

Climate change is a global problem caused by human activity. To mitigate its negative effects, it is necessary to implement extensive changes, both at the individual behaviour level and the systemic level. One of the ways to influence the system is through various collective actions where individuals come together as a group to actively contribute towards improving the well-being of the larger community. Such actions can be highly diverse and receive varying responses from society. Previous research shows that peaceful actions, compared to violence-based behaviours, receive more favourable responses from the public and are more likely to achieve their goals. The perception of violence as irrational is one of the reasons for limited support, as it hinders observers from identifying with the activists who engage in such actions, resulting in decreased support. Radical actions face a similar reaction. They are defined as behaviours that significantly deviate from norms, disrupt social order, and cause harm to others. These actions draw significant media attention, thereby raising public awareness about the issue. However, they often contribute to decreased support for the movement employing them. The reduced support is associated with diminished identification with the group due to the perception of such behaviours as harmful and immoral. However, research suggests that this relationship is not so clear, and radical collective actions can have positive outcomes for the cause championed by activists. Additionally, the radical actions of one group can contribute to a positive perception of other groups operating in the same area and using more moderate strategies. The study of the influence and effectiveness of collective actions is a topic increasingly addressed by psychologists. However, there are still gaps in this area of research. How the public perceives various actions taken by pro-climate activists and what this process depends on is unknown. Furthermore, most studies in this field have been conducted in Western countries using fictional group descriptions. Hence, as climate activists in Poland increasingly turn to radical measures, understanding how these actions are perceived and their effectiveness is an important issue. The presented project will contribute to deepening knowledge in collective action psychology and social influence processes.

The first of the described studies is a longitudinal study that examines whether the level of support for various collective actions for climate change depends on psychological factors such as right-wing authoritarianism, social dominance orientation, and environmental identification. To investigate this relationship, we plan to conduct a three-wave panel study with a six-month interval between each wave. Participants will be asked to declare their support for diverse climate-related actions and complete questionnaires measuring the three psychological variables mentioned. The list of actions will be selected based on a preliminary study in which respondents will evaluate a range of pro-climate actions in terms of characteristics such as conformity to norms, use of violence, effectiveness, evoked emotions, and conformity to laws. The list will present behaviours that vary in terms of these characteristics. We predict that changes in social dominance orientation and right-wing authoritarianism, which are associated with reluctance towards actions aiming to reduce inequality and actions that violate norms, will influence support for climate-related actions, especially those that are radical and non-normative. A strong environmental identification, which is associated with concern for the climate, will lead to a positive evaluation of actions of all kinds.

The second study is an experimental study in which we will examine the impact of the activities of radical groups on the support for more moderate groups and support for environmental policies. To do this, participants will be randomly assigned to one of the experimental conditions, where they will read two texts: 1) describing the activities of a pro-environmental group diversified in terms of the radicality of the adopted strategies, 2) focusing on the activities of a group using only moderate actions; or to a control condition. Respondents will be asked about their perceived radicalism of the described groups, their level of identification and support for the second group, and their support for selected environmental policies. Previous research results allow us to predict that the radical actions of the first group will increase support for the moderate group and support for environmental solutions. An increased sense of identification with the moderate group will mediate this effect.