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Seeking More Appreciation by Demonstrating Unappreciation and Farmers Protest



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Abstract

This thesis will test the importance of feelings of societal appreciation on protest behaviour. Until now, studies on protest behaviour have not been focused on the importance of the feeling of societal appreciation. There are many cases where protesters named unappreciation as one of their reasons to protest. The question that remains is: to what extent this is a motivator for participating in a demonstration. There are probably many people who feel unappreciated, but not everyone takes to the streets. For this study, 10 farmers will be interviewed on their participation in the protests which happened in October of 2019. To obtain the best knowledge on the effects of the feeling of societal appreciation the farmers who are selected will be the ones who did participate and who did not participate in these protests. These will be compared to their idea of societal appreciation and place in society. The goal of this research is to find out to what extent the feeling of societal appreciation played a role in choosing to participate in the demonstration.

1. Introduction

Protests about labour-related issues and unappreciation are not exceptional. In 2019 alone, teachers, caretakers and farmers from the Netherlands took to the streets to protest. Probably the most memorable protest was the one by the farmers. They blocked the highways and disrupted the public order for multiple days. Although they protested the recent policy changes which were going to happen, it might not have been the only reason to take to the streets. The farmers also demanded 're-appreciation for their jobs. (NOS, 2019) What this re-appreciation is and what role it played in their motivation protest remains unclear. This research is going to focus on this role and will focus on how it fits with current knowledge on protest behaviour.

A protest is a form of political behaviour, people take place in a type of action to accomplish their political purpose. All protests have some kind of dissatisfaction at their core. In a very simple way: people are not satisfied with the status quo, which, in some cases, means they take action. However, many types of dissatisfaction could lead to a protest. Furthermore, protest is a collective action, which means it is the discontent of a group. It has been established that policy dissatisfaction can lead to political discontent and 'unconventional' political behaviour. (Graig & Maggiotto, 1981) However, in most protests, it is somewhat more complicated. There are many cases of dissatisfaction with policy, but it does not always lead to protest. What the motivators are for protest is not always clear, most of the time there is a 'trigger', but only under certain conditions, these triggers are the cause of a protest. (Awad & Wagoner, 2020) Research about protest has many different approaches. From an economic, political and psychological point of view.

One of these approaches is the social-psychological model for collective action. This model consists of three indicators that predict participating in a protest, namely identity, injustice and efficacy. (van Zomeren & Postmes, 2008) In short, this theory states that people with shared interests, feel injustice and believe they can make a difference with their collective action are more likely to participate

in collective action. However, there are still groups that protest more regularly than others. Also, collective action does not mean blocking the streets per se. Why the farmers chose this type of collective action in the Netherlands in 2019-2020 remains unclear.

To understand the steps before the protest better, it is necessary to look at the recent history of the farmers in the Netherlands. It has been a well-known topic in the agricultural in society field of study, the distance between the 'countryside' and the 'city'. Since the industrial revolution, people move away from the countryside and the cities kept on growing. It is difficult to say the extent to which this gap is present, however, it does play a role in the perceptions of the farmers. In a study about this issue in 2003, it is said that the farmers are worried about the future and are looking for solutions and the citizens are not aware of their problems, let alone the consequences they might have on the future of the countryside. (Pijnenburg & Reus, 2003) As you can see, the research of Pijnenburg and Reus is about the perception the farmers have of the citizens. Since the second world war, farmers are struggling with their image. In the 1950s it was about stereotypes, in the 70s and the 80s it was better, but in the 90s they had suddenly many economic problems. (Karel, 2013) Research from that time points out that the people from the agricultural sector felt attacked and misunderstood by society. This brings us to the 21st century, the problem with the image of the farmers remains, the gap between the citizens and the farmers is still present even after campaigns to improve the image of the farmers. What is important to note is that research among citizens shows something different. Research done in 2005 indicates that the self-image of the farmers is lower than the actual image set by the citizens of the Netherlands. (Karel, 2013) So, where does this self-image come from? This

leads to the case chosen for this thesis, which is the farmers protest from October 2019. On this day thousands of farmers took their tractors onto the highway to protest in The Hague. On this day, and many after the people who participated in these protests disturbed the roads for their cause. The trigger for this protest was a statement of a member of the Democrats party of the Netherlands (D66). This statement included the idea of cutting the livestock of the farmers in the Netherlands in half. The idea of this member of parliament came from an ongoing crisis on nitrogen emission. (NOS, 2019) As mentioned before, the farmers also demanded re-appreciation. This may be a consequence of the gap between the countryside and the city. However, this does not explain why the farmers reacted the way they did.

In every society, some groups are more likely to protest than others. Social identity theory could explain this based on disadvantaged groups. Members of disadvantaged groups will become beware of the groups status which will lead to collective responses to improve the groups status. (Wright, Taylor, & Modhaddam, 1990) So, if you feel you are a member of a group and feel that group is disadvantaged you might feel you have to take action to improve the status of 'your' group. This can also be seen in protests which have some sort of discrimination in their core. The basic idea of this theory is that there are three steps towards political action. The first is the discrimination against an (ethnic) minority, while it may not seem that farmers are a minority, they might feel like they are treated as a minority. This

could cause them to form grievances. These grievances contributed to the mobilization of the minority for political action, such as voting. The third step is the more mobilized minority will more likely engage in collective political action. (Gurr, 1970) The discrimination could partially be integrated into the social identity theory. Being discriminated against would probably make you feel you are part of a disadvantaged group. However, in many cases, people who are part of a disadvantaged group would not say they are discriminated against per se. There are not many theories that explain how people get the feeling they are part of a disadvantaged group.

Appraisal theory could be an explanation of the feeling of being part of a low-status group. In general, appraisal is a process that detects and assess the environment for the person's well-being. Furthermore, appraisal, or the lack of it, is also a motivator for action. (Moors, Ellsworth, Sherer, & Frijda, 2013) The appraisal theory has not been implemented in social identity theory and collective action. It has been established it is a motivator for action, but not for collective or political action. Appraisal theory is mostly used as a psychological and social psychological theory (Scherer, Schorr, & Johnstone, 2001), what is not much known is how appraisal affects social or occupational groups. Furthermore, it is necessary to know if a feeling of unappreciation is an important factor in the idea of being part of a disadvantaged group.

Up until now, there has been little research on the feeling of unappreciation and how it can contribute to participating in a protest. Furthermore, it unclear is why some people from the same group protested while others did not. If some people did protest for more appreciation, why did others from the same group not? For this thesis, one main research question and three sub-questions are defined. The main question will be as follows :

How did the feeling of unappreciation affect the protest behaviour amongst farmers?

This question will give answers to the importance of the feeling of unappreciation in participating in protests. The relationship between unappreciation and protest behaviour has not been studied before. There are some small indicators that the relationship does exist, however to what extent and 8

1. What does the feeling of unappreciation entail?

This question will address all the factors which contribute to the feeling of unappreciation to understand the concept better. This research will focus on 'feelings of unappreciation', which does not mean that the unappreciation is present, but it is felt by the farmers. This question will answer when and why people feel unappreciated by something. These concepts, or dimensions, of appreciation, will be used to pair up with the protesters and non-protesters to find out which can be found where.

2. From whom do farmers in the Netherlands get the feeling of unappreciation?

If the farmers feel unappreciated, from who do they get this feeling? This question is important to find the reason for the feeling of unappreciation. It is also necessary to know to find solutions to the problem.

3. *How do farmers in the Netherlands think they can change a feeling of appreciation through protest, or cannot change through protest?*

Protests can be used for awareness, but awareness is not the same as appreciation. This question will be used to understand the feeling that people think they can change the lack of appreciation through protest. If people did not think they could change the appreciation through protest, they would probably not do it. In this question, the distinction is made between the people who protest, the ones who possibly think they could change the feeling of appreciation through protest and the ones who did not think they could change it through protest. The reason for this question is to find out who think they could change the feeling of appreciation and why they think protest is the solution to that.

To answer these questions the next part, theory, will discuss the concept of appreciation and protest with the corresponding theories. Chapter 3 is about the research design, which explains how and why this research happened the way it did. This leads to chapter 4: the analysis, where the collected data is used to answer the research questions. The last chapter is the conclusion, which gives a summary of the findings of this thesis.

2. Theory

2.1 Appreciation and protest

To understand how a feeling of unappreciation can affect protest behaviour the concept needs to be explained further. The first part of this theory section will try to give a better insight into the concept and how it can be linked to collective action. Furthermore, some theoretical concepts of protest behaviour will be integrated into the appreciation framework.

Appreciation

Appreciation can be defined as grateful recognition or awareness of the value, which means that people who feel appreciated have the feeling of being recognized for their value. (Emmons & McCullough, 2004) This recognition can be either in an economic or a social sense. Someone can be appreciated for their work and get paid for it as recognition, if this payment is not enough the people feel unappreciated. This is somewhat more complicated for societal appreciation. This appreciation comes from multiple people, and it is more about how the person who receives it, interpreters, it. People who do not feel appreciated do not feel recognized for their value by others. Appreciation is an emotion that can be directed to one's self or someone else, however, in most cases, a feeling of appreciation comes from other people. (Emmons & McCullough, 2004) This psychological theory explains appreciation as an individual feeling. Although it does not mean that people could be feeling unappreciated if their group is unappreciated. There are not many theories yet on the concept of unappreciation and how it leads to action. However, some other theories can be linked to this concept. The first is already mentioned before, the feeling of discrimination. In the last decades, there have been countless protests which were about discrimination. For instance, just recently, the black lives matter protests in the United States in which over 15 million Americans participated. (Buchanan, Bui, & Patel, 2020) Also, 60 years ago in the United States, the peaceful protests by Martin Luther King Jr. (Miller, 2018) This may not seem as relevant to the farmers, but it can explain the process they go through before the protest. In discriminations theory, once a person, or group, feel discriminated against, they start to form grievances. This contributes to the mobilization for political action. The more mobilized minority is then more likely to engage in a protest. (Gurr, 1970) The hypothesis for this is that next to discrimination, unappreciation can also lead to grievances. However, it is not a curtain. What is known is that dissatisfaction is a clear motivator for political action. If people are not satisfied with the status quo there is a higher chance of them being politically active. In this case, the farmers are not satisfied for multiple reasons. This makes it harder to find out if the feeling of unappreciation affected their protest behaviour. Right now there are some indicators that it did influence the farmers, but it is not yet known how the group could react to unappreciation.

Social identity theory

The social identity theory can explain how people could feel unappreciated on behalf of their group. This theory explains the behaviour of members of a disadvantaged group. If a group is exposed to a certain inequality, members of this group will be more aware of the intergroup structure. Once members find the structure illegitimate or unstable, the members of the low-status group will find alternatives to improve the status of the group. Examples of these alternatives can be acceptance of the groups status or some kind of action, which can be collective or individual. (Wright, Taylor, & Modhaddam, 1990) In this case, the individual action which a person does is mostly to improve their condition. So, there might be people who do not participate in collective action and chose to improve one's condition. If this is not possible these people will likely participate in collective action. The first step of this collective action is within the norms of the existing system. If that is not helping the group is likely to engage in collective action outside of the norms of the system. (Wright, Taylor, & Modhaddam, 1990) Although helpful in understanding the group's reaction to some injustice, this theory does not give an insight into what type of injustice the groups respond to. Furthermore, it does not explain how the members of the group feel that the intergroup structure is illegitimate.

Appraisal theory

Most literature on appreciation can be found on appraisal and recognition. Appraisal is very close to appreciation, it refers to judgement and assessment of the value of something. From this, a theory has been developed, appraisal theory. This is a psychological theory, it can be used to explain the process people go through when they do or do not get appreciation. Furthermore, it explains which emotions come from the appreciation or lack of appreciation. In general, the theory is the claim that emotions come from evaluations, in other words, how an individual feels refers to the appraisals someone gets in events or situations. (Scherer, Schorr, & Johnstone, 2001)

In this theory the individual differences in emotional response to something can come from differences in appraisal, however, the interpretation of events cause these emotions. Another part of appraisal theory is that it distinguishes the difference between the reaction to negative appraisal. This appraisal model has two outcomes, sadness and anger. The former occurs when an individual perceives to have no control of the situation, which means they do not believe they can change the appraisal in any way. The latter refers to the opposite, individuals believe they can change the current situation, they will get angry. Anger is known to be a protest emotion, it is one of the three big indicators of protest behaviour. This anger is mostly an indicator for protest if it is at some perceived injustice. (Jost, Becker, Osborne, & Bedaan, 2017) This process will be explained more in the third part of the theory. For protest, this would mean that some people interpret some event different with two outcomes: anger or another emotion. The people who interpret an event different and get angry will protest sooner than people who have a different emotion from the same appraisal or non-appraisal event. All of it begins with an event, people get appreciated or they will have an emotion to the appreciation which would lead to action. This would partially explain how the farmers go from unappreciation to actual protesting.

However, there must be an event that would trigger the feeling of unappreciation in the first place. It is not clear whether people who did not protest just have a different emotion from unappreciation or that those people do not feel it enough to eventually protest.

Protest and protest behaviour

To understand the relationship between appreciation and protest behaviour, first, the concept of a protest needs to be explained. Protest can be distinguished based on three types of actions. The first distinction is based on inaction and action, so who does something and who does not, meaning someone can support a cause but has the choice to participate in any action. The second is based on the difference between an action for personal conditions and an action for improving the conditions for a group someone is aligned with (collective action). (Van Stekelenburg & Klandermans, 2013) The difference between improving conditions for one's self and the group will be discussed later.

Protest and emotions

Protest behaviour can have many causes, for this research the focus is on the feeling of appreciation. How a feeling can cause some kind of collective action has been explained in various studies. Van Stekelenburg and Klandermans defined five social psychological approaches on protest behaviour, namely grievances, efficacy, identification, emotions and social embeddedness (Van Stekelenburg & Klandermans, 2013) Many of these might be related to the feeling of unappreciation. The relation between emotions and protest behaviour might explain more about how a feeling of unappreciation could affect protest behaviour. Emotions in protest function in two ways, as accelerators or amplifiers. The accelerators make a cause move faster, while amplifiers make a cause sound louder. In the case of protest, amplifiers make the motives to join a protest stronger and accelerators make someone join a movement faster which means it would turn faster into action. (Van Stekelenburg & Klandermans, 2013) In the case of this research, it is most relevant to look at the accelerators, it is expected that the unappreciation has been an accelerator in the farmer's protest. Protest behaviour is a collective action, a group with the same goal who expresses their ideas through a demonstration. In this collective action, a group can develop a collective emotion, also called a group-based emotion. The overall protest emotion is anger, it has been shown that group-based anger is an important motivator when it comes to protesting participation. Something or someone has to trigger this group-based anger which will lead to more willingness to join a demonstration. (Van Stekelenburg & Klandermans, 2013) So, the farmers probably had this group-based anger, a possible explanation of this could be that they felt unappreciated.

Relative deprivation theory

One of the approaches to protest from Klandermans and Van Stekelenburg was grievances. In every protest grievances are present. They can be explained as illegitimate inequality, feelings of relative deprivation and feelings of injustice. (Van Stekelenburg & Klandermans, 2013) From relative deprivation, a theory has been developed. This theory can be divided into the group level and the individual level. The former refers to comparisons between groups, this group compares themselves to

another group who is, according to them, treated better. The other, egoistic relative deprivation, refers to comparing a personal situation with the previous personal situation. These are all related to discontent, which can be expressed through protest. (Onyango, 2020) To apply this to the protest behaviour, people who will feel like other groups are treated better will protest more often. This means that the group who did not protest probably does not think that the group or themselves are treated worse than other groups in society.

Social deprivation on the individual level can be divided into intra-personal deprivation and interpersonal deprivation. The latter refers to individuals who compare their situation with the persons around them. Intrapersonal deprivation refers to individuals who compare their situation to their previous situation. From previous research, it seems that interpersonal deprivation is more likely to lead to collective action. (Walker & Smith, 2002) For this research would mean that the people who did protest feel like people around them are being appreciated more. These people would compare themselves more with the people around them and would feel less appreciated by the government and the Dutch people. The intrapersonal deprivation should still have an effect on protest behaviour, but the interpersonal deprivation should be found more in general and should be found more by the people who protested and less by the people who did not.

The intrapersonal situation is especially interesting when it is coupled with an economic situation, the new policy could change the economic situation of farmers. The feeling of unappreciation could come from not getting what you deserve. If the farmers feel they deserve more or the same money they get, they would feel unappreciated and therefore could protest. It is expected that the people who protested felt more than their economic situation could change if the policy was implemented.

The first sub-question is about what unappreciation entails. To get the best understanding of unappreciation a scheme is made to define appreciation. This scheme will consist of the dimensions of appreciation and whether it would be seen back in protesters or non-protesters. The table below gives an insight into the hypothesis. Every theory is mentioned and the expected feeling the protesters and non-protesters have. After the theory section, these will be used to create the interview questions.

Table 1: Appreciation in protest			
Dimension of appreciation		Protesters	Non – protesters
Social identity theory		Feel that the status of farmers is low by some kind of injustice. Want to change the status of the group with some sort of action	Do not feel the status of the groups is low or have accepted that they are part of a disadvantaged group. Try to improve their status in the group

Appraisal theory	negative appraisal	People who protested would feel anger because of the negative appraisal they got	People who did not protest would feel another emotion, such as sadness or a feeling of loss. They would be less angry
Relative deprivation theory	Intrapersonal	People would feel that their situation is changed and they are less appreciated	It is expected that people do not feel their situation is different than before. They could feel less appreciated, but it would be more with the protesters
	Interpersonal	Should be found here more than with the non-protesters, this affects the direct protest behaviour	

2.2 Cause of feeling unappreciated

As mentioned before, in recent history a gap between the countryside and the city has been developed. The people of the Netherlands do not have strong ties to farmers and vice versa. It seems that this gap has grown over the years. This is not strange, since people are still moving from the countryside to the cities. Furthermore, from 1950 up until 2014 the number of farms is decreasing with an average of 15 companies a day. (CBS, 2014) This does not say that this results in unappreciation, although it might be an explanation for the feeling the farmers have. Who also needs to be mentioned as a cause for feeling unappreciated is the Dutch government. The protest of the farmers was mainly about a new policy made by the Dutch government. What can be learned from previous studies about policy and protest is that the group who protests does not feel represented by the government. (Thomassen & Prentoulis, 2012) This concept is close to unappreciation. If people feel they are not represented, they do not feel they are of value. This is why the farmers probably will feel they are unappreciated by the government.

Next to knowing who causes the unappreciation, it is necessary to understand from who they need appreciation. Farming is a profession, which means the farmers do not feel appreciated for their job. In the appraisal theory, it is mentioned that people need an appraisal from someone who is above them in their job. (Scherer, Schorr, & Johnstone, 2001) Most of the farmers in the Netherlands are self-

employed, with 81% of all farmers working on a family farm in 2018. (CBS, 2018) Because the farmers are self-employed it is not easy to say from whom they need an appraisal, because they do not have a direct person or organization for which they work. In their statement it is said that they need the re-appreciation from the Dutch people, however, this group is not the same as someone who is above you. There is not much known in theory about from which groups you need appraisal if you are self-employed. Another reason for the protest was the appreciation from parliament. It could be that the farmers will also need appreciation from the government/parliament. This could be because it is an organization that has the power to change policy, which means it is above them. Another organization that should be mentioned is the LTO, this is the biggest farmers interest organization in the Netherlands. It has over 35000 ‘agricultural entrepreneurs’ as a member and has as its goal to strengthen the societal and economical position of farmers in the Netherlands. The LTO did not organize the protest, but they did support the protest. Because the farmers went to protest outside of the LTO it could mean that they think the LTO does not do their job good enough.

It is clear that the protesters need more appreciation, the agractie mentioned that the farmers need appreciation from the Dutch people and parliament, however, from theory it does make more sense that there are other people/institutions which would be above them from which they need appreciation. For the protesters, it should be found more that they need appreciation from parliament more than from the Dutch people since that is an institution that creates the policies and has more power. In the case of the non-protesters, it is not clear, these people would probably not have less need of appreciation in general.

Like the first table, this table shows the expected findings from the protesters and the non-protesters. This part is less based on theory, in the data and documents part of this thesis, this will be explained further.

Table 2: Causes feeling of unappreciation		
	Protesters	Non-protesters
Cause feeling of unappreciation	The gap between Dutch people	Would have fewer causes of feeling unappreciated
By who do they not feel appreciated	Government, Dutch people	**
From who do they need appreciation	LTO, the Dutch people, Government	**

2.3 Change appreciation through protest

The third sub-question is about how people think they can change something through protest. In a collective action, effectiveness is a predictor of people’s intentions to participate in a protest. Effectiveness can be defined as whether an action will influence key decision-makers. (Hornsey, 2006)

This issue is also explained by Klandermans and van Stekelenburg, which is called efficacy. Efficacy refers to the belief and expectations of people to alter the upcoming policy changes through protest. This belief can either be in group efficacy, which means group related issues can be solved by collective efforts, or by political efficacy, the belief that any political action can have an impact on policy changes. The beliefs of people can be divided into internal and external political efficacy, the former meaning the belief to understand politics and to participate in politics and the latter meaning trust in government. The external efficacy is the feeling that the government will respond to the demands one gives through political action. The internal efficacy is more about one's understanding of politics to feel that someone can participate in politics. (Chamberlain, 2012) To apply this to protest behaviour, studies have shown that feelings for efficacy are correlated with participation in the protest. This is because if someone believes that participation in a protest affects policies, the sooner someone is willing to participate. This idea, political cynicism, is the opposite of political efficacy and can reinforce and reduce participation. If someone thinks they have been treated fairly and they do not believe that they can change policy, they are less likely to participate in a protest. (Van Stekelenburg & Klandermans, 2013)

Another theory that can be linked to this subject is government responsiveness. The interaction between citizens and the state is important for trust in government. Literature on this topic suggests that if people feel the government is responsive to them it would affect their political participation. It has been established that the more a government the more people participate. (Sjoberg, Mellon, & Peixoto, 2015) In general, a responsive government is a liberal government, a government that is open to protest. The people believe the government will act on their protest. (Zheng & Meng, 2020) For this case, this could mean that the protesters went to protest for the changing of the policy in this situation. However, it does not mean that this is the only reason people protested. If this theory is applied to appreciation, it could be that people believe they can change the appreciation by protesting, they would be more likely to protest. It is expected that people who did not protest do not believe they can change the appreciation from society or politics through protest. This does not say that people who did not protest do feel appreciated, it would just mean that these people do not think they could change it through protest. It could be that these farmers have other ideas on how they could change the appreciation, or that they believe that protests have an opposite effect on their goal. This does not answer the third sub-question, which is how the farmers think they can change the feeling of appreciation through protest. This is a 'gap' in the protest literature, it is known that if people think they could change something through protest, they would protest earlier. What is not known is how these people think they could change it. The answer to this question can mainly be found with the protesters, they are the people who possibly think they could change the appreciation through protest. Nevertheless, the people who did not protest would also have reasons to not protest, which is why this question will be asked to both groups.

Lastly, in the table of the third research question, these are the expected believes and ideas from the protesters and the non-protesters.

Table 3: Efficacy & political cynicism		
	Protesters	Non-protesters
External Efficacy	The belief they can change policy through protest can be that this is the reason to protest. Could be that they feel they can change appreciation through protest	Do not believe they can change policy through protest. Could be that they do not believe they can change appreciation through protest.
Internal Efficacy	Do feel they are familiar enough with politics to participate in a protest	Do not think they are familiar with politics to participate in a protest
Political cynicism	Does not think they have been treated fairly	Thinks they have been treated fairly

3. Data and documents

Research design

The goal of this research is to provide an understanding of the mechanism by which the lack of appreciation affects participating in a protest. This can be obtained best with a small scale qualitative study. The issue of societal appreciation in protest is too complicated to solve without qualitative research. The farmers named the lack of appreciation in their reasons to protest, however, it is not determined if the people who did not protest have the same feeling or another feeling. Since there could be many more reasons to protest other questions need to be asked to see if there are relevant differences amongst the groups. Also, there is a possibility that the farmers think different about what appreciation should be. So, to find out what appreciation means for these respondents and how it affected their protest behaviour a small scale qualitative research is needed. The research question of this study is how these people go from the feeling of unappreciation into participating in a protest. To find out, these people will get interview questions that are derived from the theories in the theory section. The beginning of the interviews will be about the protest and protest behaviour in general, after that all the questions will focus on appreciation.

Case selection and sampling

In May and June of 2020 nine interviews are held with farmers in the Netherlands. There are four interviews with people who did not participate in the protests and five with people who did participate in the protests of October. The goal of the research was to have an equal representation of both groups, however, due to unforeseen circumstances, there will be one participant less in the group of people who did not protest. On the first of October 2019, the main protest was in The Hague, but some respondents only protested in the streets of their village. Those people will belong to the group of protesters because they made the choice to protest. The respondents will be recruited by a personal network and by a so-called snowball sampling strategy. This means the respondents will be asked for other people in their network who might be willing to participate in this study. Most of the interviews will be held in the province of Friesland and all the people will be interviewed at their home or by online communication, the last one had the preference, because of the COVID-19 situation. The respondents had the opportunity to choose between the interviews online and the interviews in person. When the interviews were at the respondents' homes all the measurements from the RIVM were followed. All the interviewees will be divided into age categories of 10 years and their age is between 20-50 years. For these interviews, there is no selection in membership of interest organizations. The individuals need to have their farm or are part owners of a farm. This selection criterion is because the people who are an owner of a farm are directly related to the nitrogen policy plan and their income is directly derived from their company.

To find the difference between the two groups, the respondents, the ones who protested and the ones that did not, will be as identical as possible. Furthermore, the interview questions have as many as

possible similar questions to compare them in the best possible way. The questions for the interviews are all derived from the sub-questions. The goal is that the interviews are 35-45 min each, however, it is more important to have answers to all the questions from the interview protocol, which means some interviews are somewhat shorter or longer than the goal.

The group of people who did not protest will be selected based on that they did not want to protest. This could be explained best via the theory about mobilization for protest. The mobilization theory consists of four steps, participants of a protest are in the last step of mobilization, which means they will participate in a demonstration. People who did not participate in a protest could have many reasons, to make sure people are fit for the research the mobilization theory will be used. The first step of this is the mobilization potential. This is the group of people that could be mobilized by a social movement. This group is concerned with the issue, which in this case is farmers. The second stage is that people need to be targeted, which means they need to be asked to participate in the demonstration. The targeting of participation can either be by passively receiving information or by being personally asked to participate. Thirdly, people need to be willing to participate in the protest. This means that they consciously decide to participate in the protest. The last step is being able to participate in a protest, if someone is not able to protest, the other reasons do not matter anymore. (Van Laer, 2011) For this research the focus will be on the third step, farmers who are willing or not willing to participate. People are selected on their desire no to protest.

This research is focused on the effect of societal appreciation on protest behaviour. To make sure this can be studied the fourth step is being taken into consideration. The goal is to find people who consciously decided to or not to protest. This means that the fourth step needs to be taken out, all of the people who are asked to participate in this research need to have been able to protest. Before the selection, the non-protesters will be asked if they could protest, if not, by any circumstances, they are not selected for this study. This is needed because these people will give an insight into the reasons not to protest with the exclusion of not being able to protest. To get the best view of the group of farmers the people who are chosen have different companies. The variation is being made in organic or regular farms, most of the companies are dairy farms, this is because there are many dairy farms in the Netherlands. Furthermore, they were mostly in each other's network. This is an effect of the snowball sampling strategy.

Participants

Table 4: Participants protesters				
	<i>Age category</i>	<i>Gender</i>	<i>Occupation</i>	<i>Member of agricultural interest organization</i>
<i>Protester 1</i>	40-50	Male	Dairy farm	LTO
<i>Protester 2</i>	40-50	Female	Chicken farm	LTO, FDF
<i>Protester 3</i>	30-40	Male	Organic dairy farm	LTO, FDF

<i>Protester 4</i>	30-40	Male	Dairy farm	FDF
<i>Protester 5</i>	30-40	Male	Dairy farm and employee of animal feeding company	LTO

Table 5: Participants non-protesters				
	<i>Age category</i>	<i>Gender</i>	<i>Occupation</i>	<i>Member of agricultural interest organization</i>
<i>Non protester 1</i>	30-40	Male	Organic dairy farm	None
<i>Non protester 2</i>	30-40	Male	Dairy farm	LTO*
<i>Non protester 3</i>	20-30	Male	Dairy farm	LTO*
<i>Non protester 4</i>	40-50	Male	Dairy farm	LTO*

*active membership

In table 7 the membership of farmers interest organizations is displayed. As seen protester 2 and protester 3 are a member of the 'FDF' which is the farmers' defence force. This organization started in April of 2019 and has been very active in the mobilization and the organization of the farmers protest in October 2019. The LTO are the biggest farmers interest organization, which has been mentioned before. The reason the respondents are asked for their membership is to know whether they were asked to participate. It has also been proven that people who are a member of interest organizations are more active in protest participation. (Klandermans & de Weerd, 2000) To make sure this is not a third variable in this research membership of the organizations will be taken into account.

Operationalization

As mentioned, the data for this research will be interviewed, which means qualitative research. The main reason for this is to find the deeper reasons why people protest or why not. The best way to find answers to this question is by doing interviews. These interviews will be around 35-45 min per case. Most of the questions are the same for the protesters and the non-protesters.

All the interviews are transcribed for analysis. The system for the analysis is qualitative coding. The relevant pieces of the answers to the questions will get a label to compare the answers between the two groups. The interview questions will be based on the theories discussed before. All the questions which are asked can be found in the interview protocols for people who protested and those who did not. (Appendix A) The interview protocol starts with general questions about the participants, which can be found in Tables 4 and 5. After the general questions the participants were asked about their reasons to protest or not to protest. This question is essential for the interview since it is expected that there are many differences in the groups. The second part of the interviews are questions derived from theory, which can be seen in the tables below. The questions in table 6 are used to determine if the farmers did or did not feel appreciated. The questions will be asked to both groups to see whether the protesters did feel less appreciated than the non-protesters.

Table 6: Questions appreciation in protest		
Dimension of appreciation	Theory	Questions
Relative deprivation	Intrapersonal	Do you feel that the appreciation for farmers has changed over the years? How did it change? Do you think your financial situation would change much if the nitrogen plan would continue?
	Interpersonal	Do you feel other people around you (not farmers) are appreciated more for their profession? Why? Do you feel that people in the Netherlands are more appreciated? Why?
Appraisal	negative appraisal	What do you feel about the unappreciation of farmers? Could you explain the feeling of unappreciation?
Social identity		Do you feel farmers in the Netherlands are less appreciated than other people in the Netherlands?

Table 7 shows the questions which are asked to find out who causes the feeling of unappreciation and who do not appreciate the farmers enough, If the people do not have the feeling of unappreciation, they will be asked by who they do feel appreciated more than others.

Table 7: Questions Appreciation from others	
Theory	Questions
Who needs farmers appreciation?	Who do not appreciate the farmers enough right now?
Who causes unappreciation?	Who causes the feeling of unappreciation of the farmers in the Netherlands? Who causes that feeling for you?

In table 8 the questions for efficacy are displayed. People who do feel appreciated are still asked if they think the protests had a positive effect. After these questions, the participants are asked if they feel the protest eventually affected appreciation and the other goals of the protest. Non-protesters are asked if they would have participated in the protest knowing what they know now to see if they are still sceptical about the protests, during the interview they are also asked if they are supporters of the protest.

Table 8: Efficacy and political cynicism questions	
Theory	Question
External Efficacy	Before the protests, did you think that something would change? Do you feel the appreciation changed?
Political cynicism	Do you think the farmers have been treated fairly? Do you think farmers have been treated with respect?

This thesis also focuses on solving the lack of appreciation for the farmers. For this reason, there are some general questions made to see what the farmers think how this problem could be solved. These questions can be found in table 9.

Table 9: General questions	
Question	Explanation
Could the problem of appreciation be changed by something else than protest?	People who did not protest might have other ideas on how to solve the issue without going to protest
What should happen to get more appreciation for farmers?	To solve the issue of the feeling of appreciation with farmers there should be some solutions. The farmers will be asked what they could do and what society/the government can do.
How do you see the future of your company?	For understanding how people see the future of their company.

4. Analysis

In this section, the answers given by the participants are used to create a general idea of both groups. The interviews will be compared amongst each other, which means they will be compared from people who protested and people who did not. They will also be compared amongst the five people who participated, which means the people who are the 'same' in this research. This will also be done for the farmers who did not participate.

As mentioned the relevant parts of the interviews will get the label which is the theoretical concept they belong to. So, the answers to the questions about the theory and the relevant parts of the answers will be labelled with the part of the theory that it belongs to. The transcribed interviews can be found in the appendix. (Appendix B) The analysis is divided into four parts, the first three are the sub-questions of this research and the last is the analysis of the opinions of the solving of the lack appreciation issue of the farmers.

4.1 Appreciation and protest

This part of the analysis will provide an insight into the part of the interviews which are linked to the first sub-question. This question is as follows: *What does the feeling of unappreciation entail?* For this part, three main theories are used. Because this part discusses the appreciation and protests the answers to the question of why people did or did not protest is also discussed in this section.

Social identity

This theory is integrated after conducting the interviews, therefore answers to other questions are reviewed for finding answers for this theory. This theory mostly is about how someone sees the intergroup status. It is expected that the protesters feel more than the group they are in have a low status. The non-protesters are the ones who would not feel that the group has a low status or have accepted that they are in a disadvantaged group. A question which is asked in all the interviews is if the farmers feel they are less appreciated than other people in the Netherlands. In general, the non-protesters are more likely to answer this question with answers like: "There are more people in the Netherlands who are more unappreciated". While protesters feel more that they are a group who 'always the one who is bad in the news'. Here it is already shown who they think is the reason they feel unappreciated.

Reasons to protest

Before the participants got any questions about appreciation they got the question of why they chose to participate or not participate in the protest. This question is to see what the most important reasons people were to participate or not participate in the protest. Furthermore, it is analyzed if the people require societal appreciation or for other appreciation. This is needed to see how people see the appreciation and what kind of appreciation the protesters and non-protesters need.

The protesters had very similar answers to the question of why they did protest. They all talk about the decisions and decision making of the government. For instance 'I do not agree with the new rules the government puts on us, you have to show them, in a good way, that you do not agree'. Teo out

of 5 claims that the decisions are based on wrong research and say the farmers are put in a bad light. All of the farmers also talk about what they read in the media, they feel they are not being treated fairly. What is interesting is that most of these farmers do not mention appreciation as a reason to protest, by some it is seen that it could be an underlying reason, however it is not directly mentioned by the respondents.

The question is different for the non-protesters, they are asked about their reasons not to protest and their opinion about the protest. These people have many different reasons why they did not protest, but there are some resemblances in the answers. In general, people do not feel they could change something with a protest: 'If you live with the idea you can change something with a protest, you are wrong'. Others were afraid of the outcome of the protest, that it would not be safe and people would turn against the farmers. 'A conversation would solve more than a protest'.

Intrapersonal

Intrapersonal refers to the changing of appreciation over the years, it is expected that the people who protested feel that the appreciation has changed much over the years. Non-protesters would have less feeling of this 'loss'. Also, they would have fewer problems with less appreciation in general.

All the farmers, both protesters and non-protesters thought the appreciation for farmers has changed over the years. Many farmers named the issue that the people in the Netherlands do not know what is going on on a farm. Some people explain this by the example that in the past there were many more farms. People had more farmers in their family and social life. People in 'the city' do not know what happens on a farm anymore, the gap between the farmers and the citizens has gotten bigger over the years. These are some arguments mentioned by the protesters. They also explain the change by mentioning the start of social media and the left spectrum getting bigger in the Netherlands. One protester calls it: the rise of another way of thinking, of politics and the citizens. For non-protesters is this almost the same, these people also acknowledge that the appreciation has changed over the years. 'companies get bigger, fewer people are farmers, which means you have less link with other people.

For all the farmers the financial situation would not change much, most say it would not change at all. Almost everyone said they have the right permits to keep their company going. Other farmers said that they would not have a problem with the government buying their company, 'if they give a nice sum of money, with as a goal to start their company somewhere else again, for instance in Denmark or Germany where it would be easier to stay a farmer. So, this was, as expected for many farmers, not a reason to protest, some even said they did it more for the group than for their situation.

Interpersonal

For this part, a clear difference between protesters and non-protesters is seen. The question of other people are appreciated is answered very differently. People who did not protest are more likely to answer this question with that other people are less appreciated and name groups such as teachers, care staff and some even say 'everyone feels that they are not appreciated'. This is different from the protesters, there

people feel more they are less appreciated or are more the ones who are put in a bad light more than others.

The other part of the interpersonal theory is that people feel that others around them are appreciated more, or unappreciated less, than others. Many participants did not feel that the people around them were more appreciated. Some of the protesters did mention that other people do not have as many groups who are directed against them. They also mentioned that other people do not have to deal with media and other groups who put them in a bad light.

Non-protesters are more moderate in their answers, some say that everybody does not feel appreciated. An example: 'If you have watched the news the last year you see many people do not feel appreciated, people in care, teachers and many others. What was mentioned by one non-protester is that he felt that there was a difference in the kind of appreciation they got. This respondent said the farmers got enough financial appreciation, but the societal appreciation is not enough.

Appraisal theory

For appraisal theory, the participant was asked what they felt about appreciation. It was expected that the protesters were mostly angry about appreciation. For non-protesters, this would be more sadness. Most of the respondents did not say one of these emotions directly, however, there are some emotions said which can be linked to these emotions. If one of the answers cannot be linked to one of these emotions it will be analyzed separately.

In general, people did not answer with typical emotions, the respondents of the non-protesters group were, in general, more indifferent. 'I get enough appreciation from people' or 'I do not care what people say about other farmers'. These were some regular answers from the non-protesters. What can be seen in their interviews is that these people feel that they are appreciated enough, however almost all of them feel farmers are not appreciated enough. These people take the accusations of the farmers less personal than the group who did protest. Sadness is not mentioned by any of the respondents.

The group who did protest named more emotions, they talk about other people, politicians or the media making them angry or put them in a bad mood. However, most of them say that it is so much that they do not feel anything about it anymore. 'I cannot read all day, I do not have the time for that

4.2 Appreciation from others

The second part of the analysis, solving the lack of appreciation, cannot be done without knowing from who the farmers need appreciation. The agractie mentioned that the farmers need appreciation from citizens of the Netherlands and government, it is expected that the farmers need more appreciation from the government than from the citizens of the Netherlands, however, it is not known which type of appreciation is needed from these groups.

The second part of this analysis is about the cause of the unappreciation, this is different from the first part because there might be groups who cause appreciation without the farmers feeling that those groups are important.

What causes the feeling of unappreciation

In the interviews, the people were asked about who causes the unappreciation and from who they need more appreciation. In most interviews, the participants talk about groups or organizations in their reasons to protest. For instance, some participants give a reason to protest that people in the Netherlands know how important they are. If they give such answers during the interviews to other questions it will be used for this part of the analysis.

For the protesters it was clear that they did it for appreciation from the citizens of the Netherlands, most of them did not believe they could change something in politics about appreciation. It was mostly about letting the Dutch people know what they do and what they stand for. When looking at the interviews, it is seen that they need different appreciation from the different groups. From the government, they mostly need to feel that they are treated equally as the rest of the Netherlands. From the citizens, they need more appreciation in general. Which mostly meant, less criticism (can be linked to the low-status group) and being willing to pay a higher food price. The respondents are happy about the protest when looking at the appreciation from citizens. Some feel that the protest was very good for putting farmers back in society. The respondents are not happy about the results in government, they do not think anything is going to change. One non-protester mentioned something like this: ‘We have a good feeling after the protest, but nothing is going to change. The non-protesters were asked if they support the protests. All of them were positive about the first protest, but they also are afraid the appreciation will change if the farmers continue to protest, they think they will lose the ‘goodwill’ of the citizens if the protesters will continue. Most of the non-protesters said they had enough appreciation from people around them, but are afraid the other protesters could change the general perception of farmers.

The cause of unappreciation can be found in many parts of the interview, many groups are named before the question. For this analysis, the groups which cause the feeling of unappreciation can be found in table 12.

Groups mentioned	Protesters (5 total)	Non-protesters (4 total)
Media	5	3
‘Left’ parties	4	3
Animal rights organizations	4	4
People who live in ‘the cities’	3	2
Dutch people	2	2
Government	2	2

It is clear that the people who protested name in general more groups than the people who did not protest. What is interesting is that almost all the participants mentioned the media in the interview. Reasons for

this were that the farmers felt that they were framed as animal abusers, climate polluters and that they work too much with toxic materials. After these answers, the question was asked if they feel part of the group farmers. All of the responders answered yes. This led to the question if they feel that they are attacked as a group, or that they feel this individually. Most of the farmers felt addressed when the media writes about farmers in general. This could be another reason most of the farmers named the media as a cause for the feeling of unappreciation. Some of the participants also named some groups together. For instance, one said: ‘The left parties and animal rights organizations know better how to work with the media., we do not know how to do that well’.

4.3 Change the feeling of appreciation

The most differences between the groups are expected in efficacy. People who believe they can change politics are more likely to participate in a protest. Non-protesters are more likely to think they cannot change policy and politics. Also, it is expected that the non-protesters think they have been treated fairly. People who think they have been treated with respect and fairly are less likely to protest. Furthermore, it is asked if people think something would change if they participate in a protest. All these factors will answer the third sub-question: *How do farmers in the Netherlands think they can change a feeling of appreciation through protest, or cannot change through protest?*

Efficacy

First, the internal efficacy is taken into account. Internal efficacy is the feeling that you are familiar enough with politics to participate in a protest. It was expected that the group who did not protest would say they are not familiar enough with politics to participate in a protest. This is not found in any of the interviews. The typical answer this group gave was that they thought it would not change anything. The idea of this group was that they knew politics in a way that they knew nothing was going to change for them. This is also found with the group that did protest. They also mentioned that they did not think they can change policy, however, they seem a little less sceptical about the effect it had on the view of the farmers by society. The group that did not protest was sure that the public was not going to be positive about farmers because of such a protest and thought there were other ways to solve the problem.

The latter also explains a little how the interviewees reacted to external efficacy. In this case, a difference is found between the groups. The group that did protest was somewhat more positive about the fact that they could change policy. This group was mostly surprised by the effect it had on the Dutch people and the media. However, two of the five protesters mentioned that they do not think it is a good idea to protest again because they are scared the people will turn against the farmers. The other three are more positive about protesting again and are willing to go on until their problem is solved.

Political cynicism

Political cynicism is about being treated fairly by politics. This question had many answers about the research of the RIVM. The RIVM researched nitrogen emissions in the Netherlands, in this part, there are not many differences between the protesters and non-protesters. All the farmers say they are not

treated fairly by the government. They do not feel that they are treated equally, they feel that they are the ones who have to solve the nitrogen crisis while many other companies do not get restrictions from the government. An example that is used much is KLM, the farmers think that companies such as KLM do not get the same rules and restrictions as they got.

This may also be part of the feeling of discrimination. The farmers feel that they are, compared to other occupational groups, discriminated in the way that they get all the rules and restrictions. They feel they are being punished for polluting, while other companies are not.

5. Conclusion

The goal of this research was to find the answer to: *How did the feeling of unappreciation affect the protest behaviour amongst farmers?* For the conclusion, all the sub-questions will be discussed with some recommendations about what should change to solve the unappreciation problem.

The first sub-question was: What does a feeling of unappreciation entail. In this research, it is found that appreciation has multiple dimensions. First, there is a difference in societal appreciation and financial appreciation. This research found that the appreciation mentioned in the farmers' protest of October 1st was societal. Societal appreciation can be linked to some dimensions; interpersonal relative deprivation, intrapersonal relative deprivation and appraisal theory. There are not many differences found between protesters and non-protesters in the interpersonal relative deprivation. So, this would not have much effect on the protest participation. By intrapersonal there were some differences between the groups, the protesters felt that they were less appreciated by other people than the non-protesters. Appraisal theory had the same results, the protesters were, in general, angrier about the situation than the non-protesters. All in all, this means that the protesters feel less appreciated and feel more unappreciated than the people who did not protest.

The second sub-question is about who causes the unappreciation and by whom the farmers feel unappreciated. It is found that the farmers who did protest need more appreciation from the Dutch citizens. The people who did not protest feel that they are appreciated by people around them and feel that it is enough. If we look at from whom the feeling of unappreciation comes, the media is mentioned by every one of the respondents. This is remarkable since this is not found in theory. Also, both groups mention the distance between the farmers and the public. This is an important issue since it has been a topic for many years now and it does not have a solution. When asked about who the farmers got less appreciation, the protesters mentioned little more groups, but not enough to conclude that they felt much less appreciated than the group that did not protest.

The third sub-question was about how people think they could change appreciation through protest. Most of the non-protesters were sceptical about any change at all but were surprised with the effect of the first protest. The ones who protested did not think they could change policy or change much in politics, they wanted to show that they did not agree with the choices made by the government. However, these people did have the feeling that they could change their feeling of appreciation from the citizens. These people felt that they needed to make a statement to get the attention of citizens. Most protesters said that they knew there could be more appreciation because there was appreciation in the past, but people need to know what farmers are and do to appreciate them. From this, it is also not enough to conclude that the protesters felt much less appreciated than the group that did not protest.

All in all, it does seem that the feeling of unappreciation could be the step for the feeling of injustice, which is missing in the social identity theory. However, it could be said that the injustice for the group is the policy in this protest. From the interviews, it seems that the protesters are more interested in changing policy than changing appreciation. This confirms the external efficacy theory, the people

who believe they can change policy will protest more. There are some small indicators found that the people who did protest felt more unappreciated, but it is not enough to say that it has a real effect on participating in a protest. The differences between the groups are little and there are many other reasons the farmers protested, such as policy and ‘making a statement. This research does provide a better insight into the state of the social agricultural sector and their process before the protest. Therefore, there is a part written about how the farmers could solve the lack of appreciation.

This research has given a better insight into the underlying reasons that are present in protests. Still, the case of the Dutch farmers is an interesting topic to research, since there is still much happening in this field. For instance, the gap between the city and the countryside has been mentioned in this research, but more research can give a more clear path towards understanding the attitude of farmers. Unfortunately, this is missing in this thesis, it did cover what causes the unappreciation, but not if this feeling is legitimate. The other side, from the ones who are listed as a cause for unappreciation, is not studied. So, in further research, it may be interesting to take a look at how the citizens of the Netherlands view the farmers. Or how the government reacts to the protest in their policy-making.

5.1 Solving lack of appreciation

Protesting does not seem like a permanent solution for the feeling of unappreciation. For the solution, it is asked to the respondents what other ways there could be to solve this issue. Also, it is asked if other solutions would have as much effect as a protest does. People who did not protest are expected to have more other ideas of how to solve these issues.

The participants are asked if they think they could have the same result if they did something else than protest. For most of the protesters, the answer was no. Many of them give examples of things they have tried over the years, but with not much effect. The examples are open days on farms and try to teach the Dutch citizens something about farms, but with not much success as they would like. Even the non-protesters do not think you will get the same result without a protest. Some said it was to wake up some institutions, such as the LTO and the government that they cannot make decisions without the ‘consent of the farmers.

Because the farmers cannot go to the streets every day, the question was asked if they have an idea about solving the unappreciation problem. Most people mention social media as an important factor in their pr. Some of the protesters think there will be many more demonstrations in the future, others think there are other ways to solve it. ‘Now you got their attention, you have to talk to them’. Some name education as an important factor, ‘if people get more educated about where food comes from, they will have more appreciation for farmers’.

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