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Six Factors Fostering Protest: Predicting Participation in Locally Unwanted Land Uses Movements

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In two studies we analyzed the predictors of participation in an Italian Lulu mobilization, rooted in the Susa Valley, a North-Western Italian valley where a high speed railway (HSR) should be sited. Based on the data of qualitative Study 1, performed interviewing 12 anti-HSR militants and 12 non anti-HSR militants, we hypothesized that Klandermans' (1997) model on participation (centered on group identification, sense of injustice, and collective efficacy) is suitable to predict the Lulu mobilization we studied, and that three contextual variables (community involvement, the perception of the existence of a vast majority in the community favoring the mobilization, and place attachment) may be added to Klandermans' to predict such a mobilization. We formally tested such hypotheses in quantitative Study 2 (representative sample of the people living in the Susa Valley, N = 250). Results supported the role of Klandermans' (1997) variables and confirmed the influence exerted by our contextual variables, thus suggesting that an integration of the two models would be fruitful in the analysis of Lulu mobilizations. Limits and future developments of this research are discussed.

KEY WORDS: Collective action, Political protest, Social movements, Locally unwanted land uses

The involvement of citizens in social movements and social action groups has considerable implications for the life of people and communities, both at the social and political level. In the last three decades the spread of the so-called “unconventional participation” increased, and protest repertoires emerged as one of the most visible and effective tools for social change. Studies in collective action, and specifically in protest behaviors, have been used to approach the subject according to two major standpoints, which may be labeled as the structural and the cultural perspective (Giugni, 1998).

The structural perspective emphasizes the influence of the external environment on the emergence and the development of social movements, mainly focus-

ing on two aspects. On the one hand, the role of organizations and informal networks in mobilizing individuals and making them available to collective action (McCarthy, 1996; McCarthy & Zald, 1973); on the other hand, the specific features of a political system that can explain different action repertoires and enhance or inhibit the development of social movements (McAdam, 1996; Tarrow, 1994). The cultural perspective strives to acknowledge the role of sociocognitive processes in the development of social movements, identifying in new *grievances* the primary impulse to the birth of social movements, intended as new social actors fighting to impose their values and vision (Melucci, 1985, 1989). The acknowledgement that movements involve issues of social norms and identity, and that collective actors strive to create group identities and counter culture, is crucial to this perspective (Gamson, Fireman, & Rytina, 1982; Johnston & Klandermans, 1995; Melucci, 1996; Snow, Burke Rochford, Worden, & Benford, 1986). As Melucci (1985) put it, movements are societal constructs designed to facilitate the development of new political ideals. Even if the adjective “cultural” emphasizes the symbolic aspect of collective narratives, the shift of perspective undergone in recent years by social movement studies is due to the incorporation of the social psychological processes into collective action.

Recently developed approaches try to explain collective action using both individual and social variables, considered as reciprocally linked in circular relationships. According to Giugni (1998), such approaches share the basic idea that categorization and attribution processes, all favoring or hampering involvement in social action, depend both on individual and cultural variables. Whereas the former exert their influence through attitudes, values, and beliefs, the latter make information, action repertoires, and instruments available to create and manipulate symbols and communication, thus enabling the construction of shared identities (Gamson, 1992).

For the scope of our paper the psychopolitical approach developed by Klandermans (1997) is particularly fruitful. Klandermans (1997) proposed that collective identity, sense of injustice, and collective efficacy (agency) represent the key elements of a collective action frame, i.e., of a cognitive frame, composed of beliefs, attitudes, and representations, which defines the collective mental set in which participation is socially created. The construction of collec-

tive beliefs, meant as the first step for the transformation of discontent into collective action and the formation and maintenance of commitment to a movement, springs from an interactive process through which information available in the media system, in personal experiences, and in common sense is processed and interpreted. Individual dispositions (e.g., reflexivity, commitment, and knowledge) and cultural *topoi* influence decisions about the reliability of sources and how to process information. When this operation makes injustice, identity, and agency frames become salient, then a collective action structure usually takes shape. A recent meta-analysis performed by Van Zomeren, Postmes, and Spears (2008) confirmed the efficacy of such variables in predicting collective action.

Collective identity was regarded in recent years as one of the crucial determinants of social action. As Klandermans stated (1997), “acting collectively requires some collective identity or consciousness” (p. 41), stemming from the collectively defined grievances that produce a “we” feeling and causal attributions that identify a “they.” According to the social identity and social categorization theories (Tajfel, 1978, 1981; Tajfel & Turner, 1979), which are the main frameworks to whom all the mentioned studies can be traced back, group membership promotes collective action because being part of a group entails intergroup social comparisons. Identification with a group seems to play a major role in fostering involvement in collective action when social identity is salient and important. On the contrary, when personal identity is salient, individuals are likely to follow a cost-benefit pattern (Stürmer & Simon, 2004).

Sense of injustice stems from the moral disdain for being wronged and entails a cognitive process through which the responsibility for injustice is attributed to an alleged perpetrator (Mikula, 2003). As showed by Klandermans (1997), feelings of injustice may arise from a perception of illegitimate inequality, but also from suddenly imposed grievances and the belief that moral principles have been violated. They are typically associated with anger, when the actor responsible for the injustice can be identified (Major, 1994), or hopelessness and fear, when the causes are impersonal or out of control (Klandermans, 1997). According to Tyler’s (1994) integrated model based on the tripartition of distributive, procedural, and interactive justice, groups can complain either about an unfair distribution of resources, the procedures through which the allocation of goods is accomplished, or the quality of their relationship with the opponents. All three components are affected by group values and ingroup-outgroup relationships, which serve as heuristics members can use to evaluate the fairness or unfairness of events (Ellemers, Van Knippenberg, De Vries, & Wilke, 1988).

Finally, collective efficacy (or agency), which can be traced back to Bandura’s (1977) concept of self-efficacy, refers to the feeling of being able to influence politics through collective action. In Klandermans’ (1997) view, agency concerns the perceived opportunities and the belief that collective action is a potentially

successful influence strategy. For this reason, he claims that a sense of efficacy must develop for people to become involved in collective action, whereas feelings of helplessness will discourage participatory behaviors. Hornsey and colleagues (2006) argued that definitions of efficacy should include not only influence on decision makers and achievement of desired goals, but also fulfillment of intra-group and broader societal needs. Beyond instrumental motives, collective action can be successful in increasing cohesiveness among protesters, building opinion movement, and also expressing values. As high levels of individual efficacy increase the probability of undertaking social and/or political action (Hornsey et al., 2006; Niemi, Craig, & Mattei, 1991; Van Zomeren, Spears, Fischer, & Leach, 2004), so does collective efficacy, which refers to group agency.

Klandermans' (1997) model was widely used to explain many different forms of social action, ranging from participation in trade unions (Kelly & Kelly, 1994; Veenstra & Haslam, 2000), political groups (Brewer & Silver, 2000; Kelly & Breinlinger, 1996; Klandermans, 2000, 2002; Klandermans, Sabucedo, Rodrigues, & de Weerd, 2002; Liss, Crawford, & Popp, 2004), and social movements (Gamson, 1992; Haenfler, 2004; Simon et al., 1998; Stryker, Owens, & White, 2000). However, it was not used to study an increasingly spreading form of mobilization, typically arising in restricted geographical areas, to oppose the siting of both installations such as nuclear stations, incinerators, or transport infrastructures, and services for stigmatized groups such as HIV or mentally ill patients (Gordon & Jaspers, 1996). In the literature and in the mass media such mobilizations are often labeled as NIMBY—Not In My Back Yard (Dear, 1992). However, we preferred to label them as LULU—Locally Unwanted Land Uses—(Freudenberg & Pastor, 1992); as in empirical research, the postulates of particularism and irrationality of such movements underlying the use of the NIMBY label are systematically not confirmed (see for instance Gibson, 2005; McAvoy, 1998).

At present, these new forms of political participation are often conceived as important resources for the Western democracies, since they may be considered as forms of grassroots mobilization, often based on postmaterialistic values, aimed at defending the quality of life in disadvantaged or threatened communities (Gould, Schnaiberg, & Weinberg, 1996). Compared to other forms of collective action, LULU movements have two distinctive features. On the one hand, they are locally based; that is to say they develop in a specific geographical area and address issues concerning that area and its residents. This characteristic plausibly makes the concept of “community”—both in the territorial and in the relational level—particularly salient for participants. On the other hand, they are usually heterogeneous in their composition, gathering together ordinary citizens at their first experience of protest, people who are already involved in social action groups, and local representatives. Because of these traits, it seems that studying LULU movements might innovate on available knowledge on collective action processes.

Goals

This article was aimed at answering two questions: Is Klandermans' (1997) model useful in predicting participation in LULU mobilizations? And are there other variables useful to predict them? To try to answer these questions, we performed two studies. In qualitative Study 1 we adopted an exploratory approach, trying to identify factors enhancing the decision of individuals to become activists in the LULU movement we studied. Study 2, based on a confirmatory, quantitative approach, is aimed at testing whether factors that emerged in Study 1 actually serve as determinants of LULU mobilizations, by comparing Klandermans' (1997) model (focused on group identification, sense of injustice, and collective efficacy) with a situated model including community involvement, the perception of the existence of a vast majority antiplan in the community, and place attachment.

Both the studies were conducted on members and nonmembers of a protest movement against the construction of a high-speed railway (henceforth HSR) in the Susa Valley, near Turin, North-Western Italy. Although similar to other LULU conflicts, we chose the anti-HSR mobilization because of its very high and unusual levels of citizen participation. A brief description of the circumstances in which the movement arose follows. HSR is an infrastructural intervention funded by the European Commission, intended to link on the one hand the Western and the Eastern parts of the continent, and on the other hand the Northern and the Southern ones. Some of the railroad works have already been completed, while others are under construction or are still to begin, as in the Susa Valley, which is supposed to be crossed by the line connecting Turin to Lyon, in France. In this geographical area, grouping 37 villages for a total population of about 75,000 residents, a protest movement against the HSR developed in the early 1990s, gaining momentum in the last two months of 2005, when the Italian Government tried to make the works begin: Local residents impeded the digging, and clashes with the police occurred. Reasons for protesting can be traced back to three main points: environmental and health concerns (fear of territorial ravage, water layers, and atmospheric pollution; dangerous amounts of asbestos and uranium in the mountains that should be pierced) (Mannarini, Bonomelli, & Caruso, 2008) and a democracy concern (no involvement of local communities in the decision process; Fedi, Rovere, & Lana, 2008). At the end of 2006, 62.7% of the Susa Valley residents were against the construction of the new high-speed railroad, and 48.0% had taken part in protest activities in the prior 12 months (Campana, Dallago, & Roccato, 2007).

Study 1 was performed between May 2006 and January 2007 and Study 2 in May 2007. During this period railroad works were stopped as a result of protest, and the Italian government started a negotiation process with the Susa Valley community.

Study 1

Goals

This exploratory study had two goals. On the one hand, it aimed at understanding whether factors that Klandermans (1997) showed to be important in promoting and sustaining involvement in collective action are as relevant for the LULU case we studied as they are for other forms of participation. On the other hand, we wanted to understand whether additional factors emerged, facilitating the rise of protest behaviors against unwanted uses of territory. We expected these factors to be linked to the specificities of the LULU movements, i.e., the central role played by the local community and the heterogeneity of their components. In order to answer our research questions, we based our investigation on qualitative methods, so as to draw information from the participants' discourse.

Method

Participants

We interviewed 24 residents in the Susa Valley (men = 14; average age = 46.95 years; $SD = 15.07$). Twelve of them were active members of the anti-HSR movement; among them seven had been involved in the past in political groups (such as parties, radical movements, and feminist groups), environmental associations, and civic or religious organizations. For the other five, the anti-HSR protest constituted the first mobilization experience in their life. The remaining 12 interviewees had not taken part in the anti-HSR mobilization. Fifteen of the interviewees were personally contacted during manifestations or public meetings, while nine were selected through a snow-ball procedure.

Interview Plan

The interviews were intended to explore the following topics: (a) one's own personal position towards the HSR project; (b) representations of the site chosen for the installation (the Susa Valley); (c) reasons for protesting or not protesting; (d) factors which facilitated or inhibited their involvement in the protest; and (e) representations and feelings towards the actors involved in the conflict (ingroups and outgroups). Participants were interviewed at their home or in public places. On the average, each interview took about one hour.

Analyses

Interviews were tape recorded with the permission of interviewees, successively transcribed, and merged into a single text, which underwent a three-step

content analysis. Initially, members of the research team read and codified the interviews separately, labeling segments of text according to a data-driven approach, and providing definitions of each of the codes assigned. Successively, the different lists of codes were compared and discussed, and a new, definitive list was elaborated (see Appendix A). Thirteen categories were created: individual motives for participating, arguments for opposing the unwanted installation, representations of the unwanted installation, empowering processes, relationship with places, interpersonal relationships, internal conflict, ingroup-outgroup relationships, organization, characteristics of protesters, evolution of the protest movement over time, attitudes towards the protest movement, and outcomes of protest. This list was used to code the interviews by means of the Atlas.Ti software (Muhr, 1997). Through a retrieving procedure, we were able to group, for each category and related variables, all the matching texts.

Results

Collective Identity and Identification with the Movement

As far as the anti-HSR movement (henceforth movement) identity was concerned, our activists' discourse highlighted two main sources of identity, one derived from the characteristics of the ingroup, and the other one derived from the opposition to the outgroup, experienced as "the enemy." According to its members, the movement built a collective identity stressing the resources coming from internal differences and using external events (i.e., conflicts) both to stigmatize the outgroup members and to strengthen the ingroup identity. From the standpoint of nonprotesters these internal differences were not framed as resources, but almost as the movement's shallow tendencies, which were rather undesirable: "[Movement is made up of] residents of course, but also of No-global activists, squatters. . . . Protest is made in general terms. . . . Why do anarchists from Rome protest against the HSR? What do they know about the Valley?" (16, M, A, NP).¹ For our activists, on the contrary, group identification emerged as a valuable process motivating individuals in mobilizing against the HSR project. Once in the movement, members' social identity grew stronger and stronger as they intensified interactions, shared positive and negative events, and created common symbols. As one of the movement leaders said, "there's a deep solidarity [inside the movement], which is not something derived from having been in a party. . . . There's a real pleasure in being together" (10, M, A, P).

¹ Each quotation is followed by initials referring to the main characteristics of interviewees: gender (M = man; W = woman), age (Y = young—18–30 years; A = adult—31–65 years; S = senior—over 65 years), and being or not being a member of the protest movement (P = participant in the anti-HSR movement; NP = nonparticipant in the movement).

Collective Efficacy

Differences in perceived collective efficacy seemed to distinguish protesters from nonprotesters, with some of the latter showing signs of learned helplessness: “If they affirm that they’ll build it, they’ll do it! If they have decided, it doesn’t matter what this movement does or says” (4, W, A, NP). On the contrary, among our protesters a sense of efficacy stood out as one of the prominent perceptions. On the one hand, efficacy was linked to the achievement of desired results, and, on the other hand, efficacy emerged as the capacity of creating consensus, expressing values, and increasing individual technical, social, and political competencies. Signs that the mentioned skills were strengthened emerged, for example, from the following quotations about the development of social skills: “It was unbelievable to see young anarchists fighting against the police along with elderly people. . . . It really happened, they were fighting together on the barricades” (3, W, A, P). As far as the political skills were concerned, our interviewees stated that “Now there are lot of people attending many political decision meetings, they are well informed and able to confute every argument” (9, M, A, P). Finally, increased technical skills were reported from interviewees: “I couldn’t ever dream of using some kind of words, or knowing how a high speed railroad works. . . . From this standpoint it was a sort of self-improvement” (18, M, S, P).

Sense of Injustice

Besides collective identity and perceived group efficacy, sense of injustice was often reported in our interviewees’ discourse. Activists were likely to frame protest as a reaction to the decision of siting the HSR infrastructure in the Valley, which was perceived as unfair and antidemocratic: “Democracy was at stake. That’s why solidarity strengthened!” (3, W, A, P). The police violent behaviors against peaceful and harmless citizens, in particular, were considered as highly condemnable by nonactivists also. One of them declared: “They were wicked . . . beating people up. . . . Unbelievable! But how can you club those people? What a cheek!” (22, M, Y, NP). Protesters’ judgments mainly revolved around three issues: (a) distributive issues, related to the costs and benefits of the HSR projects; (b) procedural issues, concerning the decision-making process which resulted in the siting of the new railroad; and (c) interpersonal issues, related to the way authority had treated residents. At all the mentioned levels, our activists reported sharp feelings of been wronged. If relational and procedural injustice judgments emerged also from the discourse of nonactivists, in this case what appears to distinguish them from activists had to do with distributive issues. Nonactivists framed HSR more as an opportunity or a benefit rather than an unfavorable or unjust event: “This railway is important. . . . I think there will be ten or twenty thousand people working in the Valley thanks to HSR. . . . It could be important for the economy of the Valley” (23, W, Y, NP).

content analysis. Initially, members of the research team read and codified the important for mobilizing people against the HSR project.

Social Embeddedness

In describing the path they followed in joining the movement, our activists reported that a large number of people they knew in the community, such as relatives, friends, and acquaintances, were already involved in the mobilization. Informal and formal social networks constituted a channel for spreading information and drawing attention to the issue at stake. As a movement member stated, “I’ve been following the political debate on the HSR since the very beginning because my father was a local administrator [in the Susa Valley]” (1, M, Y, P). Eleven out of twelve of our activists declared that they became interested in the issue, and then decided to become active protesters, because someone they were in direct contact with was part of the protest movement, or at least had elaborated a clear position against the HSR. On the contrary, nonactivists appeared less integrated into community networks: “My family and I are quite unconnected with the social life of the village; we don’t have real friendship or close affective bonds here” (21, W, Y, NP). Besides informal networks, community organizations were also mentioned as a valuable channel driving citizens to protest: “Many groups are currently active in the community, and are engaged in several [anti-HSR] activities” (17, M, A, P).

Social Pressure Exerted by the Majority

As suggested by our activists, social networks exerted an influence on their decision to become protesters. Participants acknowledged that they were unintentionally urged to take a stand against the HSR and discouraged from assuming and expressing different opinions. To put it in different terms, the general perception that the majority of the residents was against the HSR seemed to result in a pressure to conform to the majority position, and turned the protest behavior into the most desirable behavior citizens could adopt. Several activists, when asked to think of the reasons why pro-HSR attitudes did not emerge in the community, stated that it happened “because the majority is against the HSR!” (13, M, S, P). If our activists minimized the negative implications of conformism and framed it mostly as social support, from the standpoint of nonactivists social support/conformism became a “widespread fundamentalism” among protesters, “the feeling of absolutely being on the right side” (20, M, A, NP). Explicit punishments, physical but above all social, were also mentioned as persuasion strategies towards outsiders: “You can’t say you’re in favor of the HSR without being punched!” (15, W, A, NP).

Place Attachment

Finally, relationships with place—the Susa Valley—stood out as one of the most important factors facilitating residents' involvement in the protest. Place attachment emerged as a shared feeling among participants, as shown by excerpts like the following: "It's my Valley, and I'm afraid I might not have a future in here" (2, W, A, P). Activists' attachment to the Valley appeared to be well-known to nonprotesters, as one of them stated: "Activists are very attached to their place. . . . Their protest is closely tied to environment; they say they are destroying the Valley!" (4, W, A, NP). Contrary to our activists, our nonprotesters depicted the Valley as characterized by decline and decay: "There are no more people feeling strong attachment to this place. . . . The Valley is depopulated and impoverished" (24, W, S, NP).

Discussion

Our results provided qualitative information partially supporting the value of Klandermans' (1997) model in explaining the LULU mobilization we studied. Indeed, as can be assumed according to Klandermans (1997), our participants' discourse highlighted that in the conflict going on in the Susa Valley collective identity, perceived group efficacy, and sense of injustice did play a role in mobilizing people against the HSR. At the same time, our findings were partly at odds with his model, since three more key factors emerged, which were not included in Klandermans' (1997) theory.

Through the analysis of our activists' discourse we were able to trace collective identity back to the ingroup-outgroup dynamics, as stated by social identity and social categorization theory (Tajfel, 1978, 1981; Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Confrontation with the adversary led the movement's members to feel more united and strengthened perceived internal similarities. New perspectives were developed, and new symbols created, which contributed to define the movement's public image, with its distinctive characteristics. Social identity seemed to become more and more salient for individuals as the level of conflict increased, thereby fostering involvement in collective action.

Collective efficacy, or group agency, also emerged as a significant factor motivating the persistence of mobilization. Results suggested that whereas protesters believed that their mobilization would contribute to stop the construction of the new railroad, and this belief served as a reason to join the movement, people not involved in the protest showed higher degrees of hopelessness, feeling that nothing they could do would make any difference. Furthermore, it was clear in our activists' discourse that a sense of efficacy included different domains: not only did it refer to the possibility of influencing policies and the achievement of the expected goals, but also to the possibility of satisfying the groups' needs, expressing shared values and views. Thus a broader concept of efficacy emerged,

encompassing both the instrumental and the expressive motives (Hornsey et al., 2006).

A sense of injustice appeared as one of the most powerful levers used by citizens to rally and raise their voice. The decision of siting the new railroad in the Susa Valley seemed to be judged not only as an unfavorable event, but above all as a piece of unfairness, thus increasing the movement's internal cohesion, motivating uninvolved people, and helping protesters reframe their motivations and arguments. Besides procedural unfairness (Van Zomeren et al., 2004), interactional injustice, based on the quality of the relationship with decision makers, played an important role in fostering feelings of collective anger and discontent, fueling the protest (Wolsink, 2000, 2006).

Nevertheless, in addition to the above-mentioned variables, other factors underlying mobilization emerged from the study, which seemed crucial in activating the Susa Valley LULU conflict: (a) the role of social networks, (b) the dynamics of social influence, and (c) the psychological ties to the Valley. The role of networks in the emergence of social movements has been deeply examined by *resource mobilization* theorists (McCarthy, 1996; McCarthy & Zald, 1973), who claimed that the position individuals hold in social networks increases or decreases the probability to be acquainted with activists, who serve as recruitment channels (Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995). More recently informal networks have been acknowledged to contribute to the decision of being committed to social action (Passy & Giugni, 2000, 2001). Moreover, trust circulating in interpersonal relationships is supposed to facilitate the decision of becoming an activist by reducing the perceived costs of involvement (Benson & Rochon, 2004) and providing social support. Especially when mobilization occurs in circumscribed local communities, being embedded in social networks is potentially equivalent to being socially integrated in the community, a condition which entails accessing material, relational, and symbolic resources.

Small communities can indeed be conceptualized as networks of networks. On the whole, it seems there is a sound theoretical basis for considering formal and informal social ties as a factor facilitating involvement in collective action. It is also apparent that networks can influence behaviors in different directions and for different purposes. They can press individuals to adopt desirable behaviors and to discard undesirable ones. As social movements express values, norms, and vision that are not shared by the society at large, they are supposed to represent a minority view (Moscovici, 1976). Due to the minority status, protest behaviors are generally perceived by the vast majority of individuals as socially undesirable, and undesirability is one of the costs that is to be paid by people who decide to become involved in collective action. Nevertheless, social networks can turn protest into a desirable behavior, to the extent informal relationships are able to overcome the psychological resistance individuals meet, and to appeal to their need for inclusion and approval. To put it in different terms, networks can put pressure on individuals to take a stand, and in doing so

they can push people to adopt the opinion which is shared by the network's majority members.

Finally, the hypothesis that psychological ties linking individuals to places (i.e., place attachment) can affect the decision of being involved in collective action—especially when the mobilization issue concerns the population settled in a restricted geographical area—needs more clarification. Lewicka (2005) showed that place attachment plays a role in enhancing specific forms of participation, though the relation remains unclear. Stedman (2002) pointed out that participation aimed at defending local communities can be associated with high levels of place attachment in the condition that individuals experience threatening events or perceive extreme environment decay. In more general terms, there is a general consensus that the meanings individuals assign to their environment influence the perception of risks they might be exposed to (Vorkinn & Riese, 2001), and therefore the decision of being involved in collective action. Although we are aware that reference to locality does play a role in shaping identity, and that it is difficult to disentangle one from the other, the above-mentioned studies on the relationships between place attachment and collective action suggested that the feelings experienced by the individuals about their area of residence could be considered separately from place identity. In this sense, and in a more general perspective, feelings attached to place could also be conceived—together with the shared grievance associated with a sense of injustice—as a correlate of broader emotional dimensions promoting collective behaviors (Mackie, Devos, & Smith, 2000; Van Zomeren et al., 2004).

Based on the consideration set forth above, the results of Study 1 suggested that, at least in the LULU conflict we investigated, six factors are likely to predict protest behaviors: collective identity, collective efficacy, sense of injustice, community involvement, the perception of being surrounded by a majority who is against the unwanted installation, and place attachment. We tried to quantify the impact of all the above-mentioned variables on the probability of being involved in collective action in quantitative Study 2.

Study 2

Goals

Study 2 aimed at formally testing the hypotheses we derived from Study 1.

On the one hand, relying on Klandermans' (1997) findings, we hypothesized the probability of participating in the LULU mobilization we studied to be positively influenced by collective identity (H1.1), sense of injustice (H1.2), and collective efficacy (H1.3). On the other hand, according to our Study 1 we hypothesized such probability to be positively influenced by community involvement (H2.1), perception of a vast anti-HSR majority in the Valley (H2.2), and place attachment (H2.3).

However, even if all these hypotheses were to be verified, this would not show that the second pool of independent variables did actually add predictive power to Klandermans' (1997) model. Indeed, it would be useful to add them only if they exerted a significant influence on the probability of being an anti-HSR activist *net* of the impact of collective identity, sense of injustice, and collective efficacy. The qualitative data of Study 1 did not enable us to derive a precise hypothesis about this impact; therefore, after testing our six hypotheses, we explored the possibility that community involvement, perception of a vast anti-HSR majority in the Valley, and place attachment added a significant contribution on our dependent variable to that of collective identity, sense of injustice, and collective efficacy.

Method

Participants and Procedure

Two hundred and fifty residents in the Susa Valley (quota of men = 49.1%, mean age = 51.96, $SD = 16.56$) were administered a CATI questionnaire aimed at assessing the data useful to test our hypotheses; the sample was representative of the population living in the Susa Valley according to gender, age, education, and area of residence in the Valley. The variables we assessed are displayed in Appendix B. To empirically test our hypotheses we performed three logistic regressions. In the first one we used collective identity, sense of injustice, and collective efficacy to predict participation, while in the second regression we used community involvement, perception of a vast anti-HSR majority in the Valley, and place attachment as predictors. The last regression was a hierarchic model, predicting participation using the former three variables at step 1, the latter three variables at step 2, and all the interactions among them at step 3. We chose to perform a hierarchic logistic regression as we wanted to understand if adding the second group of variables to the first one would have significantly improved the fit of our model.²

Results

As a whole, 83 people (i.e., 33.2% of our interviewees) declared to have taken part in actions (e.g., public demonstrations, petitions, public meetings) against the HSR in the 12 months previous to our survey. Table 1 shows the results of our logistic regressions aimed at predicting the probability of being an anti-HSR activist. The first three columns of the table show that collective identity, collective efficacy, and, above all, sense of injustice positively influenced the probability of being an anti-HSR participant. Thus, our H1.1, H1.2, and H1.3 were verified.

² Parallel analyses adding the main sociodemographic variables (gender, age, years of formal education, number of sons and/or daughters living in the family, family situation, and work status) brought similar results. Based on Achen (1992), we chose to present the models without the sociodemographic variables. Readers interested in examining them may ask the corresponding author.

Table 1. Logistic Regression Analysis of Factors Influencing Participation in Protest against the HSR Project

Independent variable	Model 1			Model 2			Model 3		
	B	S.E.	Exp(B)	B	S.E.	Exp(B)	B	S.E.	Exp(B)
Collective identity	.331*	.136	1.393				.328*	.146	1.388
Sense of injustice	1.358***	.283	3.887				1.518***	.320	4.563
Collective efficacy	.325*	.148	1.384				.319*	.158	1.376
Formal community involvement				.499***	.149	1.647	.650***	.203	1.915
Informal community involvement				.445**	.152	1.560	.242	.196	1.274
Perception of a vast anti-HSR majority in the Valley				.874**	.305	2.397	-2.95	.407	.744
Place attachment				.206*	.096	1.228	.047	.120	1.048
Constant	-6.542***	1.121	.001	-3.227***	.974	.040	-7.539***	1.666	.0001
Nagelkerke's Pseudo- R^2		.580			.235			.625	

*** $p < .001$ ** $p < .01$ * $p < .05$

The next three columns of Table 1 show that when we used community involvement, perception of an anti-HSR majority, and place attachment to predict participation, perception of a vast anti-HSR majority in the Valley was participation's main predictor, followed by formal and informal community involvement and by place attachment. However, the fit of such a second model was lower than that of the first one. The last three columns of Table 1 show the results of a hierarchic logistic regression aimed at predicting participation entering collective identity, sense of injustice, and collective efficacy at step 1, and community involvement, perception of an anti-HSR majority, and place attachment at step 2. The variables entered at step 1 (above all sense of injustice) exerted the strongest influence on the dependent variable: Other conditions being equal, people experiencing a strong sense of injustice who participated in the anti-HSR movement were nearly five times more frequent than those who did not participate. In other words, using gambling jargon, if we know that a person living in the Susa Valley experienced a strong sense of injustice, we can bet nearly 5 to 1 that he or she would participate in the anti-HSR movement. Among the remaining variables, formal community involvement confirmed its significant influence on the probability of participating in the anti-HSR movement, while the other variables did not significantly influence the dependent variable. Despite this partially disappointing result, as a whole the latter variables did significantly improve the fit of Klandermans' (1997) model, $c^2(1) = 12.040$, $p < .001$. Finally, one could argue that the two groups of variables we used may display, besides their additive effects, multiplicative effects also. However, when we added a third step to our hierarchic logistic regression, entering all the interactions among our centered independent variables, we did not significantly improve the predictive power of our model, $c^2(21) = 21.514$, $p = .428$.³

Discussion

The main results of our Study 2 were four. First, the variables belonging to Klandermans' model were powerful predictors of the anti-HSR mobilization. Such a result, which confirmed our first three hypotheses, witnessed the effectiveness and the flexibility of Klandermans' model, which was *not* originally developed for predicting participation in LULU conflicts. Second, as a whole, the novel, situated variables that emerged in Study 1 showed a significant influence on the probability of mobilization. Although these results confirmed our second three hypotheses, such influence was weaker than that showed by variables considered in H1.1, H1.2, and H1.3. Third, only formal community involvement went on influencing the probability of taking part in the anti-HSR movement when collective identity,

³ Parallel analyses were performed in the subsample made of the 161 people who showed a negative judgment on the HSR. Obtained results were analogous to those we presented. Readers interested in examining them may ask the corresponding author.

collective efficacy, and sense of injustice were partialled out. Thus as a whole, the model including community involvement, perception of a majority position, and place attachment showed significantly, although slightly, to add predictive power to the set of variables used by Klandermans (1997) to explain participation. Fourth, the two groups of variables we used to predict participation displayed additive, but not multiplicative, effects on the probability of taking part in the mobilization we studied.

General Discussion

Our Studies 1 and 2 yielded consistent results. Qualitative Study 1 suggested that in the LULU conflict going on in the Susa Valley collective identity, perceived group efficacy, and sense of injustice played an important role in mobilizing people. At the same time, it suggested that additional, contextual variables—being embedded in formal networks, feeling attached to places, and perceiving that the vast majority of the Susa Valley residents were against the construction of the new high-speed railroad—influenced the dynamics of mobilization. Results from quantitative Study 2 substantially supported the role of factors included in Klandermans' (1997) model and confirmed the influence exerted by the contextual variables emerged from our exploratory Study 1. Indeed, the former group of variables emerged as the most powerful factors promoting protest. The latter group also showed significantly to affect the probability of being involved in protest, even if such influence was weaker. Such a result did not catch us completely unprepared: Indeed, we were fully aware that the explanatory potential of what we defined as the contextual variables needs to be borne out through further evidence, just as the key factors included in Klandermans' model have been proved valid through multiple groups and underwent successive adjustments over time. However, given the low *N* of our Study 2 and the fact that, to the best of our knowledge, this was the first time a model like ours was empirically tested, we think that a model taking into account both Klandermans' variables and those detected in Study 1 cannot be fully discarded. Future research on the topic will be obviously welcome.

When all of these variables were entered in the same model, only formal community involvement went on influencing the probability of participating. We interpreted this result as the effect of a tight relationship between place attachment and collective identity, on the one hand, and between the perception of a majority supporting the protest and collective efficacy, on the other hand. Indeed, perceiving that public opinion backs the cause of protesters can increase the group efficacy and strengthen the belief that a great number of individuals are willing to fight (Van Zomeren et al., 2004). Place attachment, in turn, can be considered as overlapping group identification, serving as a proxy for collective identity (Stürmer & Simon, 2004). On this aspect also, future research will be welcome. The main implications of such results are threefold. First, Klandermans' (1997)

model, even if it was not originally developed for predicting participation in LULU conflicts, showed to be effective in explaining the protest against the undesired installation we focused on. Second, place attachment, perception of an anti-HSR majority position, and community involvement were also important in encouraging citizens to take action in the LULU conflict investigated, though they were not sufficient per se to account for protest. Third, as all the independent variables we kept in our final model displayed additive, but not multiplicative effects on the probability of taking part in the protest, the processes identified by Klandermans and in our Study 1 should be considered as reasonably independent.

One of the most remarkable results of our two studies was that the perception that the vast majority of the Susa Valley's residents were against the construction of the new railroad increased the probability of protesting. To put it in different terms, in our case study, mobilization was fostered by the perception that protest attitudes were adopted by the majority of community members. To explain these findings we relied on Asch's (1951) classic thesis: When individuals perceive that a judgment is approved by the majority, the desirability of expressing such judgment leads them to adopt it. However, the hypothesis advanced by Oliver (1984), according to which optimistic attitudes about collective action by others can make a person more willing to contribute, if he or she perceives that the individual contribution has an accelerating impact on the collective good, does not apply to our case. Indeed, in our study what is perceived is a general *attitude* against the HSR plan, rather than protest *behaviors* adopted by a great number of people. Nevertheless, the parallel seems interesting and might be worthy of further investigations.

Our analyses showed that the belief that the point of view against the HSR was largely diffused in the population made it difficult for different standpoints to emerge and increased conformity. Thus, social pressure to embrace the dominant position seemed to generate a silence effect, as suggested by the spiral of silence theory (Noelle-Neumann, 1980). According to this theory, fear of social rejection is the essential motive driving individuals towards conformity: People are unwilling to publicly express their opinion and to undertake overt behaviors if they believe themselves to be part of a minority, whereas they are more vocal if they believe themselves to be part of a majority. Such a result not only reminds us that conflicts entail social influence processes, and that social conflicts are likely to press individuals to take a position (Klandermans & Oegema, 1987), but also indicates that an initially minority position can turn into a majority position, thereby calling for conformity.

Our results also bore out the role of embeddedness in social networks, consistently with the literature on social movements, which highlighted the importance of networks in (a) serving as a recruitment channel, (b) offering individuals access to participation, (c) socializing political issues, and (d) actively contributing to the decision of being committed to social action (della Porta & Diani, 2006; Diani, 1992; Passy & Giugni, 2000, 2001; Verba et al., 1995). The restricted dimensions of the communities of the Susa Valley plausibly amplified the power

of networks, often blurring the boundaries between social networks and communities. Formal, more than informal, networks were shown to significantly improve the recruitment of participants: Being involved in community-based groups (such as local associations and parishes) proved to be more influential than having friends in the community or spending leisure time in public places with other people. Thus, a formal commitment at the community level increased the probability of being mobilized for a new cause. Nevertheless, due to the restricted dimension of the Susa Valley community, overlaps between formal and informal networks are likely to exist. Although we cannot rely on specific data highlighting such overlaps, it is reasonable to assume that in a small community a certain number of individuals are simultaneously part of multiple networks, both at the informal and formal level. As a matter of fact, the concept of social embeddedness is akin to the concept of social capital, as proposed by classic authors such as Coleman (1988) and Putnam (1993), who have emphasized the opportunities offered by social relationships in terms of trust and shared values. More specifically, Paxton (2002) pointed out that social capital is essential to the maintenance of democracy, in that it helps disseminate critical discourse and sustain the growth of opposition movements. Nevertheless, we decided to use the concept of social embeddedness to emphasize the role of social networks that has been considered crucial in many studies on social movements (McCarthy, 1996; McCarthy & Zald, 1973; Passy & Giugni, 2000, 2001; Verba et al., 1995).

Our results also pointed out that person-environment relationships can influence the decision of becoming an activist, when a LULU conflict is concerned. Our activists showed strong feelings of attachment to their place of residence, and defense of the land against potentially risky human interventions emerged as one of the main inputs for collective action. Such a result confirmed that experiencing positive affective ties with the environment influences the decision of being involved in collective action (Hidalgo & Hernandez, 2001; Vorkinn & Riese, 2001), especially if such a participation is aimed at defending one's community. This result also suggested that participation aimed at defending community is likely to occur when individuals experience both high levels of place attachment and threatening events.

Overall, our results suggested that in analyzing LULU conflicts, specific, situational factors may influence the dynamics of protest. Nevertheless, it was also apparent that accounting for protest relying on these sole variables would be limiting. For this reason, considering the whole pool of six variables we used seems to be a promising indication for a deeper comprehension of the psychosocial processes underlying mobilization against locally unwanted installations. It could be objected that the influence exerted by the independent variables we used on the probability of participating in the anti-HSR movement was not very high. However, it is noteworthy that the model testing the predictive power of community involvement, perception of a majority position, and place attachment did not violate Von Wright's (1971) condition, as our independent variables were pretty

logically independent from our dependent variable. In our opinion, given that our causes genuinely explained the variance of our effect, without any semantic overlap among them, the quota of the variance of our dependent variable that we could explain was far from disappointing.

Our research had two main limits. First, as only one protest case was taken into consideration, our findings cannot be extended across contexts to the generality of LULU conflicts: More studies on other kinds of LULU mobilizations will be plausibly fruitful. Second, our dependent variable did not allow us to study empirically the impact exerted by the independent variables we used on different kinds of LULU activities, such as signing a petition, participating in a demonstration, attending a public meeting, and so on. In future research it would be interesting to disaggregate those different forms of mobilization.

However, our study had some strong points also. On the one hand, it was based on a fruitful interplay of qualitative and quantitative methods, which showed convergent evidence. Such interplay allowed us to test new hypotheses about the predictors of participating in the LULU movement we studied, which would have been impossible had we exclusively relied on standard survey research. On the other hand, the quantitative part of our study was based on a representative sample of the Susa Valley population. Studies on representative samples are still infrequent in political psychology, since psychologists are often not interested in generalizing their results, and they are socialized to think that the relations between variables are substantially independent from the sample surveyed. Nonetheless, a growing number of studies jeopardize the postulate of the independence of the relations between the variables from the sample analyzed (see for instance Best & Krueger, 2002; Gordon, Slade, & Schmitt, 1986; Miller, Fontes, Boster, & Sunnafrank, 1983; Roccato & Ricolfi, 2005).

We would like to conclude with a brief consideration on the psychosocial models explaining protest behaviors. Besides Klandermans' approach, other models we did not discuss in this paper can be adopted to predict mobilization. Among them, a dual-pathway model has been recently proposed by Van Zomeren et al. (2004), who, relying on the same variables studied by Klandermans (and considered in our study), have hypothesized two different routes—and two psychological mechanisms—bringing to participation: through group-based anger (including group identity and the appraisal of unfair disadvantage) and through group efficacy. Although we proposed a one-way model, the results of our study partially overlapped some of the major findings of Van Zomeren and colleagues' studies (see also Van Zomeren, Spears, & Leach, 2008). Thus, we believe that future research could fruitfully test their model on LULU movements.

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Appendix A

Categories and Variables Used to Code the Interviews

Category	Variables
Individual motives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perceived costs of participation • Perceived benefits of participation
Arguments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arguments for opposing HSR based on the critical aspects of the project (e.g., usefulness, environmental impact, and implication for public health) • Arguments for opposing HSR based on the perception of the quality of the relationship with the proponents (e.g., lack of community involvement, no dialogue with proponents, hostile reactions of the counterpart)
Representations of the unwanted installation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perceived characteristics • Associated images • Metaphors
Empowerment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perception of control over the events • Self and collective efficacy • Critical awareness • Learned hopefulness • Prefiguration of the future
Relationship with places	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feelings of attachment/detachment to the place of residence • Images of the place of residence (stereotypes, metaphors) • Images of the community • Environmental behaviors
Interpersonal relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of interpersonal relationships among community members • Quality of interpersonal relationships among movement members • Perceived social support • Perceived solidarity • Self-interested behaviors
Conflict	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Divergent opinions among activists • Competition among subgroups
Out-group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perceived characteristics of outgroup members • Attitudes and behaviors related to outgroup • Differences between activists' and nonactivists' views
Organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structure of the movement • Organizational devices
Protesters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social characteristics of protesters • Past involvement in social action • Perceived differences with past experiences of civic engagement
Evolution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Narratives of the initial phases of the mobilization • Memorable events • Enlargement of the movement • Forecasts about the destiny of the movement
Attitudes towards the protest movement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attitudes towards the protest movement expressed by outsiders • Attitudes towards the protest movement expressed by members • Labels used to describe activists by outsiders • Labels used to describe activists by members of the movement
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desired effects • Undesired effects • Perceived impact on individuals • Perceived impact on the community

Appendix B

The Variables We Assessed in Study 2

Status	Item(s)	Psychometric characteristics and indexes computation	Source
Dependent variable	Did you take part into actions (e.g., public demonstrations, petitions, public meetings) against the HSR in the last 12 months (No = 0; Yes = 1)		Campana, Dallago, & Roccato (2007)
Independent variables: Collective identity	Would you define yourself an anti-HSR activist? (No = 0; Yes = 1) How much would you like to be labeled as an anti-HSR activist? (answer categories ranged from 0 = Not at all to 3 = Very much) How many things do you have in common with other people in the anti-HSR movement? (answer categories ranged from 0 = None; to 3 = Many) Did you ever take part in the activities organized by the anti-HSR movement? (answers categories ranged from 0 = Never to 2 = Often)	a = .816 Collective identity score: Average of the four standardized items	Adaptation of Van Stekelenburg's (2006) items
Independent variables: Sense of injustice	The decision of building the HSR in the Susa Valley: (a) was illegitimate, since it was taken without involving the Susa Valley population = 1, or (b) was legitimate, since it was taken by a democratically elected government = 0? The decision of building the HSR in the Susa Valley: (a) will satisfy the parochial economic interests of a minority = 1, or (b) will satisfy the general interest of the Country = 0? The decision of building the HSR in the Susa Valley: (a) will make the quality of live in the Valley worse = 1, or (b) will improve the quality of live in the Valley = 0? The decision of building the HSR in the Susa Valley: (a) was taken without taking into consideration the main technical and geographical elements = 1, or (b) was taken taking into consideration the main technical and geographical elements = 0?	a = .872 Sense of injustice score: Average of the four items	Campana, Dallago, & Roccato (2007)
Independent variables: Collective efficacy	In my opinion the anti-HSR movement will make the Government modify the HSR project taking into consideration the desires of the Susa Valley population (No = 0; Yes = 1) In my opinion the anti-HSR movement will lead to the development of a strong anti-HSR movement even outside the Susa Valley (No = 0; Yes = 1) In my opinion the anti-HSR movement will unite the Valley's residents, no matter what happens to the HSR plan (No = 0; Yes = 1) In my opinion the anti-HSR movement will drive the government to decide not to build the HSR in the Susa Valley (No = 0; Yes = 1)	a = .681 Collective efficacy: Average of the four items	Adaptation of van Stekelenburg's (2006) items

Appendix B

(cont.)

Status	Item(s)	Psychometric characteristics and indexes computation	Source
Independent variables: Community involvement	Do you regularly hang out at restaurants or pubs in your neighborhood? (answer categories ranged from Never = 0 to 2 = Often) Do you usually attend the parish church of your neighborhood? (No = 0; Yes, just on ceremonies = 1; Yes, even beyond ceremonies = 2) Are you member of a community-based organization? (No = 0; Yes = 1) Do your best friends live in your neighborhood? (No = 0; Yes, a few of them = 1; Yes, most of them = 2)	First three eigenvalues (exploratory factor analysis, Maximum likelihood extraction): 1.308, 1.092, .928 Community involvement scores: two factor scores, respectively, of the first two items (involvement in formal institution rooted in the community) and the second two items (leisure-based use of the community) (answers coded as 1 if Yes, and 0 if No)	Tartaglia (2006) ⁴
Independent variables: Perception of a vast anti-HSR majority in the Valley Independent variables: Place attachment	In your opinion, how many Susa Valley residents are against the HSR? (A small minority; Less than half of the residents; A small majority; A vast majority) How attached do you feel to the Susa Valley? (answers categories ranged from 0 = Not at all to 3 = Very much) How sorry would you be to leave the Susa Valley? (answer categories ranged from 0 = Not at all to 3 = Very much) How many things do you have in common with the Susa Valley's residents? (answer categories ranged from 0 = None to 3 = Many)	A vast majority = 1 (N = 99) Other answers = 0 (N = 146) a = .681 Place attachment: average of the three standardized items	Campana, Dallago, & Roccatto (2007) Adaptation of Austin & Baba's (1990) and of Churchman & Mitriani's (1997) items

⁴ Items not reported by Tartaglia. We would like to thank him for giving us the items he used for his research.