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Beliefs About the Malleability of Immoral Groups Facilitate Collective Action

Smadar Cohen-Chen^{1,2}, Eran Halperin², Tamar Saguy², and Martijn van Zomeren³

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Abstract

Although negative out-group beliefs typically foster individuals' motivation for collective action, we propose that such beliefs may *diminish* this motivation when people believe that this out-group *cannot change* in its very essence. Specifically, we tested the idea that believing in the malleability of immoral out-groups (i.e., targets of collective action) should increase collective action tendencies through group efficacy beliefs. Study 1 revealed that the more strongly participants believed that immoral out-groups could change as a function of contextual influences, the stronger their collective action tendencies were due to increased group efficacy. In Study 2, we experimentally replicated these findings using a manipulation of individuals' beliefs about immoral out-groups being potentially malleable (vs. fixed). We discuss implications of our findings with an eye on the literature on collective action and implicit beliefs and on the promotion of civic engagement more broadly.

Keywords

collective action, social change, group efficacy, implicit theories

When people act on behalf of their group to achieve group goals, they are engaging in *collective action* (van Zomeren, Postmes, & Spears, 2008; Wright, Taylor, & Moghaddam, 1990). Throughout history, collective action has played a critical role in the processes of social change; it has served to change agendas and social priorities and instill values among members of nations and societies. Notable examples of collective action include the American Civil Rights Movement seeking to abolish racial discrimination against African Americans in the United States (King, 1964); antiapartheid activities opposing racial segregation in South Africa (Lodge, 2009); and the more recent 2010–2011 “Arab Spring,” the wave of mass protests throughout the Arab region, concentrating on issues such as human rights' violations and government corruption. Indeed, collective action reflects people's capacity to create change as a group by taking control of their destiny and pursuing the betterment of their lives and position on a large scale. Interestingly, however, in a world filled with group-based deprivation, collective action is not as common as intuitively expected. A key question, therefore, is what motivates people to partake in collective action (or demotivates them from doing so)?

In the collective action literature, scholars concentrate on the role of individuals' beliefs about the relevant out-group (e.g., the high-status and/or high-power out-group disadvantaging the in-group). Previous theorizing on the potentially mobilizing effects of negative beliefs about the out-group (e.g., Simon & Klandermans, 2001) proposes that negative out-group beliefs foster a sense of both unfairness and in-group

identity, leading to motivation for collective action. Although this may be true at a general level, we propose that negative out-group beliefs may *dampen* this motivation when in-group members believe that the negatively perceived out-group *cannot change* in its very essence. We derive this line of thought from insights from theory and research on implicit theories (Dweck, Chiu, & Hong, 1995; Levy & Dweck, 1998; Plaks, Stroessner, Dweck, & Sherman, 2001; Rydell, Hugenberg, Ray, & Mackie, 2007). As such, the current article introduces the concept of implicit theories to the study of collective action and offers a novel boundary condition for the general notion that negative out-group beliefs foster collective action.

The Role of Out-Group Perceptions in the Psychology of Collective Action

An extensive body of research has addressed psychological predictors of collective action (e.g., Becker, Tausch, Spears, & Christ, 2011; Kelly & Breinlinger, 1995; Klandermans, 1997, 2004; Marx & Wood, 1975; McPhail, 1971; Stürmer &

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Simon, 2004). A meta-analysis (van Zomeren et al., 2008) substantiated the role of in-group identification, perceived injustice, and efficacy as reliable predictors of collective action. The more people identify with their disadvantaged group, particularly with political movements representing it (Simon & Klandermans, 2001; Stürmer & Simon, 2004), the more likely they are to act collectively to change their situation. Similarly, the perception of the in-group's disadvantage as unjust (see van Zomeren, Leach, & Spears, 2012) was also found to be associated with collective action. Finally, the extent to which the in-group is perceived as efficacious, or able to promote its goals, was found to drive collective action (Bandura, 2000; Hornsey et al., 2006; Klandermans, 1984, 1997; Mummendey, Kessler, Klink, & Mielke, 1999; Wright & Lubensky, 2009; for a review see van Zomeren et al., 2012).

Nevertheless, these three predictors of collective action pertain to perceptions of the *in-group* (i.e., as important to the self, unjustly treated, and efficacious). However, perceptions of the relevant *out-group* (toward which collective actions are targeted) were also found relevant for predicting collective action (Klandermans, 1997; Reynolds, Oakes, Haslam, Nolan, & Dolnik, 2000; Simon & Klandermans, 2001; Wright & Lubensky, 2009; Wright & Tropp, 2002). According to this work, the out-group should be perceived very negatively, perhaps even vilified, for mobilization to occur. Indeed, seeing the relevant out-group as fair and good-natured should undermine the perception that the in-group is mistreated. This may increase the likelihood of the disadvantage being attributed to one's own actions or even its own characteristics, rather than to an adversarial enemy (Simon & Klandermans, 2001). In addition, seeing the out-group in a positive light might weaken the perceived distinction between the in-group and the out-group, undermining identification with the disadvantaged in-group (Wright & Lubensky, 2009).

This line of thought has led scholars to doubt whether interventions aimed at improving out-group perceptions, such as positive intergroup contact, can be effective within the collective action context. For instance, Wright and Lubensky (2009) found that among African Americans and Latinos, positive contact with Whites was associated with more positive attitudes toward Whites. However, it was also associated with less in-group identification and less support for action aimed at advancing equality. Similar findings were obtained among Arabs in Israel. In this case, contact with Jews predicted better attitudes toward Jews but reduced perceptions of inequality between Jews and Arabs as unjust. This in turn weakened the support for policies advancing Arabs' status (Saguy, Tausch, Dovidio, & Pratto, 2009). Moreover, in a survey of Black South Africans, positive contact with Whites was associated with decreased support for social policies meant to enhance racial equality (Dixon, Durrheim, & Tredoux, 2007) and decreased perceptions of racial discrimination (Dixon, Tropp, Durrheim, & Tredoux, 2010; Saguy & Chernyak-Hai, 2012).

Taken together, these findings corroborate the notion that promoting favorable out-group attitudes in the context of asymmetrical relations between groups can diminish disadvantaged

group members' motivation to partake in collective action. This coincides with insights from the collective action literature, suggesting that negative out-group attitudes are likely to foster collective action. Nevertheless, we propose that this statement requires some qualification.

Introducing Implicit Beliefs to the Psychology of Collective Action

Our main goal in the current research was to better understand the relationship between negative out-group perceptions and collective action. To do so, we link extensive theorizing and research about collective action and its key predictors with more recent accounts about out-group perceptions. Specifically, we seek to introduce insights from implicit theories about group malleability (Plaks et al., 2001; Rydell et al., 2007; see also Chiu, Hong, & Dweck, 1997; Dweck et al., 1995; Levy & Dweck, 1998) to the psychology of collective action. This is important because the notion of group malleability perceptions introduces a potential boundary condition to the idea that negative out-group beliefs foster collective action.

In general, implicit beliefs can affect perceptions and attitudes toward the self, other individuals, and out-groups. A malleable ("incremental") belief about individuals, namely, a belief that people's personalities can change, is associated with lower tendencies to make stereotypic judgments (Levy, Stroessner, & Dweck, 1998; Plaks et al., 2001; Rydell et al., 2007) and to recommend punishment and retaliation for others' wrongdoing (Chiu, Dweck, Tong, & Fu, 1997). Implicit beliefs about groups' malleability or the notion that groups can change has recently been investigated in the context of intergroup attitudes. Halperin, Russell, Trzesniewski, Gross, and Dweck (2011) and Halperin, Crisp, Husnu, Dweck, and Gross (2012) demonstrated that believing that groups in general are malleable (vs. fixed) increases conciliatory attitudes within the context of intergroup conflict. According to Halperin et al.'s (2011; 2012) reasoning, the general belief that groups are malleable decreases the perception of the out-group's nature as inherently evil and fixed, leading to more conciliatory attitudes toward peacemaking.

Although collective action contexts do not necessarily involve perceptions of the out-group as "evil," it is noteworthy that Simon and Klandermans (2001) suggested that individuals with politicized (i.e., activist) identities are likely to have a moral connotation. In their analysis, a pillar of politicized identity is the perception of the out-group as an adversary (rather than merely an out-group one feels negatively about). Furthermore, work on relative deprivation and collective action (e.g., Runciman, 1966) suggests that individuals can hold strong motivations for undertaking collective action, for instance, when the out-group violates core moral values held by the in-group (e.g., Van Stekelenburg, Klandermans, & Van Dijk, 2009). Given this tendency to view the out-group as an immoral adversary, we believe the gap between research on group malleability and collective action is not so vast. In fact, the current studies are aimed to fill this gap.

Specifically, we propose that negative beliefs about out-group malleability undermine collective action because they undermine group efficacy beliefs. Indeed, people who feel that the out-group's immoral nature is fixed may have little faith that collective efforts to create social change can succeed. This is because the situation itself is a function of the dominating (perceived) immoral out-group. Therefore, perceiving the out-group in a "fixed" negative light may lead to the perception that group efforts to create change may be futile, thus undermining individuals' sense of group efficacy. If, however, group members conceive of the specific immoral out-group as, in principle, holding the *potential to change*, a sense of group efficacy may be retained, even against a general backdrop of negative out-group perceptions.

Thus, we propose that there is an underlying perception regarding the out-group's nature that must remain positive in order to instigate a sense of efficacy. This perception is that the potential for change exists within the out-group. Note that we do not refer to a change in how negative the out-group is perceived. The only dimension conceived as positive is the immoral out-group's ability to change. According to our reasoning, believing that the perpetrators of an unjust status quo have the potential to change would generate the perception that the in-group is able to advance the social change it hopes for without transforming the negative perception of the out-group's nature. This in turn would promote intentions to engage in action.

Nevertheless, linking work on collective action and implicit theories created a potential problem that we needed to solve. Previous work dealing with interventions aimed at changing attitudes regarding negatively perceived out-groups (Bar-Tal & Rosen, 2009) has shown that *direct* attempts to change attitudes toward an out-group may backfire by inducing defensive reactions. For this reason, we followed recent research which shows that beliefs regarding the malleability of a specific group can be indirectly transformed by referring to the malleability of groups *in general* (Halperin, Crisp, Husnu, Dweck, & Gross, 2012; Halperin, Russell, Trzesniewski, Gross, & Dweck, 2011; Rydell et al., 2007). Our rationale was that beliefs about a specific immoral out-group's ability to change are encompassed within perceptions of immoral groups' malleability in general. We thus predicted that beliefs regarding a powerful and immorally perceived out-group would be changed by referring to the malleability of immoral groups in general. Considered in this (conservative) way, implicit beliefs regarding immoral groups in general may bridge the gap between prejudice reduction and the need to vilify the out-group to promote collective action.

We conducted two studies to test our hypothesis that group malleability beliefs increase collective action tendencies through increased group efficacy beliefs. In Study 1, we correlated people's implicit beliefs about immoral groups' malleability (e.g., Halperin et al., 2011) with their ingroup efficacy beliefs and their collective action tendencies (e.g., Van Zomeren et al., 2012). In Study 2, we examined our hypothesis experimentally by manipulating implicit beliefs about immoral

groups in general (Halperin et al., 2011; 2012; Rydell et al., 2007) and measuring their causal effects on group efficacy beliefs and the willingness to engage in collective action. Across these studies, we predicted that referring to the malleability of immoral groups in general would affect beliefs regarding the relevant out-group in the context under study. We further hypothesized that believing immoral groups can change their nature would increase the experience of group efficacy, which in turn would induce intentions to partake in collective action.

Study 1

The study took place in Israel between June and September 2011, during the most widescale social protest in Israel's history, led by Israel's middle class (often referred to as the Summer of Discontent). The protest, which spread throughout Israel, revolved around a range of social issues. These included, among others, the consistent rise in the cost of living and deterioration of social services. The protesters' core message was that the politicians and other power holding groups in Israel have no concern for the welfare of the middle class, that pays a very high price to live in dignity. The protesters' main goal was therefore to impact the political agenda and instigate reform on the issues at hand. This context enabled us to examine the relationship between implicit beliefs about groups perceived as immoral, group efficacy, and collective action under real-life circumstances of ongoing and widespread social protest.

Method

Participants and Procedure

One hundred and eight Israeli participants (47% female, mean age 31.23, standard deviation [*SD*] = 12.48) were approached by experimenters and asked to complete a short questionnaire presented as a survey about "social issues." Participants were pedestrians recruited in various cities in Israel (including the center and country's periphery). In terms of family socioeconomic status (SES), 17.6% indicated they came from very low or low SES, 45% indicated their background as middle class (average SES), 31% were slightly above the average SES, and 6% indicated very high SES.

Measures

In order to assess *implicit beliefs about immoral groups*, we used an adapted version of a scale used in the works of Rydell et al., (2007) and Halperin et al. (2011) in which implicit beliefs about immoral groups in general were examined. Items were "Groups characterized by an immoral nature will never change because this nature is deeply ingrained within them," "Politicians and power-seeking groups in general cannot change their behavior, since it is inherent within them," and "societal and political processes may create moral and value changes in groups and nations" ($\alpha = .65$). Answers

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics and Bivariate Correlations Between Research Variables.

	Mean (SD)	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Malleability beliefs about immoral groups	4.31 (1.02)	–					
2. Efficacy	4.87 (.89)	.26*					
3. Collective action	3.2 (1.25)	.29**	.39**				
4. Age	31.23 (12.48)	–.19*	.06	.03			
5. Gender (F+)	1.53 (.50)	.02	–.12	–.04	–.02		
6. SE status	3.23 (.87)	.03	–.08	–.18	–.08	–.01	–

Note. SE = standard error. SD = standard deviation.

*Significant at the $p < .05$ level.

**Significant at the $p < .0001$ level (two-tailed significance).

ranged from 1 (*strongly agree*) to 6 (*strongly disagree*); the first 2 items were reverse coded such that higher scores indicated the extent to which people believe immoral groups' nature can change.

To isolate the effect of implicit beliefs about immoral groups (Halperin et al., 2011) from implicit beliefs about individuals (Dweck et al., 1995), we also utilized a short version of the latter scale that was composed of 4 items (e.g., "People may behave differently, but the important parts of who they are can't really be changed" and "There is not much that can be done to change the moral values of a person"; $\alpha = .89$).

Group efficacy was assessed using a 3-item scale adapted from van Zomeren, Spears, Fischer, and Leach (2004). Items were formulated in terms of participants' beliefs regarding the ability of their group (in this case, the Israeli middle class and the protesters) to change the current situation. These items were "The Israeli middle class can create a change through collective action," "Members of the Israeli middle class have power as a group to advance a significant change by engaging in collective action," and "One can change unjust policies through collective action" ($\alpha = .86$). Answers ranged from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 6 (*strongly agree*), such that higher scores indicated higher levels of group efficacy. An exploratory factor analysis with oblique rotation established the differentiation between items assessing implicit beliefs about immoral groups and those assessing group efficacy. The analysis yielded a clear two-factor solution (eigenvalues greater than 1), with the corresponding items loading on two separate dimensions (loadings .50 or above), supporting the existence of two related but separate constructs.

In order to assess *willingness to engage in collective action*, we used items assessing intentions to partake in various activities aimed at redressing the situation of the middle class in Israel (adapted from van Zomeren et al., 2004, and Tausch et al., 2011). These actions were "addressing a political or social issue on a social network," "signing a petition," "participating in a demonstration," "organizing a demonstration," "participating in a strike," and "establishing a political party which represents the protest demands" ($\alpha = .84$). Answers ranged from 1 (*not at all willing to partake in activity*) to 6 (*willing to partake in activity to a very large extent*). In addition, we assessed participants' age (continuous variable), gender, and SES computed as the mean of participants' reported family SES and their monthly income (divided into five categories).

Results and Discussion

Means (*M*s), *SD*s, and zero-order correlations among all measures are presented in Table 1. Malleability beliefs about immoral groups were positively associated with both perceptions of group efficacy ($r = .26, p = .01$) and collective action tendencies ($r = .29, p = .002$), providing preliminary support to our hypothesis. Replicating previous work (e.g., Bandura, 2000; Mummendey et al., 1999; van Zomeren et al., 2004, 2008), group efficacy beliefs were positively associated with collective action tendencies ($r = .39, p < .001$). Furthermore, in order to establish that it is beliefs about groups rather than about individuals that drives the effect on collective action, we regressed collective action on implicit beliefs about immoral groups and about individuals. As predicted, malleability beliefs about immoral groups remained a significant predictor of collective action ($\beta = .32, p = .02$), whereas malleability beliefs about individuals had no significant effect on collective action ($\beta = .04, p = .78$). Furthermore, there were no interaction effects of implicit beliefs about immoral groups and SES ($\beta = .24, p = .12$), age ($\beta = -.05, p = .64$) or gender ($\beta = .07, p = .59$) on the willingness to engage in collective action.

To determine whether, as hypothesized, the effect of malleability beliefs about immoral groups on collective action was mediated by group efficacy beliefs, we used Preacher and Hayes' (2008) bootstrapping macro while controlling for age, gender, and SES. Results revealed that the effect of malleability beliefs about immoral groups on collective action ($b = .38$, standard error [*SE*] = .12, $t = 3.20, p = .002$) was reduced after the mediator was included in the model ($b = .28, SE = .12$, $t = 2.37, p = .02$) and that the indirect effect through group efficacy was significant ($a \times b = .10$; 95% confidence interval [CI]: [.03, .21]).¹ Thus, perceptions of group efficacy mediated the effect of malleability beliefs about immoral groups on the willingness to engage in collective action (Figure 1).

These findings support our contention that people who believe that immoral groups can change in their very essence tend to believe that *their* group has the ability to create social change within a specific intergroup context. Our findings are consistent with the idea that this increases their intention to engage in collective action. Our goal in Study 2 was to establish the causal relationship between implicit beliefs about immoral groups and group efficacy beliefs and collective action

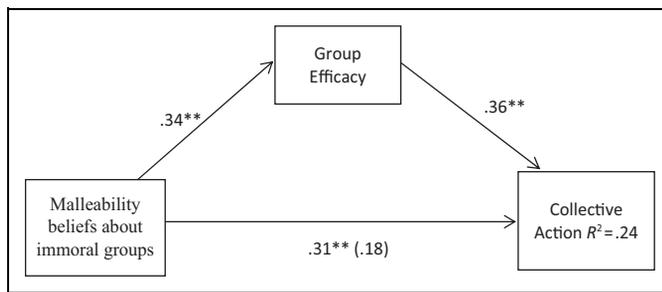


Figure 1. Group efficacy mediates the link between malleability beliefs about immoral groups and willingness to partake in collective action.

tendencies. Previous research has established that implicit beliefs about groups can be changed by presenting participants with seemingly reliable information supporting the specific belief (e.g., Halperin et al., 2011; 2012; Rydell et al., 2007). We therefore employed an experimental design in which we manipulated malleability beliefs about immoral groups in general and examined the effect on group efficacy beliefs and, in turn, willingness to engage in collective action.

Study 2

The goal of Study 2 was to provide evidence for a causal relationship between implicit beliefs about immoral groups in general and group efficacy beliefs, which in turn increases collective action tendencies. Participants were randomly assigned to read an article that emphasized either the ability of immoral groups to change (incremental condition) or the “entity” nature of such groups (immoral groups cannot change). We expected that participants in the incremental condition would believe their group to be more efficacious and also be more willing to engage in collective action, compared to participants in the entity condition; and that the former main effect would mediate the latter.

Method

Participants and Procedure

Participants were an Israeli sample of 87 passengers on a train (44% female, M age = 28.73, SD = 12.72); 16% indicated their family as under the average SES, 43% indicated average SES (middle class), 36% were slightly above the average SES, and 5% indicated high SES. All were presented with two seemingly separate studies put together for convenience purposes. The first included a mock article from Ynet.co.il, a leading online news source in Israel, through which implicit beliefs about immoral groups were manipulated. The manipulation was adjusted from a text used in Halperin et al. (2011). Participants in the entity condition learned that immoral groups cannot change, since their behavior derives from their fixed and deep-rooted character (“Groups that exploit other groups or individuals do so because these characteristics are deeply inherent in their nature and therefore they cannot change Groups can change some of their behavior, but the change is

merely superficial. Their basic nature stays fixed and there is almost nothing that will change that”). Those in the incremental condition read a study revealing that immoral groups can change and that group behaviors should not be associated with fixed characteristics but explained by leadership or contextual change (e.g., “The vast majority changed their exploiting and greedy behavior throughout the years due to social and political changes . . . was not at all a fixed characteristic in groups It is evident that very often groups change significantly and that the change is deeply rooted and remains in the long term”). Neither article referred directly to the social protest taking place in Israel at the time.

After reading the article, participants answered a number of informative questions regarding the article and completed the manipulation check assessing their implicit beliefs about immoral groups. Participants then proceeded to the next part, presented as a separate study, seemingly unrelated to the manipulation they had just read. This part included group efficacy, intent to partake in collective action, and sociodemographic information.

Measures

To assess whether our manipulation was successful, we asked people to indicate their beliefs about the malleability of immoral groups with similar items to those used in Study 1 (α = .80). Group efficacy was assessed with items similar to those used in Study 1 (α = .81). Similar to Study 1, a measure of collective action was presented. We added a number of activities to this scale in order to create a wider spectrum of actions (e.g., “consumer boycott”). The scale included a total of 8 activities (α = .91). Finally, we acquired the same sociodemographic information measured in Study 1.

Results and Discussion

No significant differences were found between the two conditions in terms of the level of participants’ understanding of the text, $t(85) = .03$, $p = .97$, the extent to which it was convincing $t(85) = -1.6$, $p = .10$, and their perception of its reliability, $t(85) = 1.1$, $p = .24$. As expected, participants in the incremental condition expressed significantly higher malleability beliefs regarding immoral groups ($M = 4.20$, $SD = 1.06$) than those in the entity condition ($M = 3.63$, $SD = 1.31$), $t(85) = -2.25$, $p = .03$, $d = .48$, lending support to our manipulation.

As hypothesized, the manipulation had a significant effect on participants’ group efficacy beliefs; participants in the incremental condition reported higher levels of group efficacy ($M = 4.49$, $SD = .95$) than those in the entity condition ($M = 4.07$, $SD = 1.01$), $t(85) = -2.05$, $p = .04$, $d = .43$. The manipulation also had a significant effect on the collective action measure, $t(85) = -1.99$, $p = .05$, indicating that participants in the incremental condition were more willing to engage in collective action ($M = 3.16$, $SD = 1.26$) than those in the entity condition ($M = 2.64$, $SD = 1.15$), $d = .43$). No interaction effects of the manipulation and SES ($\beta = -.23$, $p = .49$),

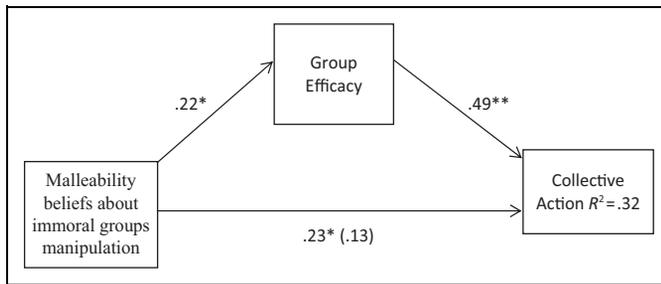


Figure 2. Group efficacy mediates the effect of experimentally induced malleability beliefs about immoral groups on collective action.

age ($\beta = -.02, p = .96$), or gender ($\beta = .02, p = .95$) on the willingness to engage in collective action were found.

Given our manipulation proved successful in affecting participants' group efficacy and collective action in the expected direction, we examined the same mediation model we found in Study 1. The manipulation's effect on collective action ($b = .57, SE = .26, t = 2.14, p = .03$) became nonsignificant after the mediator was included in the model ($b = .31, SE = .24, t = 1.29, p = .19$), and the indirect effect through group efficacy was significant ($a \times b = .26$; 95% CI: [.02, .58]) when controlling for SES, gender, and age.² Thus, in line with Study 1, but this time using an experimental manipulation of malleability beliefs about immoral groups, we increased people's perception of their in-group's capability to create change, which in turn increased their willingness to take part in collective action (Figure 2).

General Discussion

For many years, collective action's psychological and social antecedents have been examined by social scientists. Knowledge about the conditions needed for people to shake off apathy and take action concern policy makers, social movements, and citizens alike. In this article, we focused on the role of beliefs regarding the powerful and negatively perceived out-group's ability to change in its very essence. Although negative beliefs about the out-group may generally serve to foster a sense of injustice and group identity, which increase participation (Simon & Klandermans, 2001), we propose that more specific out-group malleability beliefs can foster a sense of group efficacy (the belief that the in-group can create the change it hopes for), spurring motivation for collective action.

In order to overcome negative reactions caused by direct reference to the out-group (Bar-Tal & Rosen, 2009), we chose to manipulate implicit beliefs about immoral groups in general. We reasoned that malleability beliefs about immoral groups would lead individuals to experience their own group as capable to advance change, while still maintaining the negative perception of the out-group's nature needed to induce elements of injustice and identity. Our findings from both correlational and experimental studies suggest that inducing the belief that immoral groups can change increases the willingness to take part in collective action by inducing belief in group efficacy. Future research may explore whether a *direct* focus on the

relevant out-group may lead to even stronger action-inducing processes (as could be argued from the work by Simon and Klandermans, 2001) or to defensive processes (as suggested by work by Bar-Tal & Rosen, 2009).

The significance of the current research lies within both its theoretical and applied implications. Although past research has established the risk that lies in improving relations between groups in situations with an asymmetrical power balance (Dixon et al., 2007, 2010; Saguy et al., 2009; Saguy & Chernyak-Hai, 2012; Wright & Lubensky, 2009), we narrowed this definition with a stipulation; a belief that the negatively perceived out-group can change its very nature must exist for people to believe that their own group can advance its interests. Additionally, this study also answers calls from leading scholars to better understand the factors driving beliefs in the system's stability and efficacy beliefs in the context of collective action (Wright, 2009).

Our findings further shed light on a new path in which an established psychological mechanism, in the form of implicit beliefs about immoral groups, can promote participation in collective action. As such, we join emerging research pointing to the importance of beliefs in groups' malleability. However, these beliefs have, up until now, corresponded to an extensive field aimed at promoting positive attitudes within intergroup conflict. The current research positions implicit beliefs as potentially bridging the gap between research on intergroup relations and collective action. It suggests that such beliefs can promote collective action while not addressing negative attitudes toward the out-group. Moreover, our successful use of a relatively simple manipulation (Halperin et al., 2011) in the context of collective action may serve as a basis for a variety of long-term interventions and educational programs aimed at promoting more involved and engaged citizenship.

Future research may provide further support for group malleability beliefs' ability to increase collective action tendencies in contexts other than the one used in this work. Examining our hypotheses amid the Israeli social protest enabled us to examine collective action under very real circumstances, but it would be expedient to replicate the study both when no social protests are taking place, and within different social and political contexts. Second, the use of self-reported intentions to engage in collective action as a dependent measure, though established as an indicator for actual behavior (De Weerd & Klandermans, 1999; Webb & Sheeran, 2006), limits our ability to examine our hypothesis' full impact. Future research can address this issue by involving more direct measures of collective action as well as other forms of action, less normative than those reported here. It is possible that, unlike normative collective action, nonnormative activities stem from the opposite perception of groups' *inability* to change, leading people to extreme measures of reaction to problematic and seemingly irreversible situations (Tausch et al., 2011).

In summary, the present research adds an important dimension to the rich, relevant literature on collective action and its psychological antecedents. Integrating existing models of collective action with insights from the field of social-cognitive

psychology, the current work points to malleability perceptions as an important predictor of group efficacy and collective action. Indeed, although it may be important at a general level to perceive the powerful group sustaining the status quo negatively, we showed that more specific beliefs about (the out-group's) malleability increase (in-group) efficacy beliefs and concurrent collective action tendencies. This relatively simple element adds a novel dimension to the existing framework in this domain and can further serve as a basis for interventions aimed at increasing civic engagement as well as social and political involvement.

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Notes

1. When conducting the analysis with no control variables, the general patterns remained the same, namely, the effect ($b = .36$, standard error [SE] = .12, $t = 3.13$, $p = .002$), was reduced by including the mediator in the model ($b = .21$, $SE = .11$, $t = 1.88$, $p = .06$), and the indirect effect through group efficacy was significant ($a \times b = .15$; 95% confidence interval [CI]: [.07, .27]).
2. When conducting the analysis with no control variables, the main pattern of the findings remained the same, namely, the effect ($b = .52$, $SE = .26$, $t = 1.99$, $p = .05$) was reduced by including the mediator in the model ($b = .26$, $SE = .23$, $t = 1.11$, $p = .27$). The indirect effect through group efficacy was significant ($a \times b = .26$; 95% CI: [.03, .56]).

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