

# The socialization of Deutsche Wohnen and Co. as a collective action dilemma

How goal support, perceived efficacy and selective benefits affect the willingness to participate in a social movement organization

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# Abstract

Olson's (1965) collective action dilemma confronts rational choice theorists with several hurdles to explain the emergence of social movements. On the example of *Deutsche Wohnen und Co. enteignen*, a framework on the basis of Finkel et al. (1989) and Klandermans (1984) is tested that expects *goal support*, *personal efficacy*, *group efficacy* and *selective benefits* to overcome the dilemma and appropriately explain people's *motivation to participate*. For this undertaking, a door-to-door survey on Deutsche Wohnen tenants in Berlin Kreuzberg, an online survey on citizens in Berlin, several interviews with tenants, and an expert interview were conducted. Multiple regression and grounded theory method were used to analyse the variables' impact. Overall, the qualitative findings corroborate the model and empirically observe further theoretical extensions that Klandermans and Finkel have pursued. People's *personal socialization* and *opportunity structures* are identified as additional relevant factors.

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# (1) Introduction

## (1.1) The right to adequate housing

*Deutsche Wohnen und Co. enteignen* (DWE) is a campaign that emerged from social movements of Berlin tenants and pursues the socialization of around 240.000 housing units. Through the initiation of a referendum, activists want to force the Berlin senate into enacting a law that transfers those units into a newly created institution under public law. They propose to expropriate all private rental companies with over 3000 units in their possession and base their legal argumentation on Article 15 of the German constitution (*Deutsche Wohnen und Co. enteignen*, 2021b, 2021c, 2021f) which technically allows for socialization but has never been applied (*Deutscher Bundestag*, 2019). Furthermore, they refer to Article 28 of the Berlin constitution, which states that “*everybody shall have the right to adequate housing*” (Art. I 28 BlnVerf). On state and federal level, the parliament’s scientific services concluded that the initiative is legally permissible. (*Abgeordnetenhaus von Berlin*, 2019; *Deutscher Bundestag*, 2019)

To allow for a referendum, Berlin’s constitution sets up two phases that must be successfully completed beforehand (Art. 63 I BlnVerf). First, the request to initiate a referendum requires that at least 20.000 signatures are collected in the six months before submission. Berlin’s state parliament, the *Abgeordnetenhaus*, can then offer legislation to accommodate the initiator's demands. If left unsatisfied, activists can enter a second phase during which 7% of all Berlin citizens need to sign the proposal. Should this goal be met in less than four months, a binding referendum on the matter will be held. The proposal will become law if more than a quarter of all eligible voters reach a majority.

In 2019, the campaign of DWE successfully completed the first phase and came up with 77.000 signatures. During 2021, DWE also successfully completed the second phase and surpassed the 175.000 necessary signatures. A binding referendum on the socialization will therefore be held parallel to the German federal elections on the 26th of September. (*Deutsche Wohnen und Co. enteignen*, 2021a, 2021b, 2021g; *Landeswahlleiterin für Berlin*, 2021)

## (1.2) Socialization as a public good

Due to legal equality, legal certainty and the protection through judicial courts, public policies apply to citizens without any exclusion or rivalry. The campaign of DWE therefore perfectly illustrates the ongoing production of a public good through a large group of participants.<sup>1</sup> According to Mancur Olson’s (1965) theory of collective action, these situations should create a collective action problem and suffer from free riding. Instead, the campaign’s self-declared number of supporters collecting signatures grew to over 1700 people in 18 sections (so called Kiezteams) (*Deutsche Wohnen und Co. enteignen*, 2021d, 2021e). This clearly refutes Olson’s hypothesis, meaning that an extended theoretical approach

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<sup>1</sup> Notably, individuals without German citizenship or registration in Berlin are exposed to public policies but have less means to influence them. They would therefore also benefit from the campaign’s goal but are excluded from parts of the production process. DWE takes into account that many signatures are declared invalid for this reason and publicly voices its criticism. (*Deutsche Wohnen und Co. enteignen*, 2021b, 2021e)

is necessary. Finkel et al. (1989), Lubell (2002) and Klandermans (1984), have addressed this problem and developed new frameworks to overcome the dilemma. From their work, we derive a model that integrates two proposed solutions – *personal efficacy* and *selective benefits* – into deprivation theory and is expected to explain individuals’ willingness to participate.

One might conclude that solely tenants of the affected companies will benefit from a won referendum, which would exclude all other citizens from the good. This thesis argues that the production focuses on the universal political right to not live in a city where strategies of profit-driven companies dictate the prices of living space. The public good in question would therefore deviate from the immediate changes in rent price and become a precedent for future social movements and housing policy.

But, even if one does not agree with this conceptualization, at least all tenants find themselves in a situation that perfectly resembles a collective action dilemma: Benefiting from this policy would not require any participation at all and does also not diminish the change in ownership of other apartments. Because all citizens can take part in the movement, tenants have even more reasons to consider free riding. Amid these challenges, Strobel (2020) describes how the organisation of Deutsche Wohnen (DW) tenants was of utmost importance for the campaign’s successful founding and points out the emergence of several protest groups in the Kreuzberg district. Overall, DW tenants seem to play a vital role in the production of the good, while also being in a situation that does not foster any participation.

### (1.3) Explanatory research question

Due to their interesting position, tenants of Deutsche Wohnen are chosen to be the unit for a survey in Kreuzberg, where many have taken part in different activist groups before. This project’s goal is to find explanations for their *motivation to participate* during DWE’s second signature collection phase. All independent variables are derived from the relevant literature on rational choice theory.

To test the hypothesis, a mixed method approach is used to triangulate the findings: One door-to-door survey is used to collect a data set (K) of DW tenants in Kreuzberg. The following statistical analysis is then corroborated through three qualitative interviews. An additional expert interview provides further insight. Also, a second data set (B) is derived from an online survey that presents the same questions to Berlin citizens from all districts. This allows for a comparison between the two populations and the potential emergence of factors that are specifically relevant for DW tenants in Kreuzberg.

This approach will try to answer the following overarching explanatory research question: *How do goal support, perceived efficacy and selective benefits affect the willingness of Deutsche Wohnen tenants to participate during DWE’s second signature collection phase in Kreuzberg?*

## (2) Theoretical framework

### (2.1) Public goods and the collective action dilemma

The emergence of collective behaviour has puzzled generations of social scientists, as goals of collective political protest, such as policy changes, often come in the form of *public goods*. In *The Logic of Collective Action*, Mancur Olson (1965) describes the infamous collective action problem, which occurs when public goods are produced by large groups. They differ from *private goods* by two traits that both relate to the good's supply (see Display 1). First of all, a good's excludability defines whether access to it is limited or not. If all individuals – regardless of their contribution to its production – are able to enjoy a good, it is considered to be *non-excludable*. Secondly, its *jointness of supply* must be taken into account. When everyone can make use of the good without reducing its availability to others, it is defined as *non-rivalrous*. (Shepsle, 2010, p. 307)

		Excludability	
		Yes	No
Jointness of Supply	Yes	(e.g. Madonna concert)	(defense, lighthouse services)
	No	(e.g. toothpaste, BMW 320i)	(e.g. Crowded Cape Cod beach)

Display 1: Public and Private Goods (Shepsle, 2010, p. 309)

When cooperation between only two parties is necessary to produce a public good, a situation similar to the *Prisoner's Dilemma* or *Hume's Marsh-Draining-Game* (see Display 2) can occur: Participants are incentivised to free ride by not contributing anything and waiting for the undertaking of other actors, as they would benefit anyway without having to fear any sunken losses. Because no one wants to take the risk of bearing the whole cost alone, no cooperation emerges, and everyone is worse off. (Shepsle, 2010, p. 268-269) Individuals that consider participating in collective action enjoy the same set of possible choices and can either take part (cooperate) or abstain (not cooperate). The same dilemma persists and – according to Olson – becomes even harder to overcome with a bigger group size. According to him, large groups can become the victim of very specific hurdles. While anonymity makes it harder to feel part of a group in the first place, punishment of abstention becomes nearly impossible. In small groups, repeated interactions allow for the evaluation of the other actor's behaviour and a build-up of trust, which can subsequently resolve the dilemma. These privileges diminish on a larger scale. (Shepsle, 2010, p. 280-282)

		Farmer B's choice	
		Drain marsh (Cooperate)	Do not drain marsh (Do not cooperate)
Farmer A's choice	Drain marsh (Cooperate)	1, 1	-1, 2
	Do not drain marsh (Do not cooperate)	2, -1	0, 0

The strategic interdependence of two farmers dealing with a clogged marsh is modeled by assigning fictitious values to the individual costs (3 utiles) and benefits (2 utiles) of draining the marsh. Due to increasing returns, the collective costs would only be 2 utiles in case of cooperation. This results in the payoff matrix above.

Display 2: Possible payoff to farmers in Hume's Marsh-Draining-Game (Shepsle, 2010, p. 237)

## (2.2) Deprivation theory and the simple grievance model

Olson's assumptions seriously challenged an approach that evolved during the 1960s: Deprivation theory primarily focused on the psychological and ideological reasons that motivate people to join a protest. (Beyer & Schnabel, 2017, p. 67) Discontent is expected to naturally appear in response to absolute or relative deprivation through social changes. Finkel et al. (1989) describe how the influence of these social needs can be turned into an equation that forms the *simple grievance model*, which treats "public goods preferences as an autonomous cause of protest" (Finkel et al., 1989, p. 886).

$$E(A) = V$$

Here,  $E(A)$  expresses the expected value that an individual assigns to participation in collective political action, whereas  $V$  is their subjective value of the protest's goal. High deprivation is assumed to raise the person's attached value of successful collective action and therefore their expected utility. A strong positive relationship is therefore assumed between a person's dissatisfaction and their likelihood of participation. (Finkel et al., 1989, p. 886-887) While this explanation sounds plausible at first, Olson's work on rational choice theory confronts sociologists with the need for an expanded approach. One might be inclined to brush off participation in large-scale activism as intrinsically irrational, but this thesis does explicitly not make this claim.

## (2.3) Production functions and the personal influence model

Another possible explanation for the emergence of collective action has drawn much attention from social scientists, instead. Oliver and Marwell (1985) assume that the individuals' decisions are made *interdependently* and happen in a *sequential* way, meaning that the decisions of other actors – or at least subjective expectations about them – are taken into account as group members "take turns, making their

*decisions one at a time*” (p. 525). These assumptions formulate a highly idealized image of decision-making processes but allow for the relationship between “*each of the individual [...] choices and the final outcome*” (Shepsle, 2010, p. 270) to be modelled in form of a *production function*.

To model the production process in a meaningful way, it is important to distinguish between two types of goods: Those that are being produced in a *continuous* way and those with *dichotomous* characteristics. In case of the latter – “*The group goal is either achieved or not.*” (Shepsle, 2010, p. 270) – participants do not produce small parts of the whole but instead raise the likelihood of production with each investment. This in turn affects the decision-making process of other actors who are now more likely to cooperate as well, as their own value of contribution would increase. When individuals make their decision, the behaviour of others has therefore already affected the likelihood of successful production, meaning that their weighing of costs and expected value can vary with each different phase of the production function. For better visualization, Oliver and Marwell (1985) put forward the example of a community that is confronted with a pothole and contacts city hall to demand the street’s repair: “*The first person who takes the time to call makes the probability .4 that the hole will be fixed, the second raises it to .7, the third to .8, the fourth to .85, the fifth to .88, the sixth to .90, and each subsequent call adds only a tiny amount to the probability.*” (p. 526) This example would describe a decelerating production function. In an accelerating scenario, on the other hand, “*successive contributions generate progressively larger payoff*” (p. 526) meaning that “*each contribution makes the next one more likely*” (p. 526). Oberschall (1980) assumes that most functions come in the form of an S-shape that accelerates in the beginning and stagnates towards the end.

This phenomenon of accelerating functions could also explain how collective behaviour comes to life in the first place. Due to the full *jointness of supply* of public goods, costs for certain public goods will stay the same no matter how many other individuals profit from it. When it comes to the purchase of a digital license, for example, the number of beneficiaries does not negatively impact the decision to produce such a good. They believe that group size would have no impact on the individual's decision, which makes big groups with heterogeneous interests actually more likely to be successful (Oliver and Marwell, 1988). A so-called *critical mass* of highly interested members can perceive low increases in likelihood to already be worth an investment and subsequently reach a point that motivates others to join. Oliver and Marwell (1988) challenge Olson’s logic and state that “*there really is a dilemma of collective action for public goods, but the dilemma adheres to the high cost of providing them, not to the number who share in them.*” (p. 3)

While this concept of a critical mass can explain the emergence of social movements, the underlying assumptions also provide key determinants for individual behaviour. Finkel et al. (1989) applies this reasoning to integrate two variables into his personal influence model: *Personal efficacy* (pi), the individual’s perception of its own abilities, and *group efficacy* (pg), the individual’s assessment of how likely the group will successfully reach the wanted outcome.

$$E(A) = (pg * pi) * V$$

He suggests that the decision to participate is dependent on how a person assesses their own ability to support the production process in relation to the group's likelihood of success. Individuals would therefore be keener to support a cause, if they know that their own action increases the likelihood of production to an extent that the value of participation overrides the costs. Finkel et al. (1989) and Klandermans (1984) underline the importance of a multiplicative relationship between  $pg$  and  $pi$ , which explicitly takes into account the implications of Olson's collective action dilemma. When the group's likelihood of success might be high, low personal influence would make participation seem unnecessary so that "*free-riding (and hence abstention) is the rational choice*" (Finkel et al., 1989, p. 888). Similarly, without any chance of overall success even the most effective investment would become redundant. The overall expected value of participation is affected either way. With these variables varying from person to person, large heterogeneous groups have a higher chance of including people for whom it seems worthwhile to start the production process.

## (2.4) Integrating selective benefits into the personal influence model

Additionally, to this rather complex handling of the collective action dilemma, Olson himself provides us with another clever solution and suggests that goods can be created as a by-product of *selective benefits*, meaning that "*groups are able to elicit contributions from members by providing them more than just the successful achievements of group objectives*" (Shepsle, 2010, p. 284). While the group's overall goal – most often a public good – might not be excludable, *selective benefits* definitely are. An additional entry in one's curriculum vitae or access to career boosting networks, for example, can only be accessed by participating in political campaigns. Also, the joy of standing up for one's own beliefs or a feeling of solidarity can be conditional incentives as well. Altruistic tendencies would therefore become a natural part of an individual's rational decision-making process.

While Finkel et al. have decided to not take *selective benefits* into account, one can refer to Lubell (2002) and Klandermans (1984). Lubell's applied *collective interest model* employs an additive relationship between ( $pg$ ) and ( $pi$ ) but shows how *selective benefits* ( $B$ ) and *costs* ( $C$ ) can be incorporated into the participant's calculation of expected value. Klandermans, on the other hand, does make use of the multiplicative relation (p. 586) and expands the model by more socio-psychological variables in addition to *selective rewards*. Based on their application and analytical frameworks, the following *personal influence model* is presented:

$$E(A) = (pg * pi) * V + (B - C)$$

This model expands the original grievance model by solving the collective action dilemma through the integration of *personal efficacy* ( $pi$ ), *group efficacy* ( $pg$ ) and *selective benefits* ( $B-C$ ). Building on the argumentation of Finkel and his colleagues, a multiplicative relationship between ( $pg$ ) and ( $pi$ ) is assumed.

## (2.5) Hypotheses

Four hypotheses are derived from the thought experiments of rational choice theory and the scientific findings that have corroborated the assumptions of this model (Klandermans, 1983; Finkel et al., 1989): (1) *Goal support* (V) is expected to stand in a positive relationship to the respondent's *motivation to participate*. (2) *Group efficacy* (pg) is expected to stand in a positive relationship to the respondent's *motivation to participate*. (3) *Personal efficacy* (pi) is expected to stand in a positive relationship to the respondent's *motivation to participate*. (4) *Selective benefits* (B–C) are expected to stand in a positive relationship to the respondent's *motivation to participate*.

Overall, the model is believed to appropriately explain individual participation in social movements.

## (3) Conceptualization

To further conceptualize the theorized variables for this research project, a short description of relevant dimensions and indicators are presented for each concept.

At the time of data collection, DWE describes three forms of possible participation: The signing of the proposal, the collection of signatures, and the donation of money (Deutsche Wohnen und Co. enteignen, 2021d). Apart from these three dimensions, the participation in a working group does also constitute a fourth form of involvement. A person is considered to have *motivation to participate*, if they express the will to take part in one of these forms or already do so. *Goal support* is conceptualized as the want for a successful socialization according to the proposal of DWE. If a person, unrelated to their actual participation, wants to reach the socialization or expresses a positive attitude towards it, they are considered to support the movement's goal. *Personal efficacy* describes the potential impact an individual expects to have in relation to the collective goal. As this concept focuses on the person's belief about their efficacy, the objective possible efficacy of a person does not necessarily constitute an indicator. *Group efficacy* relates to a person's belief that a group – the campaign – can reach its goal. Two indicators exist: An individual must believe that a campaign can be successful, if many people participate and belief that these many people do in fact participate. *Selective benefits and costs* can be divided into two dimensions that relate to a separation of Klandermans (1984, p. 586): *Reward motives* and *social motives*. Indicators for reward motives include all personal costs and efforts that do not relate to the reaction of other people. Indicators for social motives, on the other hand, consist only of reactions from, for example, friends and family members.

## (4) Operationalization

To operationalize all variables for an observation on the individual level, a questionnaire has been constructed that entails the request to answer closed-ended questions and state one's agreement with given statements. All questions and statements are as short as possible, framed neutrally and avoid negative formulations. Double-barrelled questions have been avoided. All possible answers come in the

form of the Likert response scale, meaning that the variables will be treated ordinally in the statistical analyses. For every question it is possible to select “*Undecided*” as an option. To make sure that the respondent is competent to answer, the questionnaire includes a pamphlet that explains the activities and goals of *Deutsche Wohnen und Co. enteignen* as well as the project’s research aim in a neutral manner. (see Appendix A)

*Motivation to participate* is measured by asking the respondent to estimate their motivation to support the campaign: “*Wie schätzen Sie ihre Motivation ein, selbst an der Kampagne teilzunehmen?*” (Possible answers range from “*Very low*” to “*Very high*”).

To get a grasp on the individual’s *goal support*, it is simply asked how they would evaluate the socialization if implemented: “*Wie würden Sie es finden, wenn die angestrebte Enteignung wirklich umgesetzt würde?*” (Possible answers range from “*Very bad*” to “*Very good*”).

For an operationalization of *selective benefits and costs*, Klandermans’ approach (1974) to differentiate between social motives and reward motives is applied. To measure social motives, the person is asked to estimate the reactions of their social environment to participation: “*Wie würde Ihr soziales Umfeld darauf reagieren, wenn Sie selbst an der Kampagne teilnehmen würden?*” (Possible answers range from “*Very negatively*” to “*Very positively*”). Respondents are also asked to indicate how much they would care about this reaction “*Wie wichtig wäre Ihnen die Meinung ihres sozialen Umfeldes?*” (Possible answers range from “*Completely irrelevant*” to “*Very important*”). When it comes to reward motives, respondents are asked to estimate the effort as well as the joy they would experience: “*Wie würden Sie Ihre persönlichen Anstrengungen/Ihr persönliches Vergnügen einschätzen?*” (Possible answers range from “*Very low*” to “*Very high*”). In his questionnaire, Klandermans also asks members of a worker’s union whether “their position in the company would worsen by participating in moderate/militant action” (p. 590). Applying this fear of structural disadvantages to this project, respondents are asked to indicate whether they believe that problems with their landlord could result from active participation: “*Durch eine Teilnahme an der Kampagne könnte ich Probleme mit meinem Vermieter bekommen.*” (Possible answers range from “*Not correct at all*” to “*Fully correct*”). To also include the possibility of structural advantages, one question asks whether valuable contacts could be established: “*Durch eine Teilnahme an der Kampagne könnte ich wertvolle Kontakte knüpfen.*” (Possible answers range from “*Not correct at all*” to “*Fully correct*”).

When it comes to *personal efficacy*, interviewees are asked to indicate for each type of participation the extent of influence they can have on the success of the campaign: “*Wie schätzen Sie en Einfluss ein, den Sie durch Ihre Teilnahme auf den Erfolg der Kampagne nehmen könnten?*” (Possible answers range from “*Very low*” to “*Very high*”).

*Group efficacy* is operationalized by combining two questions. First respondents are asked to estimate the likeliness of campaign success, if very many Berlin citizens take part: “*Wie schätzen Sie die Wahrscheinlichkeit einer erfolgreichen Enteignung ein, falls sehr viele Personen an der Kampagne teilnehmen sollten?*” (Possible answers range from “*Not likely at all*” to “*Very likely*”). Then, they were

asked to estimate the amount of Berlin citizens that would take part in each kind of campaign support: “*Wie schätzen Sie die Menge der teilnehmenden Personen ein?*” (Possible answers range from “*Very low*” to “*Very high*”).

## (5) Methodology

### (5.1) Door-to-door survey among citizens of Kreuzberg

#### (5.1.1) Survey procedure

To collect the data necessary for testing the hypotheses, a door-to-door interview survey was conducted. Respondents were personally visited at their apartment and asked to answer a few questions on their thoughts about the campaign. Their answers were recorded by the researcher. Financial incentives were not given. The data was collected between the 9<sup>th</sup> and the 23<sup>rd</sup> of June 2021.

All respondents were orally asked about their consent and received an additional pamphlet that informed them about the aim of the research, their rights as respondents, and the possibility to view the published thesis (see Appendix A). All respondents were immediately anonymised. To minimize the risk of a coronavirus infection, the researcher was tested with rapid antigen tests daily and wore FFP2-masks during all encounters.

#### (5.1.2) Sampling procedure

This questionnaire assesses tenants' opinions on the individual level. Its results are supposed to allow for generalizations about all Kreuzberg tenants of Deutsche Wohnen in 2021. According to probability theory, sampling through an equal probability of selection method (EPSEM) is expected to allow for the most representative data collection. Ideally, all elements of study would therefore have the same chance of being randomly chosen from an exhaustive sampling frame. The presented research is exposed to many hurdles so that the following approach has no choice but to deviate from this idealized sampling procedure.

Most problematically, complete information about the ownership of specific housing units is only listed in land registry offices and – apart from rare exemptions – not publicly available. For this reason, scientists from the Rosa Luxemburg Foundation relied on crowd-sourcing projects from *Correctiv* as well as *Der Tagesspiegel* and combined the information with publications in commercial databases. The result is a “*rough breakdown of property ownership for the Berlin real estate market*” (Trautvetter, 2021, p. 5). While providing the most extensive analysis of property owner groups in Berlin to date, the authors do not give out or publish the detailed information that would be necessary for the construction of a sampling frame.

To create a very rough picture of the housing ownership situation in Kreuzberg, several local activists have been contacted instead. Also, media outlets have reported on publicly known tenant associations that protest Deutsche Wohnen as their landlord. Using these sources, an incomplete list of addresses was

gathered. Only addresses with apartments were considered: Small shops and pharmacies, for example, were excluded.

This emerging sampling frame created another problem: The sampling units, the addresses, differ from the research's elements, the tenants. Knowing that some addresses represent dozens of apartments, the probability for tenants to be selected would not be equal at all. To counter some of this distortion, the sampling units were turned into households.

All households were listed and numbered by personally visiting the addresses and counting the doorbell signs. This way, each household was assigned an ID that consisted of the address and a theoretical doorbell sign ranking. An identical counting process would later be used to ensure that every theoretical doorbell ranking relates to a very specific household, when contacting the tenants on site (see Display 3).

1. Arranging list of addresses	4. Randomly listing and stratifying households with assigned ID.
2. Counting doorbell signs on site.	5. Systematically sampling the listed households.
3. Assigning IDs to theoretical households in sample.	6. Using identical doorbell counting procedure to identify household with its affiliated ID on site.

Display 3: Sampling procedure to counter lack of information about number of households

Having a total of 57 addresses, a population of 1590 apartments and their IDs were obtained. To come up with our sample, a systematic sampling process was applied. Households were randomly listed and stratified according to their postal code. Using a sampling interval of 16 and a resulting sampling ratio of 0.0625, 99 households were included in the final sample. The starting point of 3 was randomly determined.

As already mentioned, the technique only allows for the sampling of households, as no information about the number of residents in each apartment can be obtained. A sampling on the individual level is therefore not possible and the list of Deutsche Wohnen addresses is expected to be very incomplete. Due to the field's limitations and the lack of resources, this would nonetheless be the best possible sampling procedure for the purpose of this thesis.

Unfortunately, even more challenges arose when applying this method in the field. Whereas most tenants did not open the door, other reactions mostly fell into two categories: Some were afraid of a researcher's association with Deutsche Wohnen, while others were annoyed by an expected affiliation with DWE's campaign. Effort was needed to be trusted by the individual tenants. Nonetheless, a very low response rate made the developed sampling method unfeasible.

After trying to follow the described steps, convenience sampling turned out to be the only feasible method and has been applied. Houses with large numbers of units were visited to allow for an efficient

inquiry of tenants. After trying to contact a sample size of 100 households, only 15 respondents filled out the survey.

## (5.2) Online survey among citizens of Berlin

### (5.2.1) Survey procedure

To collect data from Berlin citizens, the same questionnaire (see Appendix A) was conducted by using the online service of Google Forms. Answers were automatically recorded and added to the data set. Financial incentives were not given. The data was collected between the 9<sup>th</sup> and the 23<sup>rd</sup> of June 2021.

Before starting the survey, the respondents were presented with a short text that informs them about the aim of the research, their rights as respondents, and the possibility to view the published thesis (see Appendix). No personal data was collected, and all respondents were automatically anonymised. This also entails that it was not testable whether these respondents are Berlin citizens.

### (5.2.2) Sampling procedure

Due to a lack of resources, it was not possible to conduct sampling through an EPSEM. Instead, convenience sampling was applied. The researcher has used his personal Twitter account to distribute the Google Form and asked Berlin users to fill out the survey. (Strack, 2021)

## (5.3) Interviews with participants and expert

### (5.3.1) Interview procedure

To gather first-hand information about the motivation of participants, three activists and one expert were interviewed in Berlin, Kreuzberg. All interviews were held in German between the 9<sup>th</sup> and the 23<sup>rd</sup> of June 2021 (see Appendix D).

Each was done in a semi-structured manner to allow for a natural conversation to develop while questions were loosely guided by the variables. Many open questions were asked to find possibly new factors and challenge the given conceptualizations.

The setting allowed for the tenants to stay completely anonymous. Again, all respondents were orally asked about their consent and received an additional pamphlet that informed them about the aim of the research, their rights as respondents, and the possibility to view the published thesis (see Appendix D).

All interviews were transcribed in intelligent verbatim style. ATLAS.ti was then used to code the transcripts (see Appendix E). Using deduction and going through each variable separately, the theoretical frameworks relevance was assessed and matched with the interviewee's accounts. Also, induction was applied to identify potentially new variables or overlooked relationships that are relevant to explain an individual's *motivation to participate*. By application of the grounded theory method, different incidents were compared to each other. Relationships between factors were noted and brought together in a simplified version.

### (5.3.2) Case selection

When conducting interviews, a diverse set of individuals was strived for. The goal was to include people from different age groups, ethnicity, and different levels of participation. Also, affected tenants and unaffected activists were of interest. The final set of interviewees includes a high variety when it comes to age and ethnicity, but only tenants that live under affected rental companies. Unfortunately, it was not possible to obtain an interview with any person that does not want to participate at all.

Due to limited resources, the set was limited to four interview partners that were interviewed on three separate occasions. Snowball sampling was applied to identify valuable interview partners. First, media reports were used to obtain an overview of the field and single out relevant neighbourhoods in the district. The researcher rang at several doors and respectfully approached tenants to talk about their experiences. Contact to a former janitor was established. The person's knowledge about the situation and the tenants was very valuable, as they also referred to later interview partners: Alpha and Beta. Similarly, Gamma was met and interviewed in another neighbourhood of Kreuzberg.

Apart from the affected neighbourhoods, meeting places of the campaign have been frequented. After receiving knowledge about a specific accommodation through Hannes Strobel, Delta was met and interviewed.

For the expert interview, Dr. Hannes Strobel was contacted. He is a sociologist that specializes in work sociology and has published several articles on the development of *Deutsche Wohnen und Co. enteignen*. Being actively involved in the campaign himself, he has accompanied its emergence and its predecessors in Kreuzberg for years. This experience makes him perfectly qualified to evaluate the motivations of other participants and himself from a scientific perspective.

## (6) Statistical analysis

### (6.1) Computing of variables

Before applying any statistical instruments, the surveys' responses need to be transformed into appropriate variables that are linked to the conceptualization of the theoretical framework. (The whole Syntax code is provided in Appendix B.)

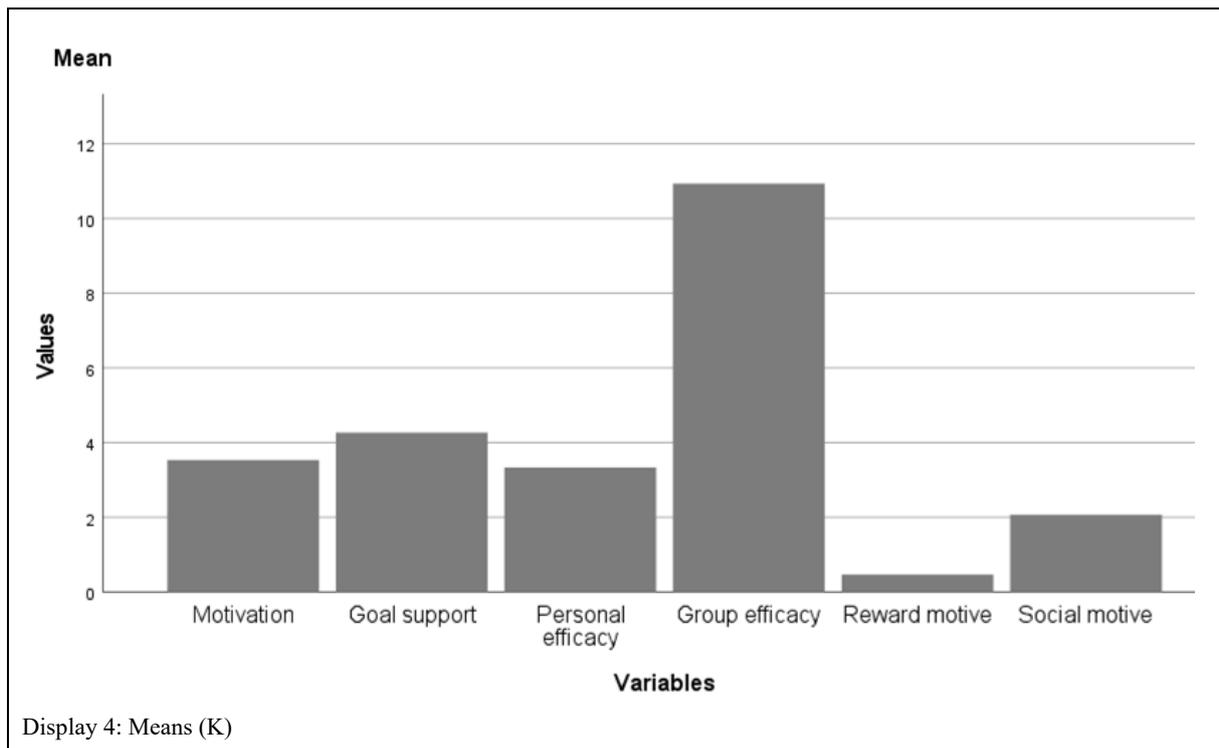
The variables *goal support*, *motivation to participate*, and *personal efficacy* are all operationalized through a single question with value labels on a scale from 1 to 5. No further adjustments are necessary for them to fit the planned analysis.

*Group efficacy*, on the other hand, requires the multiplication of two variables: *Efficacy of many participants* and *expected number of participants*. As one might believe in the success of many participants, doubts about the participants would deem these beliefs irrelevant. A multiplicative relationship is therefore assumed in the theory (Klandermans, 1984) and applied here. As a result, the new variable allows for values on a scale from 1 to 25.

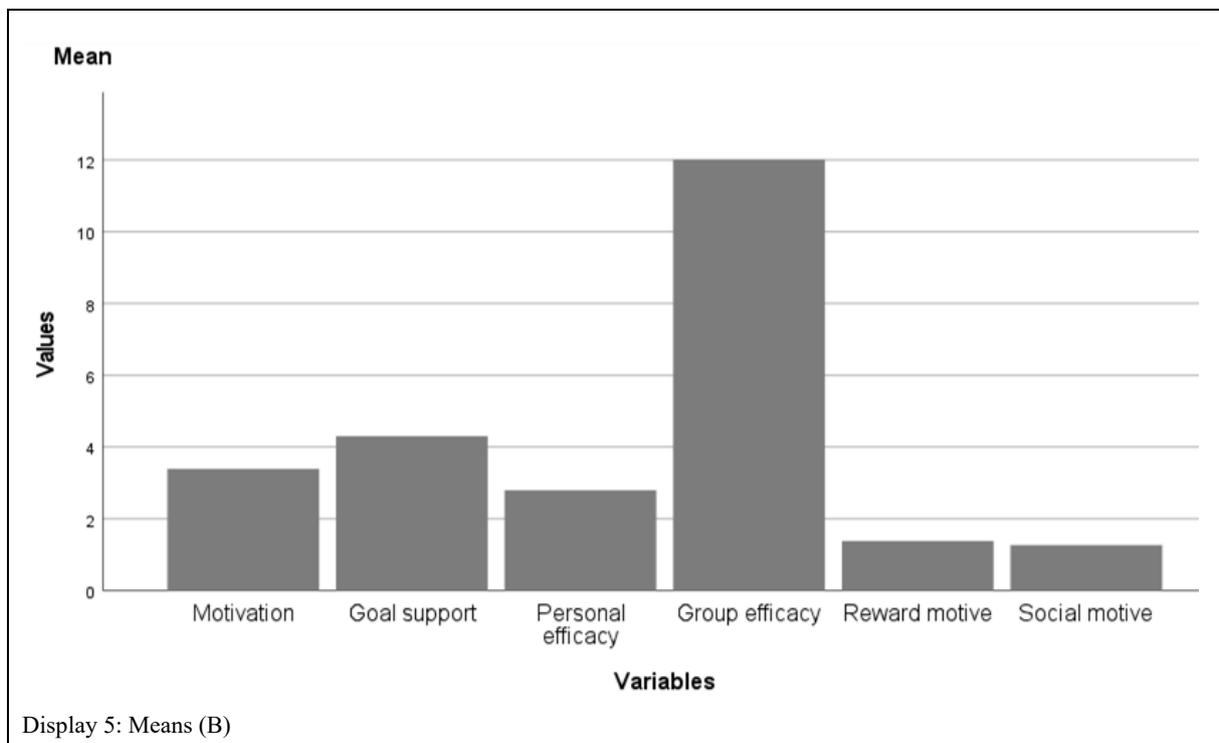
The variables relating to *selective benefits and costs* require more attention. For *reward motives*, the conceptualization requires the addition of *personal efforts* and *fear of the landlord's reaction* as well as *personal joy* and *valuable social contacts*. To accommodate the fact that some respondents might have no costs or benefits at all, these four variables' values are recoded into scales between 0 and 4. The resulting variable for reward related costs is then subtracted from the resulting reward related benefits to create the variable for *reward motives*, that allows for values between -8 and 8. For *social motives*, *reaction of social environment* and *importance of environment's reaction* are multiplied. To accommodate that some people do not care about reactions or do not expect any significant reaction at all, both scales need to include the value 0 and outweigh the other variable. *Importance of environment's reaction's* values is recoded into a scale between 0 and 4. *Reaction of social environment* is recoded into a variable that allows for values between -2 and 2. This way, both negative and positive reactions will be properly enforced by the individual's assigned importance. The final variable, social motives, therefore mirrors reward motives as it also applies a scale between -8 and 8.

## (6.2) Descriptive statistics

Analysing the descriptive statistics of our data can be revealing (see Appendix C). When looking at the means of sample (K), several things stand out. Here it is crucial to keep in mind how the variables' scales have been computed so that no wrong comparisons between them are made. With a mean *motivation* of 3.53, DW tenants in Kreuzberg tend to be highly motivated and nearly fully support the goal of the campaign. The picture looks different for their perceptions of efficacies: Regarding both *personal* (3.33) and *group efficacy* (10.93), tenants overall seem to be undecided or at least split on their assessment. Values for both the *social motive* (2.07) and the *reward motive* (0.47) are in the lower positive area, meaning that *selective benefits* seem to cover the costs but do not overreach them to a high extent. Social motives seem to provide more benefits.



The citizens' responses of (B) looks quite similar. Showing nearly identical values for *motivation* (3.39) and *goal support* (4.30), they are also very unsure about their potential *personal efficacy* (2.79) and the *group's efficacy* (12.01). Interestingly, the *reward* (1.38) and *social motives* (1.27) turn out to be more balanced and both show slightly higher values. For cases in (B), *selective benefits* seem to cover *selective costs* to an even higher extent.



## (6.3) Testing of assumptions

To conduct a meaningful multiple linear regression, several assumptions need to be made about the gathered data. (See Appendix C for all tables and graphs.)

1. *Assumption: The data set includes an appropriate sample size.*

As a rule of thumb, the sample should at least include at least 20 cases for each independent variable. Having five explanatory variables, at least 100 cases would be needed. With 82 and 16 cases, this assumption is not met for both data sets (B) and (K).

2. *Assumption: The relationship between each independent variable and the dependent variable is linear.*

The linear relationship between each independent variable and the dependent variable has been checked by examining the scatterplots. The assumption is not met.

3. *Assumption: No outliers are included in the data set.*

Cook's test is applied to make sure that no outliers influence the results. With maximum values of 0.220 no outliers are expected to affect the regression's results of data set (B). With a maximum of 2.218, one outlier could be identified for data set (K), so the assumption is not met.

4. *Assumption: Dependent variables do not correlate with each other. (Multicollinearity)*

Pearson's correlation indicates no values above 0.7, when testing the correlation of (B)'s predictor variables. No multicollinearity can be found, and the assumption is met. When examining data set (K), also no correlation can be found, meaning that the assumption is met.

5. *Assumption: The residuals' values are normally distributed.*

When examining the P-P plot for (B), a normal distribution of residuals seems to be given. The assumption is expected to be met. Looking at (K)'s plot, strong deviations from the normal distribution are given. The assumption is not met.

6. *Assumption: The residuals' values are independent. (Autocorrelation)*

From (B)'s Durbin-Watson statistic, a value of 1.827 is obtained. (K)'s value of the Durbin-Watson statistic is 2.113. The assumption is therefore assumed to be met for both data sets.

7. *Assumption: The residual's variance is constant. (Homoscedasticity)*

When plotting (B)'s and (K)' standardised residuals against their standardised predicted values, both graphs seem to be skewed and show obvious signs of funnelling. For both data sets, the assumption is not met.

## (6.4) Multiple regression analysis

For (B), an adjusted r-square of 0.468 can be obtained. This means that 46.8% of the dependent variable's variance can be explained by the applied model. When performing ANOVA, (B)'s p-value of 0.000 also is significant. The null hypothesis can therefore be rejected. For (K), an adjusted r-square of 0.262 is given. Here, only 26.6% of the dependent variable's variance can be explained by the model. Also, an ANOVA test results in a p-value of 0.174, making the model's influence insignificant in (K). (See Appendix C for the whole SPSS output.)

To allow for a better comparison of the variable's influence, the individual standardized coefficients will be examined. If significant, a predictor variable's change of one unit – one standard deviation – would be associated with a change in the dependent variable in the size of the given standardized coefficient. In (B), *goal support* has a standardized coefficient of 0.454, while it is even larger in (K) with a 0.525. With p-values of 0.000 (B) and 0.068 (K), the finding is significant in (B) but not significant in (K). In (B), *personal efficacy* has a standardized coefficient of 0.149, while a value of -0.087 is obtained from (K). With p-values of 0.126 (B) and 0.725 (K), the finding is not significant in both data sets. *Group efficacy*, on the other hand, has a standardized coefficient of 0.220 in (B) and a value of -0.185 in (K). With a p-values of 0.035, the finding is significant in data set (B). A value of 0.465 renders the finding in (K) insignificant. For *social motives*, a value of -0.033 can be obtained from (B). In (K), 0.222 is given. With p-values of 0.720 (B) and 0.397 (K), the finding is not significant in both data sets. *Reward motives* has a standard coefficient of 0.112 in (B) and 0.283 in (K). With p-values of 0.204 (B) and 0.273 (K), the finding is not significant in both data sets.

Overall, the influence of *goal support* is shown to be significant in (B). Also, out of all variables, with standardized coefficients of 0.454 (B) and 0.525 (K), it exerts the most influence as well. Apart from *goal support*, only the standardized coefficient of *group efficacy* can be classified as a significant finding in (B). According to the model, each change of one standard deviation results in an increase of 0.211 standard deviations in *motivation*.

## (6.5) Quality of quantitative findings

While the researcher trusts that a valid conceptualization and computing of the variables has been chosen, the reliability of these findings is severely hurt. During the data collection phase, convenience sampling has been used for both data sets. This is expected to have resulted in seriously biased sets that do not allow for any generalizations. Apart from that, both samples, but especially (K), do not satisfy enough necessary assumptions to produce reliable results from a multiple regression analysis.

As the model's influence in (K) has proven to be overall insignificant, only the two findings of the model's application in (B), that also proved to be significant, were to be taken somewhat seriously for an analysis of the independent variable's influence. But overall, no insight on the model's influence can be made and it is not possible to make a comparison between both sets to find out whether DW tenants in Kreuzberg stand out in their beliefs. Only the similarity of the descriptive statistics allows for some

indications that the means might be more reliable than expected. The overall value of this statistical analysis for theory development is low.

## (7) Qualitative analysis

### (7.1) Grounded theory method

#### (7.1.1) Goal support

As expected, all interviewed activists showed strong support of the campaign's goal. More interestingly, different reasonings can be identified among participants. The interviewed tenants cite several impacts on their personal lives: A flat's ownership through profit-oriented rental companies was often accompanied with higher costs that arose from unwanted modernizations or disproportionately high rents. At the same time, the saving of costs lead to poor facility management and improper handling of said modernizations. In one case, long-lasting piles of rubbish had to be circumvented to reach the interviewee's flat.

Nevertheless, a disproportionate negative financial impact stood out as the key factor that led to a support of the campaign's goal: "*The strategies of Deutsche Wohnen, the fact that they are a profit-oriented company with all the side effects... A lot of the profit strategy includes saving on repairs, driving up rents through energy modernization, and other techniques as well.*" (The full interviews can be found in Appendix D. All coded quotes are presented in Appendix E.)

Next to being directly affected, more abstract reasons were cited as well. Strong feelings about perceived injustice were named by all interviewees. Not only being treated unfairly themselves, but also relating this identified injustice to the socio-political level was explicitly mentioned by the tenants. "*I personally see a socio-political problem when stock market-oriented companies drive up rents in the city.*"

Strobel points out that most participants of the campaign are not tenants but come from an "*activist student background*". While raising rents make it also harder for citizens to find a flat in the first place, most participants are not directly affected themselves and therefore base their *goal support* on perceived political injustice. *Goal support* therefore depends on varying combinations of being personally affected and abstract beliefs about systemic injustice.

Relating these findings to the theoretical discussion, the conceptualization of the movement as a public action dilemma among potentially all Berlin citizens is supported. How one values the movement's success is not dependent on being a tenant, as the underlying reasonings are more complex.

Also, a strong causal relationship between *goal support* and *motivation to participate* is not as naturally given, as one might assume. Strobel discusses the possibility of circumventing people's support by mentioning a counter movement that hired students to gather signatures. Paying students to produce a public good irrelevant of their personal interest would be conceptualized as the incentivization through a *reward motive*. Mobilization without the existence of *goal support* is therefore possible and

can be observed. Nonetheless, the undertaking did not turn out to be successful. Strobel relates this to lacking intrinsic motivation and accompanying public scepticism regarding the activists' true intentions.

On the other hand, Alpha describes how it was possible for him to receive a signature for DWE from a person that does not agree with the campaign's goal. The decision was based on the following exchange: "*Then at least declare your solidarity!*", *'Mhmm, okay, if you pull me along.'*" It can be derived that either a principle of solidarity or the reaction of the local activist, a social motive, have persuaded him into supporting the movement. As acknowledged by the tenant, these factors can bring about only a small degree of participation.

The interaction between tenant and reluctant participant proves that in the case of DWE other variables can overcome a lack in *goal support* to some degree and *selective benefits* might be very effective in motivating individuals to join the undertaking.

### (7.1.2) Instrumentality

Another factor relating to *goal support* seems to be of importance: Choosing a campaign that tries to enforce an expropriation through a referendum as the *instrument* to reach the wanted social change is controversial. While many use similar reasoning to express discontent with their rental situation or experience the socio-political situation as unfair, their political instrument of choice differs.

Among supporters of the campaign, activists feel abandoned by local politicians and even the judicial system: "*At the time, I had the feeling that the district administration had simply abandoned me, that I had been abandoned by the local politicians.*"

The experiences of Alpha and Beta stand out, as they have extensively tried to exhaust different pathways that include publicizing their situation in the press, deliberating with local politicians and public servants, mobilizing fellow tenants, and even going to court.

While they were successful to some degree and even able to win a judicial case, they do not believe that politicians or the judicial system will solve their problems, even stating that corruption among judges would not surprise them. They believe that poor people have little chances to take these paths in the first place and past political measures were experienced as window dressing: "*The system is unfortunately like that. If you don't have legal protection insurance or you're not rich, [...] you don't have a chance.*", "*I also have to say that, unfortunately, our Kreuzberg district administration, our excellent Green politicians, completely abandon the tenants here. [Local politician] acts like Robin Hood in Karl-Marx-Allee and here he approves everything Deutsche Wohnen wants, without consideration. We live here in milieu protection. That's supposed to protect people, but it doesn't protect at all. It's really just window dressing.*" The other interviewees support this perception of local politics and use the words like "*self-defence*" to describe their actions.

Strobel accounts how relevant activist's perceived *instrumentality* of an expropriation was during the campaign's founding process. As it emerged from protests against Deutsche Wohnen, many tenants shared experiences and already decided to organize themselves in a Berlin-wide network. Nevertheless, many strongly spoke out against the idea of demanding an expropriation: "*Some people really covered*

*their ears and said 'I don't want to have anything to do with that. If I appear at my tenants' meeting in my West Berlin district, people will give me the bird!'"*

Seemingly, support of the chosen instrument to reach the common goal can make or break a person's motivation. Later, many activists would still join the campaign against their doubts, as a lack of alternative paths has changed their minds: *"There are probably various reasons for this, and one is that we have reached our limits with other means and forms of action. [...] [I]n the beginning people still thought that if you wrote a nice letter to Deutsche Wohnen, they would respond to you. Or if you approached the district politicians, then something would happen. Unfortunately, that's almost never the case, because often the local district politicians here in Berlin don't dare to mess with Deutsche Wohnen. And that's one reason why people have realized, "We have to do something different; we have to tackle the problem at the root, yes, radically in that sense," and that's why they support the campaign."*

### (7.1.3) Selective costs and benefits

During the interviews, *selective costs and benefits* were cited as decisive factors in the decision to participate. When it comes to reward motives, a lack of time and health issues present themselves as the main factors that can hinder participation temporarily or prevent it completely. Next to the burden of a full-time job, interviewees describe how both factors have also resulted from pregnancies and the upbringing of children, but also from old age and the actual death of former activists.

Fun and fulfilment, on the other hand, are mentioned as motivating factors that foster participation. It is important to note that fulfilment and fun should not be used interchangeably. While taking action creates some sort of fulfilment, Gamma specifically points out that he does not have fun during participation as he acts in *"self-defence"*. Nonetheless, most activists refer to some form of enjoyment during the campaign.

Strobel believes that the resulting sense of community is a very motivating factor for many participants and relates it to the collective wearing of yellow-purple vests with the movement's symbol during signature collection or protest: *"I think that was another motivation for many people, because they were suddenly together with many people in these vests and realized 'Wow, we're really a big movement already!'"* He also makes a comparison to other political movements that work with established approaches and engage with less heterogeneous milieus. The representation of so many different age groups and the obvious success through the engagement with so many people is identified as a very motivating factor for others and him personally. For many, a feeling of obligation is replaced with intrinsic motivation.

But Strobel also makes clear that among tenants of the affected rental companies, a fear of repercussions through their landlords exists. This turned out to be problematic for the campaign, as these tenants fear to publicly speak out and hide their identity. As a result, most public speakers live in cooperative living spaces or other less vulnerable situations. Ironically, tenants from a cooperative living space in Möckernkiez were threatened with eviction after using banners to publicly show solidarity with the campaign (Kühn, 2021). Strobel refers to this incident as well.

When asked, the interviewed tenants did not fear any repercussions by their landlords. This mainly results from their type of participation, as signing the referendum and collecting signatures on the streets can be done quite anonymously. The mentioned fear therefore only seems to affect certain types of involvement where anonymity is not possible, such as public expressions of solidarity or participation in working groups that manage the campaign's communication.

In another case of fearing structural disadvantages, Delta does not disclose her involvement with the campaign at her workplace: "*At work I have not really mentioned it, simply because I want to separate it [...] and do not know how they would react to it!*" Nonetheless, it did not impact her *motivation to participate*. Instead, she just took part in secret.

Next to reactions of the landlord or the employer, activists are affected by the reactions of their social circle: The social motives. Here, Delta also experiences a similar fear. To avoid negative reactions from her parents, she did not mention her involvement around her family. Her friends, on the other hand, did respond very positively.

All interviewees confirmed that social motives can have a very strong impact. This seems to be especially strong in local communities, where an endorsement of the campaign can make others more comfortable to join. As already mentioned, it is also possible that the campaign is not received well, making others afraid of participation, even though they personally support it.

Delta describes how she was able to motivate friends of hers by ensuring them that absolutely no special efforts or skills were needed to help out: It was only necessary to join her in the undertaking. *Selective costs* could hereby be decreased, while it could be rewarding for the participants to meet new people that share the same beliefs. Kiezteams play a similar role by creating a centralized access to information and materials in every district. This reduces the *selective costs* without the additional need to take on long distances.

#### (7.1.4) Opportunity structures

Positive reactions in social circles or local communities also seem to create an opportunity for non-participating individuals to join the action. Once a positive reaction is given, it is often possible to become motivated by the active friend or community member. Accounts of these moments are given from all interviewees, pointing out the importance of *opportunity structures*.

According to Strobel, the campaign actively sought out a way to eliminate barriers and offer straightforward opportunities for interested citizens to join the action. To offer uncomplicated access, the local Kiezteams have been developed.

#### (7.1.5) Personal efficacy

Kiezteams were not only created to provide opportunities but to also increase the individual's ability "*to make a difference*". This was not a by-product but the initial reason for their development by the campaign's responsible working group. Being a participant in one of these teams, Delta can back this statement. By lowering the above-mentioned costs, they allow more people to take part in the signature

collection and therefore also increase their *personal efficacy*. Overall, they provide an opportunity through which people experience less *selective costs* and therefore perceive more *personal efficacy*.

This potential relationship can also be observed in other cases: Alpha and Beta seem to provide us with interesting information as they are some kind of outliers with a lot of perceived *personal efficacy*. As already mentioned, they have extensively tried to challenge their landlord in several ways. This was only possible due to their occupational background: Both have jobs that allow them to understand legal documents and administrative guidelines. When a lack of participation from other tenants is described, their *personal efficacy* seems to be much lower. According to Alpha and Beta, being unemployed or lacking to understand the legal situation are major hurdles to participation in a rental protest.

Also, some foreign tenants are reported to have trouble with the language barrier. Alpha explicitly tells how this results in the feeling of helplessness and lack of *personal efficacy*. Others, however, can take up a translating role for migrant communities and thereby turn their foreign background into the ability to make a bigger personal difference: They create *opportunity structures* for other members of migrant communities. Alpha and Beta mention one specific foreign tenant who has been very engaged and used his language skills this way.

This underlines again, how *personal efficacy* is connected to *selective costs*: When it is necessary to increase one's language skills or overcome mental burdens to take part, the *personal efficacy* seems to be lower. Alpha and Beta do not have to overcome all these costs and therefore perceive themselves as able to make a big difference.

### (7.1.6) Principles and beliefs

Throughout all interviews, another interesting variable emerges: *Principles*. The influence of such a principle could be conceptualized as a *selective benefit*: The fulfilment that one reaches through action would then be categorized as a reward motive.

However, the interview with Alpha and Beta tells a different story: Both perceive a duty to protest against injustice and seem to be highly motivated by their belief. According to them, they now protest primarily out of principle instead of only trying to better their personal situation. While having a lot of *personal efficacy*, it becomes clear that they do not fully base their decision to protest on their chances of success. To at least have tried matters the most: "*This is not the way to treat human beings. That was our main point and we are ready to fight back. If we don't win in the end: Okay. But at least we tried.*" This way, a Kantian logic is applied that blocks out the *personal efficacy*.

Delta also describes how she draws her motivation from an "*idealistic duty*", which she believes to be a matter of character: "*I think there is just an idealistic duty for myself. I can't imagine simply accepting something when it bothers me and then resigning. But I think that's a question of character.*"

Gamma, having grown up in Russia, is afraid of anti-democratic tendencies and views it as his duty to actively take part in civil society: "*Everyone knows the situation in Russia. And if we don't engage, then we endanger our democracy, quite simply. Those are my beliefs by now.*"

Strobel also thinks that people do not always act in line with rational choice theory but are rather motivated by their principles and normative beliefs. At the same time, he acknowledges that it is important to feel like one can have an impact: “*I think that's the most motivating thing, when you have the feeling that you can make a difference and don't just do it out of a sense of duty.*”

Finkel (1989) proposes the idea that *principles* could replace the influence of *personal efficacy* for some individuals. According to him, at least one of the factors needs to be strongly present for an individual to be motivated.: “*Discontent in the form of policy dissatisfaction does matter for protest, but it does not provide strong motivation for participation when considered alone. Participation in collective action results when dissatisfied individuals regard the group as likely to succeed, and when either perceptions of personal influence or belief in collectively rational general principles are high as well.*” (Finkel, 1989, p.900) This theory is supported by findings from all of our interviews.

### (7.1.7) Personal socialization

Over the course of all interviews, another pattern emerged: The *personal socialization* of the interviewees (not to be confused with the socialization of property) seemed to impact their *principles* and level of *goal support*.

Gamma’s case is particularly interesting: He describes his Russian heritage to be very influential for his perspective on democracy and cites it as the core reason for his principled view on participation: “*I come from Russia and we have to get involved. Whether it's about politics, or whether it's about such things as expropriating Deutsche Wohnen.*”

Alpha and Beta, being a part of their Kreuzberg neighbourhood for over several decades, have also felt the influence of their socialization: “*I was born in Kreuzberg, we have also lived here in the house for almost forty years and have experienced a lot. We have experienced an incredibly human neighbourhood over decades.*” When discussing the reasons for lacking *goal support*, they also cite the experiences of many Berlin citizens in the DDR and describe how it has made many people cautious of radically leftist ideas. Delta’s social motives mirror this impact. Due to the politically traumatized biography of her Polish mother, she does not want to tell her about her work in the campaign.

Furthermore, the composition of the campaign’s participants draws mostly from an academic milieu that comprises student activists. The role of language skills has also been mentioned above. All these examples indicate that socialization should be taken seriously in its impact on participant’s *goal support*, *principles* and *personal efficacy*.

### (7.1.8) Group efficacy

Interesting results were obtained for *group efficacy*, as most interviewees did not necessarily believe in the movement’s ability to enforce an expropriation of rental property.

Alpha and Beta believe that political support is necessary for a movement’s success, while admitting that full support is only given by a single party. Relating this to the above discussion of *instrumentality*,

a lack of political support makes the movement necessary in the first place, but also diminishes its chances of success.

A similar dynamic can be observed for Delta, who describes that she is very unsure about the possible success and has already made the experience of a local movement being crushed. Other people in her environment are described as being split into two radical groups: “*One half believed in it and one half did not believe in it at all.*” As already mentioned, the experience of other failing pathways has made her more inclined to join the movement but also less hopeful about potential chances of success. She also perceives the number of participants to be “*not that high*” when compared to the whole Berlin population.

Gamma does not believe in the possibility of a successful expropriation at all and even doubts the legal pathway of DWE: “*This is simply not legally possible in Germany.*” Not being a supporter of an expropriation anyway and preferring to invest the pay-out into new buildings, he does conceptualize the campaign’s success in a completely different way. He solely wants a referendum to happen so that pressure is put on the rental companies.

Gamma’s perspective mirrors Strobel’s assessment: He describes the existence of many doubts about the legal possibilities and the campaign’s efforts to decrease them through a working group that includes experts on legal and economic matters. While many doubts about the expropriation’s success exist, the referendum’s exertion of political pressure alone might be the primary goal for many. This way, the group’s success becomes very likely and – in fact – has already materialized during the campaign itself. While still a public good, the individual definitions of a successful campaign therefore seem to vary and allow for perceptions of *group efficacy* that are not easily observable.

As this creates conceptual problems for *goal support* and *group efficacy*, a reconceptualization or alternative operationalization might be necessary. During empirical research, for example, one might be able to solve this by letting an individual identify their perceived goal of the campaign first, before letting them assign their perceived group’s efficacy to it.

## (7.2) Discussion of qualitative findings

Overall, an influence on the participant’s motivation can be observed for every variable. While *group efficacy* seems to be less relevant at first, by applying a different operationalization it is possible to understand its effects on the participant’s motivation. Also, other variables, that are sometimes even able to overcome the original model’s theoretical assumptions, have been observed.

Most importantly, empirically observing the influence of people’s *principles* has created the need for an expanded model, as people’s reliance on efficacy do not seem to sufficiently explain participation. An integration seems to be very valuable. Finkel (1989) himself actually considered and explored the possibility that individuals do have purely normative reasons to act and therefore concludes that *principles* are able to substitute low levels of *personal efficacy* in the model. This does not disregard rational choice theory as irrelevant but rather expands its empirically supported approach with another

factor: “While the beliefs that promote collective rationality are extrarational from the view of conventional rational choice theory [...], they are nevertheless beliefs that have been long regarded as important for mobilizing groups to action.” (Finkel, 1989, S. 889) His alternative model, where (d) “represents the sense of duty to contribute to providing a public good” (p. 889) looks like this:

$$E(A) = (d * pg) * V$$

While the applied model of this thesis is challenged by the interviews at first, the analysis was able to corroborate Finkel’s original assumptions by empirically observing his proposed interplay between *personal efficacy* and people’s *principles*.

Additionally, *instrumentality* has added to a more detailed understanding of *goal support*. This variable is also being used by Klandermans (1984), who already uses it to conceptualize *goal support* in his framework. This analysis therefore also finds further evidence that supports his theory.

Apart from these two findings, some additionally observed variables can only be better understood by literature that goes beyond rational choice theory. The *personal socialization* of individuals does seemingly influence many of the model’s variables, such as *goal support* or people’s *principles*. Approaches from the knowledge sociology would allow for an analysis of the social construction of (non-)participant’s reality and their lifeworld (Berger & Luckmann, 1980). Also, discourse analyses on “expropriation” and “socialization” seem very fruitful.

*Opportunity structures* also need to be examined. Especially the role of the campaign’s Kiezteams deserves more scientific attention, as an influence on the participants’ *selective costs* and *personal efficacy* is indicated. Analysing the Kieztams under the light of the provided political opportunities would enhance an understanding of the campaign’s mobilization very strongly.

### (7.3) Quality of qualitative findings

When evaluating validity in an interview setting, any potential misconceptions need to be identified. While one problem came up regarding *goal support*, the differences were spotted and used to enrich the theoretical discussion. Beyond that, the findings are expected to be valid.

The selection of interviewees does raise some doubt regarding the research’s reliability. Most problematically, the number of respondents seems rather small to provide meaningful insight into the behaviour of several thousand citizens. Additionally, important types of participants are not represented: Not conducting an interview with a deliberate non-participant provides a serious lack of insight. Talking to a person that is not motivated by their own affectedness would be important as well. While an expert interview is used to triangulate the participant’s perspectives and double-check all statements, no additional scientific expert is used to back up or potentially challenge Strobel’s experiences.

A cross-sectional research design itself also creates serious problems for the testing of the forebrought theory. The emergence of a critical mass would need to be observed over time and implies

that the efficacies of individuals change. This phenomenon can only be fully observed in a longitudinal study that enacts repeated measures of the same individuals.

## (8) Conclusion

Due to the small sample sizes and several assumptions for a multiple linear regression not being met, the statistical analysis has not provided any major insights. Whereas the descriptive statistics indicate some reliability of the sample's means, a multiple linear regression and comparison between both samples did not turn out to be feasible.

While also being biased to some degree and pointing out the need for improved operationalisations of *goal support* and *group efficacy*, the qualitative method, on the other hand, seems to reliably produce specific results that are corroborated by an expert on the matter. While more interviews in a longitudinal study would be necessary to confirm these results, this thesis' hypotheses can therefore still be answered:

The findings indicate that all hypotheses, (1), (2), (3), and (4), are true and that the applied model is empirically verifiable. *Goal support*, *personal efficacy*, *group efficacy*, and combined *selective benefits and costs* all seemingly stand in a positive relationship with a person's *motivation to participate* in collective action. Furthermore, Finkel's (1989) and Klanderman's (1984) already existing extensions of their models were corroborated as well. Additionally, the relevance of pre-existing *opportunity structures* and the individual's *personal socialization* has been observed.

The explanatory research question can therefore be answered by the following: According to the qualitative analysis, the theorized influences of *goal support*, *perceived efficacy*, and *selective benefits and costs* seemingly exist and, together with some other factors, played an important role in the mobilization of participants during DWE's second signature collection phase in Kreuzberg. The empirical observations suggest that the model can help to explain why individuals participate in the collective production of a public good despite the collective action dilemma.

Furthermore, this thesis provides scientific value by developing an alternative way of sampling Berlin's DW tenants. This could be applied to overcome some of the hurdles that leave quantitative analyses of Berlin's housing situation very precarious.

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## (10) Data appendix

- (A) Questionnaire
- (B) SPSS Syntax for both data sets (K) and (B)
- (C) SPSS Output
  - (1) SPSS Output for data set (K)
  - (2) SPSS Output for data set (B)
- (D) Full transcripts of the interviews (German)
  - (1) Interview with Dr. Hannes Strobel
  - (2) Interview with Alpha and Beta
  - (3) Transcript of interview with Gamma
  - (4) Transcript of interview with Delta
- (E) Coding of transcripts (Atlas.ti) (German quotes)