly consist of threats to self-esteem, which is related to ingratiating behaviour to increase chances of inclusion to a desired group, as opposed to hostile payback (Williams & Zadro, 2005).

A study on conforming to others' political opinions found those high in belongingness-needs were more likely to conform to normative opinions, but not to non-normative (Koudenburg, Postmes, & Gordijn, 2013), suggesting a selectiveness in their conformance. Participants were made aware of the normative, majority opinion of the group, and then placed in pairs to discuss issues. Among those who then received signs of rejection after having stated their opinion, belongingness-needs predicted conforming to the conversation partner's opinion – but only in the direction of the normative, majority opinion of the group, and not towards the deviant non-normative. This suggests that people with high belongingness-needs not only conform to others' political behaviour, but are more selective in what they conform to. Thus, need to belong could be a predictor of its own if normative protest activities were separated from non-normative. Societally included higher status people could thus engage in protest activities that increase their self-esteem, or self-concept, by behaving in accordance with that society's norms, i.e. normative protest activities.

Individualistic consumer culture and the Internet has been particularly important to the creation and increase of a certain type of political engagement, expressing the participants' self-actualisation and lifestyle more than it does ideology (Bauman, 2000; Beck & Beck-Gernsheim, 2002; Bennett, 2012; Giddens, 1991; Micheletti, 2003). Many of the increasingly popular normative protest activities, such as political consumerism (e.g. boycotts) and online petitions, are more common in Western, post-industrial societies with individualistic cultures (Bennett, 2012; Bennett & Segerberg, 2013). If participants in normative protest activities are part of networks of other privileged, high status, politically aware people, with strong norms of participation (Norris, 2000; SOU, 2015), it seems likely that they are being exposed to large amounts of other people's participation patterns. Going through other people's social network feeds has shown to be an attractive way to fulfil needs

of belongingness, as they provide information on what relevant others are engaging in (Gangadharbatla, 2013; Nadkarni, 2011; Seidman, 2012), especially among younger people (Seo, Houston, Knight, Kennedy, & English, 2013), and as people high in need to belong have been shown to attend to other's opinion and conform to gain approval, they could feel a pressure to contribute and participate, in order to improve self-esteem and self-concept (Cialdini & Goldstein, 2004).

Moreover, as younger people tend to be more likely than older people to be susceptible to social influence and adopt the political opinions and values of others to fit in, it seems plausible that there are stronger relations between need to belong and participation among younger people than among older.

***Non-normative protest activities.*** Most likely to be recruited to, and participate in, non-normative political activities are younger people (Awan, 2017; Dahl, 2014; Della Porta & Haupt, 2012; SOU, 2015; Watts, 1999) from marginalised groups (SOU, 2015; Vanbeselaere et al., 2003; Wright et al., 1990), where the more extreme individuals reject democracy and are a dangerous threat to society (Dalton, 2004; SOU, 2015). Rejection sensitivity has been shown to predict participation in societally excluded groups, but not societally included (Bäck et al., 2015). Moreover, members of excluded groups are more likely to choose non-normative activities over normative when a higher status group excludes them completely, compared to when leaving a slight chance of entering (Vanbeselaere et al., 2003; Wright et al., 1990), suggesting a connection between non-normative activities and (societal) rejection.

Non-normative political action could appeal to those who do not identify as part of the majority society, as a means to retaliate against it, in order to reclaim a sense of control and recognition (Williams & Zadro, 2005). Studies on social exclusion have found that people respond to the source of exclusion with aggression (Twenge, Baumeister, Tice, & Stucke, 2001), and that they seek revenge towards the source of rejection (Bourgeois & Leary, 2001). Thus, non-normative protest activities could be a means to retaliate for individuals with resentment towards the majority society that rejected them – especially if they are rejection sensitive.

As younger people are more likely to get recruited to and participate in non-normative activities, it is of great importance to understand what predicts their participation. Their sensitivity to peer-pressure, tendency to experiment with world views, and greater likelihood to act with disobedience and aggressive behaviour (Baumeister & Muraven, 1996), could

make their participation in non-normative protest activities more affected by level of rejection sensitivity than it would for older people.

### **Aims of the study**

The aim of the current study is to examine whether the predictability of need to belong and rejection sensitivity vary across normative and non-normative protest activities, and if these relations are moderated by age. The research questions are, thus: Do predictors related to social group belongingness vary across different types of protest? Are younger people's participation in protest activities more affected by social incentives than older people's participation?

### **Hypotheses.**

- H1a Age will predict participation in normative protest activities; the lower the age, the higher the tendency to participate.
- H1b Need to belong will predict participation in normative protest activities; the higher the need to belong, the higher the tendency to participate.
- H1c The relation between need to belong and participation will be moderated by age.
- H2a Age will predict participation in non-normative protest activities; the lower the age, the higher the tendency to participate.
- H2b Rejection sensitivity will predict participation in non-normative protest activities; the higher the rejection sensitivity, the higher the tendency to participate.
- H2c The relation between rejection sensitivity and participation will be moderated by age.

## **Method**

### **Procedure**

Research questions were investigated with a cross-sectional design, using a survey from a research project examining political and civic engagement. The survey was emailed to participants in early 2016, by a company that specialises in carrying out surveys.

Ethical approval was sought and obtained before the study started, as the survey queries about matters that the Ethics Review Board considers sensitive information, i.e. political attitudes.

### **Participants**

A representative sample – in terms of gender, region, and age – of the Swedish population was selected to fill out the survey. Participants consisted of people who previously had stated their willingness to fill out surveys on behalf of the company that carried out the survey. Thus, sampling does not qualify as random, but should rather be considered a non-probability one. Nevertheless, including representative portions of the population, combined

with the relatively high number of response-rate, and large number of respondents, does add valuable information, as many of the previous studies in the field have used smaller amounts of mainly students in their samples (Bäck et al., 2013; Bäck et al., 2015).

Out of the original  $N = 3,820$  who received the survey, 53.2 % ( $N = 2,034$ ), filled out the survey and were included in the study. A non-response analysis was conducted to check for differences between the total number of participants and those who were included in the study. The analysis included information about participants' gender and age, as this was available for all participants regardless of completion. No major differences were identified, although the difference in mean age does indicate a slight age-bias in completion; mean age in the original full sample was 41 ( $SD = 19$ ), and in the included sample 43.5 ( $SD = 19$ ), and, thus, older participants seemed slightly more inclined to complete the survey. Differences in female to male-ratio was marginal; 50.3% women, 49.6% men, and .1% missing in the full sample, and 50.3% men, 49.6% women, and .1% missing in the included sample. Age ranged from 16 – 80 years before and after elimination of participants.

The statistical power of the multiple regression, in terms of ratio of cases to independent variables, was considered good.

### **Instruments and variables**

The survey consisted of a total of 32 questions regarding political activism, political opinion, use of social media, personality, and demographics. Its front page had a short presentation of the survey and its purpose, as well as an informed consent, and a clear statement of participants' anonymousness and their right to end their participation at any time without stating a cause. Participants were also informed that data would be analysed on a group level, and be used for research. Everything in the survey was written in Swedish.

**Need to belong.** People high in need to belong tend to be attentive to others, and conform to the normative opinion of the group, but not the non-normative (Koumbouris, Postmes, & Gordijn, 2013; Rose & Kim, 2011). Thus, it seems likely that the effect of need to belong would vary if studying normative activities separate from non-normative. Need to belong was measured using the 10-item version of the Need to Belong Scale (NTBS), originally created in 1995 (Baumeister & Leary), and construct validated by Leary, Kelly, Cottrell, and Schreindorfer (2013) in its 10-item version. Participants were asked to rate statements of how they viewed themselves in relation to others, for example, "I want other people to accept me", and "I easily get hurt when I feel that others don't accept me". Statements were rated on a scale from 1 – 5 ( $1 = \text{Not true at all}$ ,  $5 = \text{Completely true}$ ). (See Appendix 1 for more information). Each person's score consisted of a mean of all 10 rated

statements, after three of them had been reverse-coded, to make higher scores indicate a higher degree of need to belong. Cronbach's alpha was high ( $\alpha = .82$ ).

**Rejection sensitivity.** Rejection sensitive individuals' tendency to anxiously anticipate and over-react to signs of rejection could make them more inclined to participate in non-normative protest activities as a means to retaliate against society. Participation in non-normative political activities is more common among members of excluded groups (Vanbeselaere et al., 2003; Wright et al., 1990), and people who reject democratic societal institutions (Dalton, 2004; SOU, 2015). Thus, the relation between rejection sensitivity and participation in protest could be stronger for activities that violate societal norms. Rejection sensitivity was measured with the short version of the Rejection Sensitivity Questionnaire (RSQ), validated in 1996 (Downey & Feldman). The RSQ included 8 different situations where participants were asked to imagine asking someone for help, and how they would react in that situation. One example read "You ask a friend to do you a big favour." Participants were then asked to rate a) the likelihood that their request would be granted ( $1 = \textit{not likely at all}$ , to  $6 = \textit{very likely}$ ), and b) how worried they would be about the response ( $1 = \textit{not worried at all}$ , to  $6 = \textit{very worried}$ ). (See Appendix 2 for more information). Scores were calculated by multiplying the reversed level of perceived likelihood of getting help, with the level of worry, and then creating a mean value index of the 8 situations' scores. Cronbach's alpha was high ( $\alpha = .82$ ).

**Protest activities.** Bäck et al.'s (2011) definition of political protest was used to select appropriate items regarding participation in various political activities. Participants were asked to rate their participation from 1 – 4 ( $1 = \textit{"Yes, within 12 months ago"}$ ;  $2 = \textit{Yes, but longer than 12 months ago}$ ;  $3 = \textit{No, I haven't, but I would consider doing it}$ ;  $4 = \textit{No, I haven't, and I would not consider doing it}$ ). Protest activities were then divided into their normative and non-normative counterparts (Wright et al., 1990) to examine whether the effect of need to belong and rejection sensitivity varied across the two political forms. Scores were reverse-coded, so that higher scores indicated greater likelihood of participation. (See Appendix 3 for more information). Finally, each participant's score was calculated by creating a mean value across the included activities.

**Normative protest activities.** The four items included were "Signed a petition", "Donated money to directly, or via, an organisation", "Boycotted, or bought, a certain product", and "Participated in a legal demonstration or strike". Cronbach's alpha was considered sufficient due to the study's exploratory nature ( $\alpha = .69$ ).



**Non-normative protest activities.** The three items included were “Written political statements, or painted graffiti on walls”, “Participated in an illegal demonstration or occupation”, and “Participated in a political activity when property was vandalised”. Cronbach’s alpha was high ( $\alpha = .84$ ).

### Data analysis

Two hierarchical multiple regressions were conducted to examine hypotheses of need to belong and rejection sensitivity predicting participation in normative and non-normative protest activities respectively, as well as possible interactions with age. Bivariate correlations between independent and dependent variables were conducted prior to main analyses, to ensure these were sufficient. Assumptions of normality, linearity, homoscedasticity, multicollinearity and singularity were assessed to make sure none were violated. All data analyses were conducted using IBM Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23 and 24.

## Results

### Descriptives

Means and standard deviations for independent and dependent variables, as well as correlations between them, are shown in Table 1. Both independent variables need to belong and rejection sensitivity correlated significantly with dependent variables normative and non-normative protest respectively, which is part of the assumptions that need to be fulfilled in order to conduct hierarchical multiple regression. The correlation between rejection sensitivity and normative protest activities was low, but was included in the regression model anyway, partially due to it being significant, as well as the novelty and exploratory nature of the study.

**Table 1**

*Means and standard deviations in rejection sensitivity, need to belong, normative protest activities, non-normative protest activities, and correlations.*

	M (SD)	1.	2.	3.	4.
1. Rejection sensitivity	6.73 (3.87)				
2. Need to belong	2.85 (.71)	.33***			
3. Normative protest	2.43 (.81).	-.07**	.06**		
4. Non-normative protest	1.2 (.46).	.25***	.06**	.26**	

*Note.* \* $p \leq .05$ ; \*\* $p \leq .01$ ; \*\*\* $p < .001$ .

### Normative protest activities

A hierarchical multiple regression was conducted to examine predictors of participation in normative protest activities, and possible interaction effects. In step 1, rejection sensitivity, need to belong, and age were added. In step 2, the interaction-terms

between rejection sensitivity x need to belong, rejection sensitivity x age, and need to belong x age were added.

The results from the hierarchical multiple regression in Table 2 indicated an overall support for H1a and H1b. As the second strongest significant predictor, age negatively predicted participation. This indicated that the younger the age, the higher the tendency to participate. Moreover, need to belong positively predicting participation, indicated a significantly higher tendency for participation the higher the need to belong.

**Table 2**

*Hierarchical multiple regression predicting participation in normative political protest from rejection sensitivity (RS), need to belong (NTB), and age.*

Predictor	Step 1 $\beta$	Step 2 $\beta$
RS	-.119***	-.111
NTB	.077**	.209*
Age	-.092***	.194
RS x NTB		.034
RS x Age		-.044
NTB x Age		-.269*
<i>Adjusted R<sup>2</sup></i>	.018***	.021*
<i>R<sup>2</sup> change</i>		.005

*Note.* \* $p \leq .05$ ; \*\* $p \leq .01$ ; \*\*\* $p < .001$ .

Rejection sensitivity was the strongest single predictor, and showed *negative* relations with participation, which indicated a significantly smaller tendency for participation the higher the rejection sensitivity. Although not part of any hypothesis, this did not contradict any presumptions.

Noteworthy was the remarkably low explained variance of 1.8 % in step 1. Although a significant model, it indicated that a substantial part of the variance for participation in normative protest activities was explained by measurements other than those included.

Adding the two-way interactions in step 2 significantly increased the explained variance, but by a rather small change at .05 %. The final total explained variance at 2.1 % was still low, and again indicated that the included variables did not explain a large part of the variance.

The only significant two-way interaction was between age and need to belong, which provided support for H1c stating that the relation between need to belong and participation would be moderated by age. As evident in Figure 1, need to belong affected younger people's participation more strongly than older people's, and in a positive direction. This indicated

that the higher the need to belong, the higher the tendency to participate – but only for younger people.

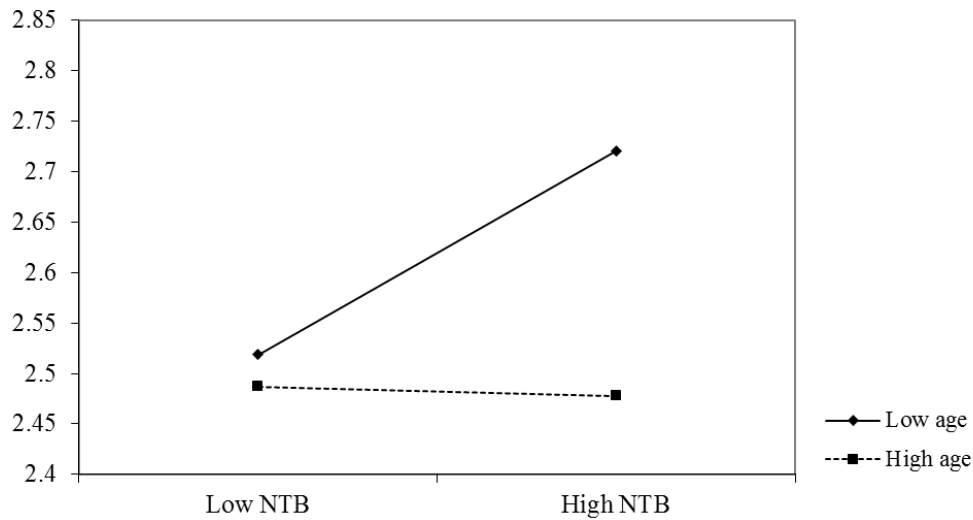


Figure 1. Interaction between need to belong (NTB), and age, on participation in normative protest activities.

### Non-normative protest activities

Again, a hierarchical multiple regression was conducted to examine predictors of participation in normative protest activities, and possible interaction effects. Identical to the procedure for normative protest activities, rejection sensitivity, need to belong, and age were added in step 1, followed by the interaction-terms between rejection sensitivity x need to belong, rejection sensitivity x age, and need to belong x age in step 2.

**Table 3**

*Hierarchical multiple regression predicting participation in non-normative political protest from rejection sensitivity (RS), need to belong (NTB), and age.*

Predictor	Step 1	Step 2
	$\beta$	$\beta$
RS	.210***	.957***
NTB	-.047	.160
Age	-.173***	.243*
RS x NTB		-.453***
RS x Age		-.424***
NTB x Age		-.126
<i>Adjusted R<sup>2</sup></i>	.086***	.111***
<i>R<sup>2</sup> change</i>		.026

Note. \* $p \leq .05$ ; \*\* $p \leq .01$ ; \*\*\* $p \leq .001$ .

The results from the hierarchical multiple regression are shown in Table 3, and shows that, again, rejection sensitivity was the strongest single predictor, this time in the predicted

positive direction. In line with H2b, a higher rejection sensitivity indicated a higher tendency to participate.

Age once more had the second largest coefficient, and, again, negatively predicted participation. Providing support for H2a, this indicated that the lower the age, the higher the tendency to participate in non-normative protest activities.

The explained variance of step 1 was significant at 8.6 %. This was higher than for normative protest activities, but still indicated that other factors were important for explaining the variance in participation in non-normative protest activities.

Adding the two-way interaction-terms in step 2 added to the explained variance by 2.6 %. The final total explained variance of 11.1 % was considerably higher than the explained variance for normative protest activities, and suggested that social incentives affected the likelihood of participation in non-normative protest activities to a larger extent than they did for normative.

As shown in Figure 2, rejection sensitivity interacted with age. Rejection sensitivity positively predicted participation in non-normative protest activities among both younger and older people. However, younger people were more sensitive to the effect of rejection sensitivity, which provided support for H2b.

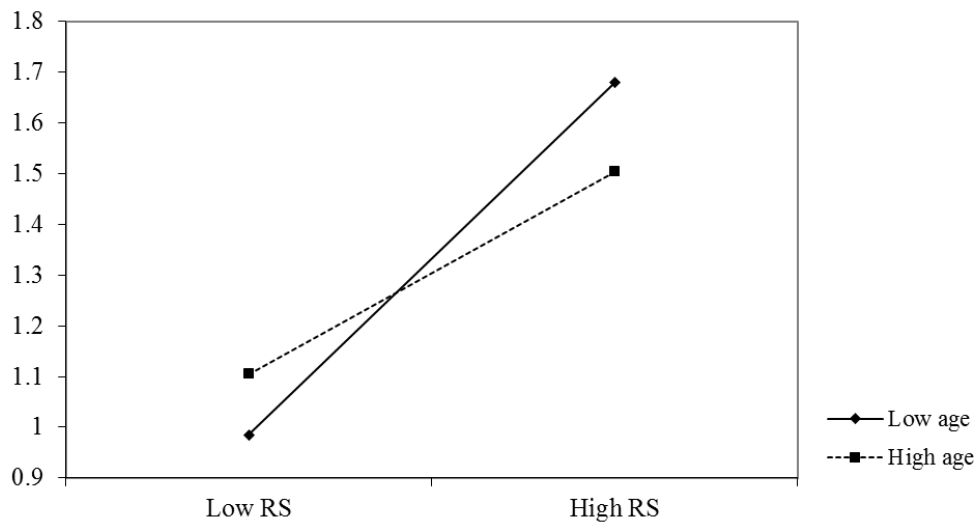


Figure 2. Interaction between rejection sensitivity (RS), and age, on participation in non-normative protest.

Step 2 had an additional significant two-way interaction between rejection sensitivity and need to belong. As evident in Figure 3, a higher rejection sensitivity once again increased likelihood of participation. The positive effect of rejection sensitivity was true regardless of the level of need to belong, but particularly so for those *low* in need to belong.

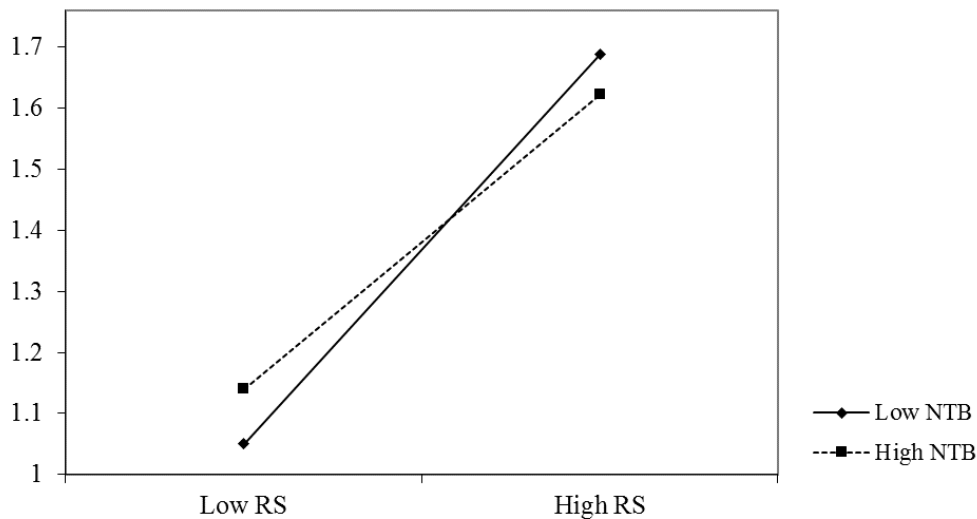


Figure 3. Interaction between rejection sensitivity (RS), and need to belong (NTB), on participation in non-normative protest.

### Discussion

The aim of the current study to examine whether social incentives of participation vary across normative and non-normative protest activities, and if these relations are moderated by age, is supported by the results. Using a representative sample of the Swedish population, the results indicate younger citizens' particular sensitivity to social incentives regarding participation in protest, and that social incentives of group belongingness vary across different types of protest, possibly due to the level of societal inclusion.

#### Normative protest activities

The suggestion that participation in normative protest activities can be predicted by need to belong is supported by the results (H1b). This indicates that the higher the attentiveness to other's opinion and approval, the higher the tendency to participate in this type of protest. Also, in line with hypotheses and the literature, age significantly and positively predicts participation (H1a); the lower the age, the higher the tendency to participate. Age furthermore moderates the effect of need to belong, in that only younger people's participation is positively affected by social incentives of belongingness (H1c). This is in line with research stating that older people rather are motivated by collective incentives due to lifecycle effects of general political interest increasing with age (García-Albacete, 2011; Lindberg & Persson, 2013; Oscarsson & Persson, 2010).

Overall, the results support the suggestion that participation in these political activities offers manifestation of not just ideological sympathies, but social group identity. The performative nature of normative protest activities is even more supported by the

unexpected negative main effect of rejection sensitivity, which is the strongest single predictor. What might seem like it contradicts hypotheses or previous research, could also be seen as supporting the suggestion to study normative protest activities separately. Previous studies of social incentives and protest have not separated between normative and non-normative activities, and have included experimental manipulations of rejection (Bäck et al., 2013; Bäck et al., 2015), which the cross-sectional design of the current study does not. Bäck et al. (2013) did find rejection sensitivity to positively predict participation in protest activities – but only among those who had social support for their opinion. For those who did not, rejection sensitivity showed a negative effect. Thus, it could still very well be that *rejected* people high in rejection sensitivity, who perceive that they have social support, and thus do not risk further rejection, are more inclined to conform and participate due to fortified belongingness needs. The current design does not allow for capturing such effects. It does, however, seem to uncover novel information about participation in normative protest activities.

Normative protest activities are for apparent reasons (e.g. being legal, as opposed to non-normative protest activities) easier to openly manifest, for example in social media, by attending events, or signing petitions online (Bennett & Segerberg, 2013). Perhaps the results indicate that the performative nature of some of the items included in normative protest activities attract a certain type of participants: young people who are preoccupied with gaining approval, but at the same time not anxiously anticipating getting rejected for the actions they take. For example, online political engagement is associated with the anxiety of not being in control of who sees what causes one has supported (Thorson, 2014), and tends to discriminate between different personality types, favouring those who are more self-confident (Amnå, Ekström, & Stattin, 2016). Aside from suggesting a certain awareness of social costs and gains of one's political engagement, it indicates that many of the protest activities that are growing in popularity would be easier to participate in if not afraid of other people's judgement. The included activities in the current study are not necessarily directly carried out via social media, but could all be marketed in such settings, and according to the aforementioned literature, they are (Bennett, 2012; Bennett & Segerberg, 2013). The participation in a demonstration would perhaps be particularly challenging to arrange in online settings, but does indeed entail manifesting quite vividly what causes one supports, which could be an easier task for those not afraid of other people's rejection.

Nevertheless, the main aim to present an alternative interpretation of need to belong, and its importance for normative protest activities was supported. The suggestion that it is not

an indicator of wanting to participate in the act due to socialising, as it was previously suggested (Bäck et al., 2015), but rather a conforming behaviour due to high sensitivity to popular opinion is supported by the results. Furthermore, need to belong being a significant predictor on its own without experimental manipulation suggests its importance for participation in collective action. Again, younger people seem to be more vulnerable to this effect than older, possibly due to the aforementioned exploration of identity and world views, and heightened susceptibility to peer-pressure (Arnett, 2000; Baumeister & Muraven, 1996; Brown, 1990).

The study took place in Sweden, which fits the mould of where normative protest activities typically have become more common; Western, post-industrial societies with individualistic, consumer culture (e.g. Bennett & Segerberg, 2013; Putnam, 2000). The literature suggests that the individualistic, consumer culture in these societies encourage self-serving actions – including political actions (e.g. Bauman, 2001). Some researchers claim that participation in normative protest activities is partially motivated by improving social identity (Bennett & Segerberg, 2013; Inglehart, 1997; Norris, 2004). Perhaps the combination of a temporarily fragile self due to identity development, and the pressure to market *yourself* makes it particularly challenging to resist behaviour that will accrue social benefits. If that is true, then younger people who are high in need to belong may be particularly vulnerable to the pressure to attend any event that will enhance social identity. In communities with strong participatory norms, that may entail a pressure to stand out and speak your mind in order to fit in.

The results could be seen as an indicator of younger people being more sensitive to peer-pressure, and, thus, show higher tendency to conform to other people's opinion and behaviour. However, if the assumption of these participants typically existing of societally included people is true, an alternative interpretation is that those high in need to belong pick up on general societal norms of participation. Participation in Sweden is generally motivated by selective incentives of conforming to the relatively strong cultural norms of political engagement (Teorell & Westholm, 1999). Hence the attentiveness to others' opinion so typical for those high in need to belong could be sign of a desire to contribute to one's fellow citizens, rather than mere self-serving motives.

Overall, the main aim to introduce the importance of need to belong for political participation is supported. Regardless of whether the results indicate tendency to conform to peers in one's immediate social network, or to fellow citizens, they suggest that the higher the need to belong, the higher the tendency to participate.

Worth noting is the low explained variance of the model in the regression, which indicates that other measurements than those included are important for predicting participation. This is in line with research suggesting that collective incentives are still important for participation in protest activities (Bäck et al., 2011; Finkel, Muller, & Opp, 1998). Part of what makes protest activities socially appealing is the freedom to custom-make the content, which makes them easier to ‘sell’, but also allow for creating engagement for narrower causes that can speak more directly to people’s specific political sympathies. Therefore, an all too pessimist interpretation would be inaccurate, and some say that trends of individualised forms of engagement indeed can go hand in hand with collective ideological motives (Sörbom & Wennerhag, 2011). The results should thus not be interpreted as all participants engaging with self-serving motives. If anything, caution should be taken against the development of protest activities that speak to people’s social vulnerabilities more than they do political ideology, and mainly attract those who are self-confident and preoccupied with social appearance. Perhaps if people were made aware of the risks of playing on personal action frames that speak to human needs of social belongingness, the opportunities of custom-making the content could be used in even more efficient ways to raise awareness for narrower causes that otherwise would not get attention. The younger population in Sweden and in several other Western nations is politically interested and well-informed (Norris, 2002; Oscarsson & Persson, 2010), thus cynical interpretations of the current results are unnecessary.

A possible future expansion of the results could be to examine how need to belong and rejection sensitivity would vary across different types of normative protest activities. Just as the current novel separation between normative and non-normative protest activities proved fruitful, a further distinction could provide clarifying information. Furthermore, it would be interesting to investigate if the results would be replicated for political engagement via social media. Considering the role that social network sites play for marketing protest activities (Bennett & Segerberg, 2013), and the fact that belongingness needs have been shown to motivate social media use (Gangadharbatla, 2013; Nadkarni, 2011; Seidman, 2012; Seo et al., 2013) it seems likely that need to belong could show similar patterns regarding participation via social media. This could also help determine whether the negative relations with rejection sensitivity are due to a fear of being rejected for openly manifesting political opinion. Moreover, it would be interesting to try to replicate the study in societies with weaker cultural norms of engagement to determine whether those high in need to belong pick up on societal pressure to participate or whether it is from social ties and peers.



## **Non-normative protest activities**

The suggested importance of rejection sensitivity for participation in non-normative protest activities is supported (H2b). Rejection sensitivity positively predicts participation, and is the strongest single predictor, followed by age, which negatively predicts participation (H2a). The expected interaction between these two is in line with hypothesis of younger people's participation being more sensitive to the effect of rejection sensitivity, but also indicates the general importance of rejection sensitivity for non-normative protest. Both younger and older people's participation is positively affected by rejection sensitivity; the higher the rejection sensitivity, the higher the tendency to participate. The effect is however stronger among younger people, indicating the hypothesised stronger effect among younger people regarding rejection sensitivity (H2c).

The unexpected interaction between need to belong and rejection sensitivity again indicates the particular importance of rejection sensitivity, rather than need to belong, for participation in non-normative protest; both those high and low in need to belong are positively affected by rejection sensitivity, in that the higher the rejection sensitivity, the higher the tendency to participate. The positive effect of rejection sensitivity is however stronger among those low in need to belong. This indicates that although rejection sensitivity is important for participation, the tendency is even higher among those who are not preoccupied with being liked.

The explained variance of the regression model is higher than it is for normative protest activities, thus implying the particular importance of social incentives for participation in non-normative protest activities. More specifically, the results indicate a particular importance of rejection sensitivity and age-differences. This may add to the understanding of why younger people are at particular risk of engaging in violent behaviour, or rebellion against authority (Baumeister & Muraven, 1996), and are over-represented as participants in non-normative activities (Dahl, 2014; Della Porta & Haupt, 2012; SOU, 2015; Watts, 1999).

A possible future expansion could be to examine gender differences in the effect of rejection sensitivity on participation in non-normative protest. It is more common that males participate (McDowell, Rootham, & Hardgrove, 2014; SOU, 2015; Zubok & Chuprov, 2011), and they also tend to have more aggressive reactions if high in rejection sensitivity, whereas females tend to show more anxious social withdrawal (London, Downey, Bonica, & Paltin, 2007).

## General discussion

Hypotheses of social incentives varying across normative and non-normative protest activities when studied separately are supported by the results. Overall, need to belong and rejection sensitivity seem to affect prediction in virtually opposite directions in the two categories, indicating an alternative interpretation of previous research. Moreover, it is suggested here that it expands previous attempts to connect societal exclusion with rejection sensitivity (Bäck et al., 2015), and maybe even with need to belong.

Individuals from societally excluded groups have stronger relations between rejection sensitivity and participation in protest activities (Bäck et al., 2015), and members of excluded groups are more likely to participate in non-normative activities (Vanbeselaere et al., 2003; Wright et al., 1990). Although the current study's participants' level of societal exclusion is not known, the results could be interpreted as supporting Bäck et al.'s (2015) suggestions that societally excluded people have higher social concerns and, thus, are more motivated to conform to any groups that will accept them; political groups would offer them a sense of belonging and identity they – unlike societally included individuals – do not get from the majority society. The current study's result of social incentives explaining a larger part of the variance for non-normative protest, could be interpreted as part of those activities' appeal entailing social group belongingness.

Examining the combined results from the two categories of protest offers further insight to the societal connection, and how group belongingness can be understood in terms of extreme non-normative action. Need to belong positively predicts participation in *normative* protest activities, i.e. manifestations that do not violate the rules and laws of the dominant system. The results from the normative protest activities suggest that participation can be predicted by motives of getting approval from the majority, which could be interpreted as conforming to the norms of the network one belongs to, perhaps even society. However, combined with the results for non-normative protest activities, showing that rejection sensitivity had a stronger positive effect among those *low* in need to belong, it could be interpreted as also indicating being discouraged to harm other people belonging to that society. Consequently, a lack thereof could involve a lack of that discouragement, or even worse, a complete indifference to them. More specifically, the interaction effect between rejection sensitivity and need to belong could reflect participation in non-normative protest activities of varying levels of extremism, and hostility towards the majority society.

Even within the category of non-normative activities, there are variations to the degree of extremism. Emotional appraisal theory holds that while anger is an approach-

oriented common predictor of both normative and some less extreme non-normative collective action (van Zomeren, Spears, Hischer, & Leach, 2004), it is qualitatively different from contempt (Frijda, Peter, & ter Schure, 1989; Mackie, Devos, & Smith, 2000). Because the latter involves dehumanising the object of contempt, and a lack of reconciliation motives, it can lead to more hostile, extreme actions (Fischer & Roseman, 2007; Tausch et al., 2011). In ‘upward contempt’, the emotions are directed towards societal institutions, such as the police or the government, which are perceived as illegitimate (Becker & Tausch, 2015). The more extreme the action, the more predictive power contempt has, while it does not predict normative action at all. Anger, on the other hand, has no predictive power for the more extreme non-normative actions. This suggests a selectiveness in the action the two types of emotions elicit; contempt explains extreme non-normative action, but not normative, and anger explains normative or less extreme non-normative action, but not extreme non-normative.

Moreover, a study on political engagement among younger citizens found different groupings in terms of their attitude towards democracy and willingness to participate in different types of non-normative activities (SOU, 2015). Among those was the *critical group* which was critical of certain societal institutions, but not of democracy per se, and the *hostile group* which was critical of both societal institutions, and rejected democracy per se. While those in the critical group only were willing to participate in non-normative activities if no one was harmed, the hostile group did not report the same level of concern for fellow citizens, and was the most likely to participate in non-normative activities, and least likely in normative. This was interpreted as differentiating between different types of non-normative activities; one that reflects an attitude of ‘all means necessary’ if perceived to benefit fellow citizens, and another directed at harming society as a whole, including its members. Interestingly, members of the critical group had more similar background to a third group which *only* participated in normative activities, and whose members were both content with societal institutions and with democracy per se; both had significantly higher education levels than those in the hostile group, and participated more in normative political activities. Thus, a possible interpretation of the interaction between rejection sensitivity and need to belong for non-normative protest activities could be that participants with a higher need to belong are willing to participate in normative and less extreme non-normative protest activities, but not the more extreme non-normative, such as terrorism. Interestingly, and in connecting this with rejection sensitivity – i.e. fearfully anticipating rejection from other people – members of the hostile group reported lower trust in other people (SOU, 2015).

Aside from possibly aiding with a clarifying distinction between different types of non-normative participation, this could expand the political implications of need to belong. Perhaps it is not enough to be rejection sensitive to participate in more extreme non-normative action; one also needs to be low in need to belong, i.e. not discouraged by carrying out non-normative actions that harm fellow citizens. People's degree of need to belong have been found to predict empathic accuracy (Pickett et al., 2004), which perhaps poses an important hinder for people who would otherwise be motivated to carry out violent attacks. If the suggestion that the interaction between rejection sensitivity and need to belong reflects different levels of non-normative protest, then this would explain why a previous study found an interaction effect where being high in both rejection sensitivity and need to belong implied higher tendency to participate (Bäck et al., 2015). They included both normative and non-normative protest activities, where perhaps some of them could be positively predicted by both rejection sensitivity and need to belong.

Perhaps rejection sensitivity involves a more instinctive and hostile conforming response than need to belong, which could explain its varying effects on normative and non-normative protest. Rejection sensitivity develops as a result of previous experiences of rejection, where the person learns to fearfully anticipate and over-react in distorted ways to perceived signs of rejection, and often responds with hostility or retaliation (Downey & Feldman, 1996), sometimes even to outgroups in general (Sacco, Wirth, Hugenberg, Chen, & Williams, 2011). The societal connection implies that the feelings of rejection could be directed to society as a whole, perhaps with the risk of developing hostile desires to retaliate, i.e. to violate its norms. Perhaps in societally excluded groups where non-normative activities are more common, the majority society feels distant, and non-normative activities become normative. This further supports the relevance of separating between normative and non-normative political activities, and the danger of allowing people to grow up under circumstances of societal exclusion, possibly fostering hostile views of the majority society and its institutions. Those circumstances could create extra vulnerability, or even desperation, to join any group that will accept them, making them easy preys for groups that need members who are willing to conform to their non-normative group norms, and commit violent acts. Non-normative groups could thus offer those with retaliatory motives due to experience of societal rejection a sense of belongingness and a way to disrupt the norms of the group that rejected them (majority society), with particularly extreme actions if they do not feel they belong in it. Correspondingly, feeling a sense of societal belongingness could entail preferring political engagement that does *not* challenge societal norms. If rejection

sensitivity reflects retaliation motives, this would explain the current study's results of its negative relations with participation in normative protest activities. A future expansion could examine whether rejection sensitivity and need to belong would have similar selective predictive power on different types of non-normative political activities as anger and contempt (Frijda et al., 1989; Mackie et al., 2000).

Important to note here is that it is not suggested that all societally excluded or rejection sensitive people commit non-normative action or reject democracy. When given the chance, rejection sensitive people prefer to act ingratiation (Romero-Canyas et al., 2010), and disadvantaged groups are more likely to choose normative action over non-normative when they perceive a slight chance to improve their status than when they are made to believe they are completely excluded (Vanbeselaere et al., 2003; Wright et al., 1990). Altogether, this suggests that some engagement in non-normative activities could be signs of not experiencing any other means of affecting political outcome, possibly due to not feeling included in society. Although these are still speculations, members of the previously mentioned hostile group did report that they did not feel that they had the means necessary to affect politics (SOU, 2015).

The finding that incentives of social group belongingness significantly predict participation in a representative sample of the Swedish population adds novel and crucial information to the literature on participation in collective action in general, and protest activities in particular. It furthermore shows the importance of attending to age while studying predictors of participation, and offers a possible explanation to the reported importance of social ties to younger people's mobilisation. It indicates that identity exploration and peer-pressure affect the political socialisation of the younger generation, which could have implications for the regeneration of a representative political engagement, and, in the long run, for democracy. More importantly, the results contribute to the literature on recruitment to violent extremism; the relatively strong predictive power of the model for non-normative protest activities indicate the need to attend to feelings of rejection or societal exclusion, as well as early preventive efforts to suppress recruitment of younger citizens to groups with hostile views of society and democracy.

### **Limitations**

The cross-sectional design of the study does not show causal relations. Thus, there is no way of telling whether the social incentives are what caused participation. Furthermore, the questions about participation regard the past, while the participants' reports on need to belong and rejection sensitivity refer to their current state. Although the personality related

traits are relatively stable over time (Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Downey & Feldman, 1996), there is no guarantee that they were high in need to belong or rejection sensitive at the time of participation. Moreover, without a control group, there is no telling what confounding variables affected the results.

Regarding the sensitive matter of asking about political participation, there could be a risk of bias in reports, where some people may not have reported truthfully, especially regarding non-normative protest activities (as they are illegal).

As always with self-report, overall caution should be taken to their accuracy.

### **Conclusion**

Need to belong and rejection sensitivity predict participation in normative and non-normative protest activities in virtually opposite directions. Need to belong positively predicts participation in normative protest activities, but not non-normative, and rejection sensitivity positively predicts participation in non-normative protest activities, and negatively in normative. This supports the current study's suggestion that participation in these is motivated by different types of incentives related to social group belongingness, possibly due to the level of societal inclusion. The positive relations between incentives of social group belongingness and participation are moderated by age and stronger for younger people. This indicates their particular importance for younger people's mobilisation, which could have implications for political socialisation, and recruitment to violent extremism.

## References

- Amnå, E., Ekström, M., & Stattin, H. (2016) *Ungdomars politiska utveckling*. [The political development of the youth.] Gothenburg: Makadam förlag.
- Arnett, J. J. (2000). Emerging adulthood: A theory of development from the late teens through the twenties. *American Psychologist*, 55(5), 469-480.
- Asch, S. E. (1955). Opinions and social pressure. *Scientific American*, 193, 31–35.
- Awan, I. (2017). Cyber-extremism: Isis and the power of social media. *Social Science and Public Policy*, 54, 138–149.
- Bakshy, E., Messing, S., & Adamic, L. (2015). Exposure to ideologically diverse news and opinion on Facebook. *Science*, 5, 1130– 1132.
- Bauman, Z. (2001). *The individualised society*. Cambridge: Polity.
- Baumeister, R. F., & Leary, M. R. (1995). The need to belong: desire for interpersonal attachments as a fundamental human motivation. *Psychological bulletin*, 117(3), 497–529.
- Baumeister, R. F., & Muraven, M. (1996). Identity as adaptation to social, cultural, and historical context. *Journal of adolescence*, 19, 405-416.
- Beck, U., & Beck-Gernsheim, E. (2002). *Individualized individualism and its social and political consequences*. London: SAGE Publications.
- Becker, J. C., & Tausch, N. (2015). A dynamic model of engagement in normative and non-normative collective action: Psychological antecedents, consequences, and barriers. *European Review of Social Psychology*, 26:1, 43-92.
- Bennett, L. (2007). Civic learning in changing democracies. Challenges for citizenship and civic education. In P. Dahlgren (Ed.), *Young citizens and new media: Learning for democratic participation* (pp. 59-77). New York: Routledge.
- Bennett, L. (2008). Changing citizenship in the digital age. In L. Bennett (Ed.), *Civic life online: Learning how digital media can engage youth* (pp. 1-24). Cambridge: MIT Press.
- Bennett, L. (2012). The personalization of politics: Political identity, social media, and changing patterns of participation. *ANNALS, AAPSS*, 644, 20-39.
- Bennett, L. W., & Segerberg, A. (2013). *The logic of connective action. Digital media and the personalization of contentious politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Van Biezen, I., Mair, P., & Poguntke, T. (2012). Going, going, . . . gone? The decline of party membership in contemporary Europe. *European Journal of Political Research*, 51, 24–56.

- Bond, R. M., Fariss, C. J., Jones, J. J., Kramer, A. D. I., Marlow, C., Settle, J. E., & Fowler, J. H. (2012). A 61-million-person experiment in social influence and political mobilization. *Nature*, *489*, 295–298.
- Bourgeois, K. S., & Leary, M. R. (2001). Coping with rejection: Derogating those who choose us last. *Motivation and Emotion*, *25*, 01–111.
- Brown, B. B. (1990). Peer groups and peer cultures. In S. S. Feldman, & G. R. Elliott (Eds.), *At the threshold: The developing adolescent* (pp. 171-196). Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Bäck, E., & Bäck, H. (2014, September 3-6). *Why engage in collective action? The conditional effect of social support and incentives on protest activity*. Conference paper presented at the ECPR General Conference, Glasgow.
- Bäck, E. A., Bäck, H., & García-Albacete, G. M. (2013). Protest activity, social incentives, and rejection sensitivity: Results from a survey experiment about tuition fees. *Contention*, *1*, 1–15.
- Bäck, E. A., Bäck, H., & Knapton, H. M. (2015). Group belongingness and collective action: Effects of need to belong and rejection sensitivity on willingness to participate in protests activities. *Scandinavian Journal of Psychology*, *56*, 537–544.
- Bäck, H., Teorell, J., & Westholm, A. (2011). Explaining modes of participation. A dynamic test of alternative rational choice models. *Scandinavian Political Studies*, *34*, 74– 97.
- Cialdini R. B. & Goldstein, N. J. (2004). Social influence: Compliance and conformity. *Annu. Rev. Psychol*, *55*, 591–621.
- Dahl, V. (2014). *Breaking the law: Adolescents' involvement in illegal political activity*. (Doctoral dissertation, Örebro University). Retrieved from <https://www.oru.se/forskning/forskningsprojekt/fp/?rdb=p858>
- Dalton, R. J. (2004). *Democratic challenges, democratic choices: The erosion of political support in advanced industrial democracies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Della Porta, D., & Haupt, H-G (2012). Patterns of radicalization in political activism: An introduction. *Social Science History*, *36*(3): 311-320.
- Downey, G., & Feldman, S. (1996). The implications of rejection sensitivity for intimate relationships. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *70*, 1327-1343.
- Eisenberger, N. I., Lieberman, M. D., & Williams, K. D. (2003). Does rejection hurt? An fMRI study of social exclusion. *Science*, *302*, 290–92.



- Erlingsson, G. Ó., & Persson, M. (2014). Ingen partikris trots allt? [No party crisis after all?] In A. Bergström, & H. Oscarsson (Eds.), *Mittfåra & marginal*. Gothenburg: SOM-institutet.
- Finkel, S. E., Muller, E. N., & Opp, K-D. (1989). Personal influence, collective rationality, and mass political action. *The American Political Science Review*, 83, 885–903.
- Fischer, A. H., & Roseman, I. J. (2007). Beat them or ban them: The characteristics and social functions of anger and contempt. *J Pers Soc Psychol*, 93(1):103-15.
- Frijda, N. H., Peter K., & ter Schure, E. (1989). Relations among emotion, appraisal, and emotion action readiness. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, Vol 57(2), 212-228.
- Gangadharbatla, H. (2013). Facebook me: Collective self-esteem, need to belong, and Internet self-efficacy as predictors of the I-generation's attitudes toward social networking sites. *Journal of Interacting Advertising*, 8, 5–15.
- García-Albacete, G. M. (2011). *Continuity or generational change? A longitudinal study of young people's political participation in Western Europe*. (Doctoral dissertation). Mannheims universitet.
- Gardner, W. L., Pickett, C. L., & Brewer, M. B. (2006). Social exclusion and selective memory: How the need to belong influences memory for social events. *Society for Personality and Social Psychology*, 26(4), 486-496.
- Giddens, A. (1991) *Modernity and self-identity. Self and society in the late modern age*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Gonsalkorale, K., & Williams, K. D. (2006). The KKK won't let me play: Ostracism even by a despised outgroup hurts. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 37(6), 1176-1186.
- Gustafsson, N. (2013). *Leetocracy. Political participation, social network sites and inequality*. (Doctoral dissertation). Lund University.
- Hornsey, M. J., & Jetten, J. (2004). The individual within the group: Balancing the need to belong with the need to be different. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 8(3), 248-264.
- Hornsey, M. J., & Jetten, J. (2005). Loyalty without conformity: Tailoring self-perception as a means of balancing belonging and differentiation. *Self and Identity*, 4, 81–95.
- Inglehart, R. F. (1997). *Modernization and post-modernization: Cultural, economic, and political change in 43 societies*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Jackson, S. (2015, July 8). *Political extremism: A non-normative, comparative definition*. Conference paper presented at the CES Conference, Paris.

- Kelly, C. (1993). Group identification, intergroup perceptions and collective action. *European Review of Social Psychology*, 4(1), 59-83.
- Klandermans, B., & van Stekelenburg, J. (2013). Social movements and the dynamics of collective action. In L. Huddy, D. O. Sears, & J. S. Levy (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of political psychology*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Koudenburg, N., Postmes, T., & Gordijn, E. H. (2013). Resounding silences subtle norm regulation in everyday interactions. *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 76, 224–241.
- Kroger, J. (2004). *Identity in adolescence*. New York: Routledge.
- Lindberg, S. I., & Persson, M. (2013). *Ungas förhållande till demokratin*. [Younger people's attitude to democracy.] Sveriges Kommuner och Landsting.
- Leary, M. R., Kelly, K. M., Cottrell, C. A., & Schreindorfer, L. S. (2013). Construct validity of the need to belong scale: Mapping the nomological network. *J Pers Assess*, 95(6), 610-24.
- Loader, B. D., Vromen, A., & Xenos, M. A. (2014). The networked young citizen: social media, political participation and civic engagement. *Communication & Society*, 17(2), 143-150.
- London, B., Downey, G., Bonica, C., & Paltin, I. (2007). Social causes and consequences of rejection sensitivity. *Journal of Research on Adolescence*, 17(3), 481–506.
- Mackie, D. M., Devos, T., & Smith, E. R. (2000). Intergroup emotions: Explaining offensive action tendencies in an intergroup context. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*. 79(4), 602-616.
- Madrigal, A. (2012, October 2). Dark social: We have the whole history of the Web wrong, *The Atlantic*. Retrieved from [www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2012/10/dark-socialwe-have-the-whole-history-of-the-web-wrong/263523/](http://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2012/10/dark-socialwe-have-the-whole-history-of-the-web-wrong/263523/). (Downloaded 2017-01-10).
- McCauley, C., & Moskaleiko, S. (2008). Mechanisms of political radicalization: Pathways toward terrorism. *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 20(3), 415-433.
- McDowell, L., Rootham, E., & Hardgrove, A. (2014). Politics, anti-politics, quiescence and radical unpolitics: Young men's political participation in an 'ordinary' English town. *Journal of Youth Studies*, 17(1), 42-62.
- Micheletti, M. (2003). *Political virtue and shopping: Individuals, consumerism and collective action*. New York: Palgrave-Macmillan.
- Nadkarni, A., & Hofmann, S. G. (2011). Why do people use Facebook? *Personality and Individual Differences*, 52, 243–249.

- Nikolaeva, A. (2015, April 2). Den osynliga källan, [The invisible source.], *Gästbloggen, KIA-index*. Retrieved from [www.kiaindex.se/2015/04/02/gastbloggen-denosynliga-kallan/](http://www.kiaindex.se/2015/04/02/gastbloggen-denosynliga-kallan/) (Downloaded 2017-01-10).
- Norris, P. (2000). *A virtuous circle: Political communication in post-industrial societies*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Norris, P. (2002). *Democratic phoenix. Reinventing political activism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Olson, M. (1965). *The logic of collective action. Public goods and the theory of groups*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Oscarsson, H., & Persson, M. (2010). *Unga väljare i Sverige 1956–2006*. [Young voters in Sweden 1956–2006.] In D. Wohlgemuth (Ed.) *FOKUS10: En analys av ungas inflytande*. Stockholm: Ungdomsstyrelsen.
- Pickett, C. L., Gardner, W. L., & Knowles, M. (2004). Getting a cue: The need to belong and enhanced sensitivity to social cues. *Society for Personality and Social Psychology*, 30(9), 1095-1107.
- Pinizzotto, A. J., Davis, E. F., & Miller, C. E. (2007). Street-gang mentality: A mosaic of remorseless violence and relentless loyalty. *FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin*, 76(9), 1-7.
- Putnam, R. D. (2000). *Bowling alone: The collapse and revival of American community*. New York: Simon & Schuster.
- Riker, W., & Ordeshook, P. (1968). A theory of the calculus of voting. *American Political Science Review*, 62, 25–42.
- Robinson, J. S., Joel, S., & Plaks, J. E. (2015). Empathy for the group versus indifference to the victim. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 56, 139–152.
- Romero-Canyas, R., Downey, G., Reddy, K. S., Rodriguez, S., Cavanaugh, T. J., & Pelayo, R. (2010). Paying to belong: When does rejection lead to ingratiation? *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 99, 802-823.
- Rose, P., & Kim, JH. (2011). Self-monitoring, opinion leadership and opinion seeking: A sociomotivational approach. *Curr Psychol*, 30, 203–214.
- Sacco, D. F., Wirth, J. H., Hugenberg, K., Chen, Z., & Williams, K. D. (2011). The world in black and white: Ostracism enhances the categorical perception of social information. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 47(4), 836-842.
- Schachter, S. (1951). Deviation, rejection, and communication. *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, 46, 190-208.

- Seidman, G. (2012). Self-presentation and belonging on Facebook: How personality influences social media use and motivations. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 54, 402–407.
- Sennett, R. (1998). *The corrosion of character*. New York: W. W. Norton Company.
- Seo, H., Houston, J. B., Knight, L. A. T., Kennedy, E. J., & English, A. B. (2013). Teens' social media use and collective action. *New Media & Society*, 16(6), 883–902.
- Sloam, J. (2013). Voice and equality: Young people's politics in the European Union. *West European Politics*, 36, 836–858.
- Stretesky, P. B., & Pogrebin, M. R. (2007). Gang-related gun violence: Socialization, identity, and self. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 36, 85–114.
- SOU. (2015). *Låt fler forma framtiden! Bilaga till betänkande av 2014 års Demokratiutredning – Delaktighet och jämlikt inflytande*. [Let more people affect the future! Annex to deliberation of the Democracy report of 2014 – Participation and equal influence]. (Statens offentliga utredningar, 2015:96) Stockholm: Elanders Sverige AB.
- Sörbom, A., 2002. Vart tar politiken vägen?: om individualisering, reflexivitet och görbarhet i det politiska engagemanget. [Where is politics going?: about individualisation, reflexivity and doableness in the political engagement]. Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell International.
- Sörbom, A., & Wennerhag, M. (2011). Individualization, life politics, and the reformulation of social critique: An analysis of the global justice movement. *Critical Sociology* 39(3) 453–478.
- Tajfel, H., & Turner, J. C. (1979). An integrative theory of intergroup conflict. In W. G. Austin & S. Worchel (Eds.), *The social psychology of intergroup relations* (pp. 33–47). Monterey: Brooks/Cole.
- Tajfel, H., & Turner, J. C. (1986). The social identity theory of intergroup behavior. In S. Worchel & W. G. Austin (Eds.), *Psychology of Intergroup Relations* (pp.7–24). Chicago: NelsonHall.
- Tausch, N., Becker, J. C., Spears, R., Christ, O., Saab, R., & Singh, P. (2011). Explaining radical group behavior: Developing emotion and efficacy routes to normative and nonnormative collective action. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*. 101(1), 129–148.
- Teorell, J., & Westholm, A. (1999). Att bestämma sig för att vara med och bestämma: Om varför vi röstar – allt mindre. [Deciding to decide: About why we vote – less]. In E.

- Amnå (Ed.) *Valdeltagande i förändring. Demokratiutredningens forskarvolym 12*. SOU 1999:132. Stockholm: Justitiedepartementet.
- Thorson, K. (2014). Facing an uncertain reception: Young citizens and political interaction on Facebook. *Information, Communication & Society*, 17(2), 203-216.
- Tulloch, G. (1971). The cost of transfers. *Kyklos*, 24(4), 629-43.
- Twenge, J. M., Baumeister, R. F., Tice, D. M., & Stucke, T. S. (2001). If you can't join them, beat them: Effects of social exclusion on aggressive behaviour. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 81(6), 1058.
- Vanbeselaere, N., Boen, F., Smeesters, D. & Leuven, K. U. (2003). Tokenism also works with groups as tokens: The impact of group openness and group qualification on reactions to membership in a low-status group. *Group Dynamics: Theory, Research, and Practice*, 7(2), 104–121.
- Vissers, S. & Stolle, D. (2013) The Internet and new modes of political participation: Online versus offline participation. *Information, Communication & Society*, 17(8), 937-955.
- Watts, M. W. (1999). Are there typical age curves in political behavior? The “age invariance” hypothesis and political socialization. *Political Psychology*, 20, 477–499.
- Wennerhag, M. (2012). Demonstrerandets normalisering? [The normalisation of demonstrating?]. In L. Weibull, H. Oscarsson & A. Bergström (Eds.) *I framtidens skugga*. Göteborg: SOM-institutet.
- Williams, K. D. (2007). Ostracism. *Psychology*, 58(1), 425.
- Williams, K. D., & Zadro, L. (2005) Ostracism: The indiscriminate early detection system. In K. D. Williams, J. P. Forgas, & W. von Hippel (Eds.), *The social outcast: Ostracism, social exclusion, rejection, and bullying* (pp. 19–34). New York: Psychology Press.
- Wright S. C., Taylor, D. M., & Moghaddam, F. M. (1990). Responding to membership in a disadvantaged group: From acceptance to collective protest. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 58(6), 994-1003.
- van Zomeren, M., Spears, M., Hischer, A. H., & Leach, C. W. (2004). Put your money where your mouth is! Explaining collective action tendencies through group-based anger and group efficacy. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 87(5), 649–664.
- Zubok, I. A., & Chuprova, V. I. (2011). Self-organization in the manifestations of youth extremism. *Russian education and society*. 53(2), pp. 26–48.

## Appendices

### Appendix 1: The Need to Belong Scale (NTBS)

26. Här följer några påståenden om hur du ser på dig själv i relation till andra. Det finns inte några rätt eller fel svar utan vi vill veta hur du upplever det.

Skattas på Stämmer helt och hållet (5) till Stämmer inte alls (1)

1. Om andra människor inte verkar acceptera mig, låter jag mig inte störas av det.
2. Jag oroar mig sällan över om andra människor bryr sig om mig.
3. Jag behöver känna att det finns människor jag kan vända mig till i svåra stunder.
4. Jag vill att andra människor ska acceptera mig.
5. Jag tycker inte om att vara ensam.
6. Att vara ifrån mina vänner under långa tidsperioder stör mig inte.
7. Jag har ett stort behov av att "höra till".
8. Det stör mig mycket när jag inte blir inkluderad i andra människors planer.
9. Jag blir lätt sårad när jag känner att andra inte accepterar mig.
10. Jag försöker att inte göra saker som kan få andra människor att undvika eller avvisa mig.

## Appendix 2: The Rejection Sensitivity Questionnaire (RSQ)

27. Nedan beskrivs ett antal situationer där man frågar andra om hjälp eller dylikt. Försök sätta dig in i dessa situationer. Hur skulle du uppleva följande situationer?

Svaret på A skattas Mycket sannolikt (6) till Inte alls sannolikt (1). Svaret på B skattas Mycket orolig (6) till Inte alls orolig (1) för varje situation.

1. Du närmar dig en vän för att prata efter ha gjort eller sagt något som kan ha upprört hen väldigt mycket.

A. Hur sannolikt tror du det är att din vän skulle vilja prata med dig?

B. Hur orolig skulle du vara över huruvida din vän skulle vilja prata med dig?

2. Du har blivit arbetslös och du frågar dina närmaste om du kan bo hos dem ett tag.

A. Hur sannolikt tror du det är att dina närmaste skulle låta dig bo hos dem?

B. Hur orolig skulle du vara över huruvida dina närmaste skulle låta dig bo hos dem?

3. Du ringer din partner efter ett stort bråk och säger till hen att du vill träffas (om du inte har en partner för tillfället, föreställ dig att du hade det).

A. Hur sannolikt tror du att det skulle vara att din partner skulle vilja träffas?

B. Hur orolig skulle du vara över huruvida din partner skulle vilja träffas?

4. Du har dåligt med pengar och du frågar dina närmaste (t ex familj, nära vänner) om du kan få låna pengar av dem för att betala din hyra eller en annan viktig utgift.

A. Hur sannolikt tror du det är att dina närmaste skulle låna dig pengar?

B. Hur orolig skulle du vara över huruvida dina närmaste skulle låna dig pengar?

5. Du ber dina närmaste (t ex familj, nära vänner) att komma till ett tillfälle som är viktigt för dig.

A. Hur sannolikt tror du det är att de skulle komma?

B. Hur orolig skulle du vara huruvida de skulle komma?

6. Du ber en nära vän att göra dig en stor tjänst.

A. Hur sannolikt tror du det är att hen skulle göra dig denna tjänst?

B. Hur orolig skulle du vara huruvida hen skulle göra dig denna tjänst?

7. Du frågar din partner om hen älskar dig (om du inte har en partner för tillfället, föreställ dig att du hade det)

A. Hur sannolikt tror du det är att hen skulle säga ja?

B. Hur orolig skulle du vara över huruvida hen skulle säga ja?

8. Du är på en social tillställning (t ex fest) och känner ingen annan, men bestämmer dig för att börja prata med en person som står i närheten av dig.

A. Hur sannolikt tror du det är att hen skulle vilja prata med dig?

B. Hur orolig skulle du vara över huruvida hen skulle vilja prata med dig?



### Appendix 3: Questions and items regarding political participation

16. Det finns olika sätt att söka åstadkomma förbättringar eller motverka försämringar i samhället. Har du under de senaste 12 månaderna gjort något av följande?

1. Ja, inom 12 månader
2. Ja, men för längre än 12 månader sedan
3. Nej, har inte gjort men kan tänka mig att göra
4. Nej, har inte gjort och kan inte tänka mig att göra

1. Skrivit under en namnlista
2. Arbetat i politiskt parti
3. Arbetat i aktionsgrupp
4. Arbetat i annan organisation
5. Arbetat i ett nätverk eller på egen hand
6. Samlat in namnunderskrifter
7. Deltagit i kampanjarbete på gator och torg eller genom att knacka dörr
8. Satt på dig band, märke eller annan symbol
9. Delat ut flygblad med politiskt innehåll
10. Kontaktat en politiker eller tjänsteman
11. Skänkt pengar direkt eller via en organisation
12. Bojkottat eller köpt en viss produkt
13. Skrivit politiska budskap eller målat graffiti på väggar
14. Deltagit i en laglig demonstration eller strejk
15. Deltagit olaglig aktion/demonstration eller ockupation
16. Skrivit en artikel eller en insändare i en tidning eller på en blogg
17. Deltagit i en politisk aktivitet då egendom förstördes