Older People
and
Collective Action:
Social Psychological Determinants

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Abstract

This thesis examines the social psychological processes and factors involved in willingness to participate in collective action among older people. This work is framed within two social psychological theories, i.e. Identity Process Theory (Breakwell, 1986) and Social Representations Theory (Moscovici, 1984). The research used the construct of barriers to collective action. The barriers were conceptualised at different levels of analysis and were considered to embody both identity and representational aspects.

The research comprised three studies. Study 1 used a questionnaire among 277 older people in order to establish the extent to which older people participate in different types of collective action. Two types of participation were identified, i.e. 'active' and 'passive'. Disability in specific areas and non-participation in a group were related to lower involvement in collective action.

Study 2 was designed to explore the social issues older people are concerned about, to identify the types of collective action they are likely to take, and to examine perceived barriers to engaging in collective action. Thirteen focus groups were run (n= 59) and the data was content analysed. Findings showed that older people perceive a need for social change for a wide variety of social issues and the importance of several aspects of identity and belief systems as either facilitators or barriers to engaging in collective action was revealed. Collective action was defined in terms of type of action (from individual to group action) and type of goal (from collective expression to collective change). Different social psychological factors accounting for willingness to engage in collective action were identified. These were investigated in the following study.

Study 3 (n= 345) investigated the relationships between certain social psychological factors and collective action. Differences in perceptions of barriers according to five levels (intraindividual, interpersonal, intragroup, intergroup, societal) were shown. These were related to the way they give meaning to older people's identity structure.
and social beliefs. A model of collective action was tested. Willingness to participate in collective action was directly predicted by political trust, previous experience of collective action, perceived effectiveness of collective action and perceived barriers. Identity and ideology factors acted indirectly through previous experience, perceived effectiveness and perceived barriers. This work has implications for future research on the study of processes involved in explaining the generation of collective action and for the study of the socio-cognitive processes affecting ageing.
Dedication

"Malgrat la tormenta, segueix navegant malgrat les distàncies, segueix estimant..."

"No matter the storm, keep on navigating no matter the distances, keep on loving..."

Aquesta tesi està totalment dedicada a la meva mare, Eulàlia Boix i Rocasalbas. Et respecto i admiro profundament per ser una persona, dona i mare tan forta i excepcional. Sense el teu continu i incondicional suport, comprensió i estimació mai no hauria estat capaç d’assolir aquesta fita.

This thesis is entirely dedicated to my mother, Eulàlia Boix Rocasalbas. I deeply respect and admire you for being such a strong and exceptional person, woman and mother. Without your continuous and unconditional support, understanding and love I could not have achieved this.
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Chapter One

Introduction

"When I am, as it were, completely myself, entirely alone, and of good cheer—say, travelling in a carriage, or walking after a good meal, or during the night when I cannot sleep; it is on such occasions that my ideas flow best and most abundantly... Whence and how they come, I know not; nor can I force them."

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-91).

1.1 The focus of the study

This thesis is concerned with understanding some of the factors and processes which may influence older people’s willingness to participate in collective action. In particular, it focuses on identifying the social issues that older people are concerned about, establishing the types of collective action older people are likely to engage in and the examination of potential barriers to engaging in collective action. Unlike previous models of collective action, this thesis contributes to the development of an integrative model by using two social psychological theories, i.e. Identity Process Theory (Breakwell, 1986, 1988, 1992a, 1993) and Social Representations Theory (Moscovici, 1961, 1984, 1988).

An innovative approach is adopted by incorporating the construct of subjective barriers. These are conceptualised as embodying both identity and representational characteristics. The research incorporates different levels of analysis, in which the construct of barriers ranges from the intraindividual level to the societal one. The research also takes into account processes operating and moulding the content and value dimensions of the structure of identity and examines the extent to which they facilitate or hinder willingness to participate in collective action. The examination of the interactions and relationships between a number of individual and group factors
will make it possible to develop and test a model of collective action.

There are various reasons why this thesis studies older people in the context of collective action. In terms of demographics, the percentage of older people in Europe has remarkably increased in proportion and it is expected to increase even more in the next twenty years (Eurostat, 1995¹). In the U.K. in 1961, 12% of the total population was aged 65 years old and over; in 1991 this proportion was 16%. It has been estimated that by the year 2021 it will rise to 20% (Matheson & Pullinger, 1999).

From a societal point of view, present and future older people are characterised by a higher life expectancy; likely to remain healthier and active until a very advanced age; are more educated; and more consumerist in orientation than previous cohorts (Walker & Naegele, 1999). These changes have no precedent in history, implicating a vast range of areas - medical, economical, political, cultural, social and psychological. Each of these changes are likely to lead to a new definition of what ageing means. Furthermore, there is evidence suggesting that older people are both interested in politics and concerned with the community (e.g. Pratt & Norris, 1994) and that they are potential contributors to the political process, e.g. in the form of lobbying groups (e.g. Arber & Ginn, 1991) not simply with issues related to age (e.g. Rao, 1995).

From a social psychological point of view, the context of collective action seems to be an original and relatively novel framework to further our understanding of both identity and representational processes and therefore (i) contributes to the development of social psychological theory on collective action and (ii) to extend the understanding of social psychological processes operating in older people’s identity structure and belief systems.

There are some specific problems with regard to the existing literature on older people on one hand and on the theory available on collective action on the other that need to

¹ Eurostat - the “Statistical Office of the European Communities” - uses uniform rules to collect all statistical data from the National Statistical Institutes of each of the 15 Member States of the European Union.
be taken into consideration for this research. With regard to older people, social science has paid much attention to aspects of pathology and disability among older people but rarely has it acknowledged and considered research on healthy older people. Additionally, much of existing social psychological research in this area is on processes of stereotyping and ageism, in which older people have been rarely asked about their views, thus becoming targets of generalised attitudes (Ng, 1998). This has contributed to the homogenisation of older people (e.g. Baltes, Smith & Staudinger, 1992; Crosby, King, Lievesley & Perry, 1993) and to the definition of older people as a minority group in the modern industrialised countries of the world. It has affected prevailing theoretical assumptions in which minorities are regarded as powerless targets of influence, which may function to render social change as impossible, even when it is explicitly theorised (Reid & Ng, 1999). Similarly, older people have been often overlooked in terms of their potential and actual political contribution (Andrews, 1991). The need to consider other aspects rather than age in older people and the fact that age alone is not an influential factor in determining political behaviour (e.g. Peterson & Somit, 1992a; Jirovec & Erich, 1992) has already been outlined.

In relation to theory available on explaining the generation of collective action, two main problems have been identified. Firstly, the concept of collective action has been studied within diverse theoretical traditions, in which different operational definitions of collective action have been provided and thus led to a variety of findings and interpretations. For instance, the way in which existing theories of collective action using a rationalistic approach (e.g. Barnes, Kaase, Allerbeck, Farah, Heunks, Inglehart, Jennings, Klingemann, Marsh & Rosenmayr, 1979; Wolfsfeld, Opp, Dietz & Green, 1994) have defined collective action has been from a list of activities rather than acknowledging the subjective meaning attached to different types of collective actions. Moreover, sometimes studies are not comparable because they measure the outcome of collective action in different ways (i.e. either by past behaviour or intentional behaviour exclusively) and they do not acknowledge that collective action may differ according to the populations being studied and context specificity (e.g. context of instances of social change; cultural differences).
Secondly, various social psychological factors situated from an individual to a group level have been taken into account as possible predictors of both actual and intentional behaviour. For example, Public Goods Theory (Muller & Opp, 1986) has considered collective efficacy as a factor explaining participation in collective action. One problem with these theories is that there is no explicit recognition of the potential role of factors other than the ones they focus on, nor upon an explicit recognition of factors being located at different levels and the way in which they may interact.

In the light of these issues, the approach adopted in this thesis was to address the issue of heterogeneity among older people by considering possible individual differences among older people in the context of collective action. All of the participants in this research programme were older people who were asked about their views with regard to collective action and other factors rather than chronological age were explored.

Secondly, the work presented here was designed to facilitate a re-definition of the concept of collective action, and the interactions and relationships between a number of factors which have been shown by others to be significant in explaining participation in collective action were examined (e.g. group identification, collective orientation, collective efficacy, political trust). In addition, possible interrelationships between age-specific factors with non-specific ones were investigated, which contributed to further our understanding on the social psychological processes and socio-cognitive effects of ageing. This made it possible to develop and test a model of collective action which incorporated the novel construct of subjective barriers based on different levels of analysis.

Thirdly, in this thesis collective action is explored within a particular context by considering “social issues” (also referred to as “instances of social change”), which are understood to be any social matter people are concerned with. These can vary from addressing aspects such as the environment, law and order, or family. The nature of the action is also taken in consideration and related to various instances of social change and the fact that several social psychological factors might be specific to
particular types of actions is also addressed.

This research uses a multi-methodological approach in response to theoretical demands, combining both quantitative and qualitative methodologies, an approach which has been acclaimed for its potential to produce theoretical advancement within social psychology (e.g. Breakwell, 1993; Elejabarrieta, 1994; Moscovici, 1995). This was done for various reasons: (i) in order to address the theoretical innovative approach adopted in this thesis and (ii) nature of the sample (few studies reporting on older people’s views about themselves and various social issues). The research reported here comprises three studies, conducted among older people; each of the studies provided different types of information thus complementing each other.

A predictive model of collective action was developed and tested by taking into account identity and social representational processes. In referring to a predictive model this is taken here to mean a model which accounts for variability in responses on specific predictor factor variables. In doing so, it will comprise the first step towards modelling the relationship between social representations of older people, identity processes and collective action.

It is necessary to clarify at this point a terminological use in this thesis. The terms ‘political participation’ and ‘collective action’ are used interchangeably. ‘Political participation’ has often been defined and delimited by reference to a list of political activities (e.g. Marsh, 1977; Wolfsfield, 1986a; 1986b; Parry, Moyser & Day, 1992), and ‘collective action’ has mainly addressed social movements (e.g. Di Giacomo 1980; Klandermans, 1984; Kelly & Breinlinger, 1995). This decision was made on the basis of the position adopted here that any activity which aims to bring about social change is collective action (as shown in existing literature). This was further developed by data obtained in the second study of this thesis in which it was shown that a particular type of action is considered to be collective action as long as it is perceived to be as such by an individual, i.e. the subjective meaning attached to different types of action.
1.2 The structure of the thesis

**Chapter two** reviews research literature on older people, based on different disciplines (psychology, gerontology and political studies). Particular attention is given to identity and attitudes where an attempt is made to systematise the findings and literature in this area which is characterised by a lack of consensus with regard to conceptualisation, samples studied and methodological procedures. This is followed by a review of political participation in which types of political participation are discussed. This is then explored in the context of older people. It is concluded that older people are both interested in politics and concerned with the community. From this research it is suggested that the focus should be on wide range of social issues and not only on those associated with old age among older people. Moreover, it is argued that older people are not a homogeneous group. The need to take this into account in terms of their political participation is also outlined.

**Chapter three** outlines and reviews the most influential theories of collective action, some of which are not strictly situated within a social psychological perspective. These include theories of Social Dilemma, Resource Mobilisation Theory, and approaches of New Social Movement and Sociological tradition. The implications of each of these for this research are discussed. This is followed by a review on other theories more clearly situated under a social psychological perspective, i.e. Relative Deprivation Theory, and The Motivational Model. Two further social psychological aspects are highlighted for the study of collective action in this research, i.e. ‘Individualism versus Collectivism’ and ‘political efficacy’. It is argued that the problems with the concept of collective action reside mainly in differences in measurement of the outcome of collective action and nature of the samples under study; that different factors might predict different types of collective actions; and by not integrating both individual and group dimensions in the study of collective action.

**Chapter four** specifically reviews a body of literature which provides the theoretical framework for this research. Social Identity Theory (Tajfel, 1981) and Self-Categorisation Theory (Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher & Wetherell, 1987; Turner, Oakes, Haslam & McGarty, 1994) are examined and some of the existing work on
collective action which has been influenced by these theories is presented. It is suggested these theories cannot fully provide an adequate background to this research. The value of integrating both Breakwell’s Identity Process Theory and Moscovici’s Social Representations Theory is thus explored. An outline for each theory is presented and discussed, followed by a report of existing research for each and the way both theories are conceptually integrated for the purpose of the research reported here, i.e. by means of the perception of barriers towards engaging in collective action. Chapter four concludes with an outline of the main research aims.

The following seven chapters present the empirical part of this research. Chapter five reports on the first study; chapters six, seven and eight are based on the second study; and chapters nine, ten and eleven present the results of the third and final study. Chapter five is based on the first quantitative study, which investigates the extent to which older people engage in different types of political participation and its relationship between type of disability and group membership (belonging to an organisation). Results show that older people can engage in ‘active’ and ‘passive’ ways of political participation and how specific areas of disability among older people are related to political participation and that older people who belong at least to one organisation are more likely to use both ways of political participation when compared with those who do not belong to any organisation. It is suggested that disability in particular areas, together with ‘chronological age’, may not be the most useful explanation for understanding collective action among older people. The need to determine which social psychological factors mobilise which types of political participation among older people is outlined. This study enabled the classification of respondents according to types of participation (‘active’ and ‘passive’) and incorporate this classification in the second study of this research.

Chapter six is based on a description of the research questions addressed in the second study, followed by the choice of method (qualitative) and its epistemological basis in comparison to the other two studies of this thesis (quantitative). The rest of the chapter addresses the first research question explored in the study, i.e. the identification of instances of social change which older people are concerned about,
and to determine the extent to which older people desire to bring about social change. It is found that older people perceive a need for social change for a wide variety of social issues, not only age related. Besides, not only age as a relevant group membership (i.e. identification with older people) emerges as an important social psychological facilitator of social change, but also other aspects of older people’s identity are relevant (e.g. grandparenthood; citizenship; nationality) and some of the social issues are put in relation with a temporal dimension. In addition, the operation of some of the identity principles within a dimension from the individual to the collective level is shown. It is suggested that each of these dimensions may alter both the meaning of the existing content of identity and transform its value.

Chapter seven addresses the second research question of the second study, i.e. identification of the types of collective action older people are likely to take, the meaning attached to different types of collective action and accounts of their involvement and non-involvement. Actions perceived to be collective action by older people vary in terms of type of action (from individual to group action) and type of goal (from collective expression to collective change) and are not only age oriented. Some examples of relevant factors accounting for willingness to engage in collective action are perceived effectiveness of collective action; salience of identification with the group of older people; and social representations of older people. Data obtained in this study contribute to redefining the concept of collective action (phenomenology of collective action) and to identify the different social psychological factors which will predict people’s willingness to take different types of collective action. Data support the benefits of integrating Identity Process Theory (IPT) and Social Representations Theory (SRT).

Chapter eight explores the last research question of the qualitative study, i.e. perceived barriers to engaging in different types of collective action. Five levels of barriers are found to be operating, i.e. intraindividual, interpersonal, intragroup, intergroup and group/societal. They include both identity and social representational elements, which are not uniquely referred to “age”. It is suggested that some of them may be perceived as impermeable/permeable depending on specific individual
characteristics (e.g. self-efficacy, collective orientation) and/or societal ones (e.g. social representations of older people). Findings make it possible to integrate both IPT and SRT in the study of collective action and direct the following study of this research. This chapter ends with an exposition of the final conclusions obtained from the qualitative study presented in this chapter and chapters six and seven.

Chapter nine, ten and eleven focus on the final study of this research, based on a large survey study (quantitative). The relationships between each of the factors identified in the theoretical chapters and results obtained from the previous studies of this research are examined and a predictive model of collective action is tested. In chapter nine the main aims of the study are described and a detailed description of the method used follows. This study takes into account four different types of actions in relation to type of action / type of goal and presented instances of social change to older people. Finally, the preliminary analysis of this study is reported, which includes a description of the scales obtained (tractability of social issues; priority of the social issue; previous experience before and after 65; perceived effectiveness of the action; perception of barriers; political efficacy; political trust; collective orientation; identification with ‘older people’; collective efficacy; self-efficacy; importance of aspects of identity; evaluation of aspects of identity; social representations of older people and willingness to participate in collective action).

Chapter ten focuses on the exploration of relationships between social psychological variables in the study of collective action. Some of the findings are that not only more experience with a specific type of action is related to more willingness to participate in collective action but also that such willingness is still in evidence among older people who have never participated in specific actions. There are differences in perceptions of barriers according to the levels (intraindividual, interpersonal, intragroup, intergroup, societal), suggesting the importance of looking at different levels of analysis in order to explain the generation of collective action. Perception of barriers is related to identity and ideology factors. Moreover, aspects of identity are interrelated with each other, suggesting the need to consider the whole structure of identity. Social representations of older people are characterised by an evaluative
dimension and seem to specify both the content and value of older people's identity. 
At the same time, social representations are related to perception of barriers.

Willingness to participate in collective action is related to priority given to the social 
issue, previous experience, perceived effectiveness of collective action, perception of 
barriers, identity factors and organisation membership (e.g. individuals who belong to 
social issue organisations present more willingness to engage in collective action than 
those who are members of organisations which are not social issue oriented). The 
results obtained made it possible to develop a model of collective action that could be 
tested (presented in chapter eleven). The model is based on a series of nested 
regressions between socio-demographic variables, identity and ideology variables, 
previous experience, perceived effectiveness of collective action, and perceived 
barriers at five levels in order to predict willingness to participate in collective action. 
It is confirmed that willingness to participate in collective action is predicted by 
different social psychological factors, being directly predicted by political trust, 
previous experience of collective action, perceived effectiveness of collective action 
and perceived barriers at the intraindividual and intragroup levels. Identity and 
ideology factors act indirectly through previous experience, perceived effectiveness 
and perceived barriers. The prediction of collective action encompasses an overall 
identity-structure, some of its aspects are age-related and others are not. Perceived 
effectiveness and barriers are not related with each other and predict collective action 
independently. Perceived barriers are predicted by several types of predictor 
variables, which suggests that the concept of barrier is not only related to physical 
aspects of older people’s identity (age, sex) but also to the way older people give 
meaning to their identity, their belief systems and experiences. Both individual and 
collective elements of the efficacy principle are substantial predictors of perceived 
barriers at different levels, showing how efficacy can either facilitate or hinder 
willingsness to participate in collective action depending on the effect of perceived 
barriers.

Chapter twelve gives a summary of the findings of this research and a discussion 
follows on theoretical relationships evolved. Methodological issues, practical
implications and suggestions for future research are included. The need to take into account a social psychological approach that deals with levels of analysis is brought to light. This is achieved through the construct of barriers, conceptualised as subjective barriers—which embody both identity and representational aspects. Moreover, two alternative routes explaining collective action are proposed, i.e. one in which perceived effectiveness ultimately predicts willingness to participate in collective action, similar to previous research which emphasises the pervasive effect of this factor (e.g. Marsh, 1977; Barnes et al., 1979; Wolfsfeld, 1986a; Schwartz & Paul, 1992). The second route, and stemming from the innovative approach adopted in this research, is the one in which perceived barriers ultimately predict willingness to participate in collective action, in particular perceived barriers at the intraindividual and intragroup level. The fact these two levels emerge as important direct predictors, emphasises the need to take into account both individual and group/representational factors in the study of collective action. It is hoped that the work provided here will encourage future research in social psychology to further the understanding of the processes involved in explaining the generation of collective action in other social contexts and that the theoretical contribution with regard to older people will have future applications in the study of the socio-cognitive processes affecting ageing.
Chapter Two

The Study of Older People

"...Before a few weeks ago, I did not see old people at all. My eyes were pulled towards, and I saw, the young, the attractive, the well-dressed and handsome. And now it is as if a transparency has been drawn across that former picture and there, all at once, are the old..."

Doris Lessing (1983); The Diary of a Good Neighbour, p. 29.

2.1 Introduction

This research focuses on the study of collective action among older people. The most relevant aspects of existing work on older people will be reviewed in this chapter and it will be explained how some of its elements will be borrowed for the study of collective action within this thesis. In addition, specific information with regard to existing research into collective action among older people will be provided, in which the value of social psychological explanations will be emphasised. It will be shown that:

- Previous literature has generally equated old age with decline rather than gains and wrongly assumed homogeneity in the study of older people.

- Most of the existing research studying identity and attitudinal aspects of older people has been conducted without taking into account individual differences and what older people's views are. A level of consensus with regards to conceptualisation, samples studied and methodological procedures has not often been achieved.
Despite traditional sources in the literature which have portrayed older people as not being interested in political participation, such as disengagement theory (Cumming & Henry 1961), there is some evidence highlighting the political participation of older people (e.g. Powell & Thorson, 1990; Arber & Ginn, 1991; Pratt & Norris, 1994) and noting that chronological age alone is not an influential factor in determining political behaviour (e.g. Peterson & Somit, 1992a; Rao, 1995).

This chapter will integrate a body of research based on different disciplines (i.e. psychology, gerontology and political studies) which are often characterised by contradictory results, with different conceptual approaches and methods adopted.

Before proceeding with a review of this literature, it is first necessary to explain that the concept of older people has been shown to differ over time and across cultures and that this thesis is about older people from a "western" society. Following this, the different dimensions taken into account by the existing literature and demographic information emphasising the importance of the increasing size of the ageing population will be presented. Finally, some discussion on whether older people are a social group will be expounded and two social psychological aspects will be introduced, i.e. identity and attitudes. The chapter will end with a review of existing studies linking collective action and older people which will contextualise this research.

2.2 Time and culture

Neither the concept of ageing nor the position of older people in society has been consistent over time and across different cultures and sub-cultures. Two centuries ago, a person aged forty would have been considered as ‘old’, in the same way that a twenty year-old person would be viewed as mature. Conversely, in years to come it may not be surprising to consider that old age starts at eighty years of age.
This change in the perception of old age can be attributed to a combination of biological, cultural, economic and social factors, among which the most readily obvious is the increase in life expectancy. Indeed, with the coming of the industrial revolution a substantial increase in life expectancy was triggered; first observed around 1875 in industrial countries, and further expanding to colonised countries. Clearly, advances in scientific progress witnessed at the turn of the century have led to an improvement in the quality of life reflected by the dramatic change in ageing: in 1950 the life expectancy in most industrial countries was fifty years. Nowadays it is around seventy-five years, and is higher for women than for men (Levine, 1980). Social class also had an effect on life expectancy, as the most privileged social classes benefited from the improved living conditions more quickly than the working classes (Alba, 1992).

The hard living conditions before the Industrial Age did not only affect life expectancy directly, but also influenced older people's attitudes towards life, thus contributing to their biological decline. A forty year-old farmer in the Middle Ages felt that he/she had seen everything in life and that death was not a threat but a relief (Alba, 1992).

The attitudes of society also define the meaning of ageing. In many societies, for instance, the concept of old age has been related to productivity. As long as people were able to produce work or wage wars, they were not considered old. The concept of retirement did not exist as such. Biological factors were the decisive factor that moulded the role of older people in society (Alba, 1992).

On the other hand, in those societies where division of work was not so clear-cut, older people would be treated with particular respect, being considered as spiritual authorities on the basis of their years. For instance, in the so-called primitive societies, most of the magicians, spiritual guides or sages of the community were older, for they were believed to possess the 'truth'. In medieval times, older people who had links with the Church were regarded as having important positions in society.
During the Renaissance period, when the importance of the individual was enhanced, the older person was assumed to have been gaining knowledge, enriching their individual self (Shahar, 1998).

Nowadays representations of old age differ across cultures (e.g. Ng & Chan, 1996; Reid & Ng, 1999). In Eastern cultures, for example, tradition requires that older people are respected and venerated by virtue of their age and to be cared for by the young (Myers, 1995). In other societies specific chronological age is not relevant at all: for example, old age may be determined by generation (Keith, 1990). Conversely, in some societies, especially nomadic ones, where available resources are limited, the oldest in the community become a threat to the mobility of the group (Alba, 1992). Within Europe itself, societies of comparable economic conditions, differ in their attitudes and treatment of their elder population. Whilst in Greece it is held that people who are full of vigour into their late seventies should actively be involved in the life of the family, the Danish system maintains a level of state-funded institutional support which leads to structural separation from relatives (in Durkin, 1995). Overall however, it is apparent that representations and attitudes towards older people depend partly on the material, spiritual, or affective contributions they are able - or are perceived to be able - to make to the community. However, it needs to be pointed out that within a culture, one needs to address sub-cultural differences, where different representations of being old may exist. This will be addressed within this thesis (chapters seven and ten).

Concomitant with this plethora of attitudes towards older people across cultures and sub-cultures, older people have now a higher life expectancy and are likely to remain healthier and active until a very advanced age (e.g. Walker & Naegle, 1999). As is evident today, this has numerous implications to society - political, economical, social, familial - and is altogether leading to a re-definition of what ageing means².

²The author acknowledges and appreciates the difficulties of those who are biologically aged, with reduced functional abilities, facing physical and/or mental barriers and who are therefore dependent on others for daily assistance. It is necessary, too, to be aware that poverty remains a persistent problem among older people, particularly for women.
Besides the fact that the concept of old age has been shown to differ across time and cultures, existing gerontological literature has often distinguished between separate dimensions of old age, which have subsequently directed several areas of research on older people. Thus, it is now appropriate to consider this distinction and explain what position has been adopted in the present thesis.

2.3 Dimensions of old age

According to existing general handbooks devoted to the study of old age (e.g. Atchley, 1994; Morgan & Kunkel, 1998), age depends on a combination of three main dimensions: (i) biological age; (ii) psychological age; and (iii) social age, each of which is presented below.

(i) Biological age includes the interaction between extrinsic (environment; lifestyle) and intrinsic (genetic functions, the immune system, and physiological controls) factors. There is also variation between individuals. Thus, Birren & Cunningham (1985) have specified that an individual's biological age may be younger or older than his/her chronological age, and the way to measure biological age would be by taking into account the functional capacities of vital or life-limiting organ systems. This aspect is not included in this thesis.

(ii) Psychological age refers to the behavioural capacities of individuals to adapt to changing environmental demands. It is clearly influenced by biological and social factors, but the concept goes further in that it involves the use of adaptive capacities of memory, learning, intelligence, skills, feelings, motivations and emotions. For instance, in the same way one may be younger or older than one's chronological age, one may also be younger or older in psychological terms (Birren & Cunningham, 1985). Psychological age has mainly focused on four areas of research, i.e. (1) cognition, in which changes in memory, problem solving, and other mental abilities occurring with ageing are described and explained (e.g. Salthouse, 1990); (2) self and personality, aiming at understanding how older people's perceptions of themselves
and their abilities change with age, and how these changes influence their behaviours (e.g. Baltes & Baltes, 1990; Markus & Herzog, 1991); (3) social relations, which examines the changes in later life in relation to social relationships and perceptions of others in the social environment (e.g. Lansford, Sherman & Antonucci, 1998); (4) mental health, which is focused on cognitive, self-related, and social losses that can contribute to pathological psychological functioning, such as depression (e.g. Koenig & Blazer, 1992) and dementia (e.g. Raskind & Peskind, 1992).

This thesis pays particular attention to the self, which encompasses the beliefs, cognitions and emotions that lead to the organisation of our identity and behaviours. Age is one aspect of older people’s identity, which may become more important for some individuals and less for others. In particular, the way age is conceptualised within this research takes into account the temporal dimension of identity. In other words, the self is not uniquely made up of who an older person is today, but also of who he/she was once and who he/she may become (Markus & Herzog, 1991). This allows a consideration of the dynamic nature of identity. This will be further explained in chapter four, in which the theoretical framework of Identity Process Theory (IPT) (Breakwell, 1986, 1988, 1992a, 1993) is shown to be a suitable theory for studying the concept of identity among older people.

(iii) Social age is concerned with the function attributed by society to those persons considered to be young/adult and to those labelled as ‘old’; their roles and habits with respect to other members of the society of which they are part; negotiations about the meaning and implications of chronological age; expectations about behaviour. This aspect pays specific attention to the social context in which older people live. More specifically, role changes have been identified as central elements of situational change in later life. Retirement is a classic example of this, which has been mainly addressed by sociologists. Although retirement is still a phase in which the person is forced to reconsider what to do and what to expect from life (Pratt & Norris, 1994), evidence shows that it is no longer a straightforward entry point to old age and is therefore gradually becoming anachronistic as a definition of older people. There is a
trend towards the shortening of the period spent in paid employment with retirement, generally at the age of fifty-five in European countries (Walker & Maltby, 1997; Phillipson, 1998).

Two other aspects mentioned as role changes and highlighted within this research are disability and participation in politics. Disability has been identified as a new role that older people may experience (Atchley, 1994). Although within this thesis any assumption which considers disability as a natural and inevitable consequence of old age is rejected, the fact that some older people present disabilities may restrict the number of roles they can play and at the same time affect other people's reactions towards disability. One of the roles potentially affected by this could be participation in politics. In chapter five several areas of disability among older people were identified and related to types of political participation.

Another social aspect concerns the patterning of experiences. This describes the ways in which society differentially structures the experiences of different groups of people. This leads us to one of the main themes of this research, i.e. heterogeneity in the study of older people. This will be further discussed in this chapter. It is an important dimension of the thesis in general.

In brief, both psychological and social aspects of the above classification were used in this research. In particular, identity and attitudinal aspects were taken into account in the study of collective action among older people. Although these concepts are interrelated, a separate section will be dedicated for each of them in this chapter.

The three aspects of old age identified above should be set in the context of a series of demographic changes occurring among older people. They have been found to be healthier, live longer, and are more educated and more consumerist in orientation than previous generations (Walker & Naegele, 1999). The nature of "old age" is thus called into question. In order to support this, some details of the demography of ageing are presented below.
2.4 Demographic Information

In the last decade there has been a considerable increase in the proportion of the European population over sixty-five years of age (Eurostat 1995). The present and future demographic changes are dramatic and have no precedent in history (Wilson, 2000).

The ageing of the European population has been a consequence of two main factors: (i) a sharp drop in the birth rate in the EU countries since the mid-1960s which has led to a remarkable reduction in the numbers of young people in the population and (ii) economic, scientific and technological developments that have made it possible for people to live longer and remain healthy and potentially active members of the community after retirement.

In January 1993 in the 15 countries constituting the EU there were 117 million people aged 50 years and over (32% of the total population of the EU) and nearly 75 million people aged 60 and over (20%). It is expected that by the year 2020 people aged over 60 will constitute more than one-quarter of the population (Eurostat, 1995). What is most significant is the rise in the number of the most elderly, as it has been predicted that the population over 75 years old will increase by 10% (from 3.666 million in 1986 to 4.110 million in the year 2006) and those over 85 will increase by 54% (from 0.713 to 1.096 million).

Each of the populations of all the Member States are ageing, and the UK, together with Germany and Denmark, has the highest percentages of the cohorts aged 55 years old and over (25.7%), 65 years old and over (15.6%), 75 years old and over (6.8%) and 85 years old and over (1.4%) (Crosby et al., 1993). Although the older population of the UK is growing more slowly than in the past, it, nevertheless, is becoming older (Grundy, 1996). The slower growth of the older population in the UK noted above means that in the future the country will hold an intermediate position to other countries from Europe (Arber & Ginn, 1991). Additionally, among the older groups of the population, women outnumber men; in 1990, 5% of the total female population
was aged over 80 years old, whilst the total male population over this age was 2.2% (Crosby et al., 1993).

In the UK, in 1961, 12% of the total population was aged 65 years old and over; by 1991 this proportion had risen to 16%. It has been estimated that this proportion will hold constant until the year 2021 when it is expected to rise to 20%. The proportion of people aged over 75 years old, has nearly doubled from 4% in 1961 to 7% in 1991 and will rise to 9% by 2021 (Matheson & Pullinger, 1999).

2.4.1 Life expectancy

Women are disadvantaged compared to men in terms of disability and poor health in later life (Arber & Ginn, 1991). However at the age of 65, women in UK appear to have a higher life expectancy than men. In 1986 it was 17.3 years for women and 13.4 years for men, and in 1995 it had increased to 18.1 years for women to 14.6 years for men (Eurostat, 1997).

2.4.2 Social class

Fox, Goldblatt & Jones' (1983) conclusions on social class differences with regards to mortality rates among older people used data from the Office of Population Censuses and Surveys (OPCS) longitudinal study (1976-81) and demonstrated the higher mortality of working-class compared to middle-class men aged 65-74 and over 75.

The latest available information regarding social class and health among older people was published in 1985 by the General Household Survey (in Arber & Ginn, 1991). It was shown that social class has a significant influence on health. Social class was measured by the individual’s previous position in the labour market. At least 20% of higher middle-class men assessed their health as ‘good’ compared to unskilled men within each age group. For older women in their late sixties the class differences were shown as particularly strong and weaker over the age of 75. Only 25% of women who had never worked and who were in their late sixties reported ‘good’ health compared
to over 50% of women previously in a middle-class occupation.

2.4.3 Education

Information in relation to levels of education among older people is only available up to the age of sixty-nine years. There has been a constant increase in the proportion of adults aged 16-69 (not in full-time education) with educational qualifications, rising from 41% in 1975 to 69% in 1995 and 1996. Not surprisingly, those aged 20-69 with higher qualifications had, on average, higher earnings than the less well qualified (Office for National Statistics Social Survey Division, 1998). This rise of the proportion of people with higher qualifications has been shown to be greater for women (Bulusu & White, 1995).

To recap, the above demographic information about the older population in Europe showed that it has increased in number in the last ten years and that expectations for the next twenty years estimate a considerable rise, especially for those over 75 years old. Although the rise in the UK is expected to be stable during the next twenty years, it is estimated that it will remarkably increase after 2020. Women appear to have a higher life expectancy than men, although more disability and poor health has been self-reported among women. The influence of social class on health has been noted with middle-class people generally being in better health. Finally, with regard to education, older people have more educational qualifications than before, and what is more, future generations of older people will be even more qualified.

Before presenting a review of existing literature on psychological and social aspects of older people relevant to this research, it is first necessary to clarify the notion of older people as a social group, characterised by heterogeneity. These are two important assumptions adopted in the study of older people in the context of collective action within this thesis.
Chapter Two

2.5 Older people as a social group

So far in this chapter, the term ‘older people’ has been used in a way which may imply that this section of the population constitutes a separate group. Such an approach will inevitably be subject to criticism: adopting a name that encompasses the whole population of older people selected simply on the basis of their age can easily be viewed as too arbitrary or even as short sighted. For the purpose of brevity, this thesis will refer to older people in “group” terms. The way in which this will be developed and the rationale for this is presented in this section.

Firstly, it seems that society ascribes an identity to, and/or groups together older people. Societal ascriptions operate on the basis of different criteria; some of which are situational referring to features that are an intrinsic part of the individuals and their lives: chronological age - regarded as the simplest measure of age and included in research projects - (Morgan & Kunkel, 1998); retirement; health; closeness of death (e.g. widowhood - with its consequent pressure to cope independently). A further set of criteria are attitudinal as they relate, to varying degrees, to awareness of belonging to the group: intergenerational relations or membership to age-interest organisations. In addition, external factors such as the intervention of policy makers, social carers programmes, medical specialisation and even the 1999 year’s celebration of the International Year of Older People by the United Nations further encourages the definition and study of older people as a group. Each of these examples lead to the argument that the origin of a group’s identity stems from both social and psychological levels. According to Breakwell (1983), “under such circumstances, the ‘group’ is hardly likely to behave as a group. However, it should be added that these circumstances often lead to the creation of a group because the people involved cannot evade the ascriptions and attributions of the wider society” (p. 23). Thus, people ascribed to the ‘group’ may become conscious of shared interests and start to develop a “subjective group identity” (p. 23).

Cartwright & Zander (1968), define group as “a collection of individuals who have relations to one another that make them interdependent to some significant degree”
According to that conception, they state that if a group of people are considered as homogeneous by society for whatever reason, they may begin to identify with one another and consequently become an interdependent group. Thus, independently of whether the social group of older people have been classified as such in an arbitrary way (e.g. chronological age), the possibility that they constitute an interdependent group will not be excluded in the present thesis:

"Under certain conditions, which unfortunately are not well understood, one or more of these personal traits become socially relevant, and individuals possessing them are clustered into perceptual or cognitive categories such as teenagers, older people, women, motorcyclists, (...). The members of a socially defined category find that certain kinds of behavior are expected of them and that certain opportunities are available to them or denied them simply because of their membership in the category. Interdependence among members develops because society gives them 'a common fate.'" (Cartwright & Zander, 1968, pp. 56-57).

Secondly, it could be claimed that whether older people are considered as a social group or not depends very much on the criteria adopted. The same 'old' person might be a member of several groups. As has been pointed out by Campbell (1958) the concept of "entitity" is understood as an aggregation of different characteristics and constituting a matter of degree and continuity. In other words, the definition of 'group' would not be a question of whether groups exist or do not exist; they can fulfill different criteria and be categorised in many different ways. With regard to this, Campbell (1958) referred to a set of principles, namely common fate; similarity; proximity; reflection (resistance to intrusion); internal diffusion, transfer and communication. The first of these principles, whose essence is the co-variability in time and other selected parameters, would be considered to be central to the diagnosis of entities.

Thus, the question of whether older people identify themselves as a group must be addressed; and if so, to what extent and on the basis of what criteria. The above mentioned 'subjective identification' will be considered in this thesis, i.e. some older people may identify themselves with older people as a group, and others not, each of them attaching a specific meaning to their identification or non-identification. Consequently, this may affect collective action. In addition, the heterogeneity of the
social group 'older people' means that representations of the group may vary both within and between groups. Indeed, one of the aims of this thesis is to investigate whether older people view themselves as a group; and if so, to identify whether they regard 'old age' per se and representations of the group as an obstacle to them engaging in collective action. Additionally, within this thesis age is understood to be one of various definitions of an individual’s identity structure and it will be examined how age-specific elements of identity may interact with other aspects of identity to predict political participation among older people.

It is now appropriate to present the reasons why the term ‘older people’ is used within this thesis. The discussion goes beyond labels into again considering what a group is.

2.5.1 Terminology
The fact that language can be discriminatory and the consequent need for finding an unprejudiced name when referring to older people was considered by the Eurobarometer survey in 1992 (in Walker & Maltby, 1997). Older people from twelve European countries were asked what they preferred to be called. The majority opted for the terms 'senior citizens' (30.9%) and 'older people' (27.4%). The least preferred names were 'golden age/years/oldies' (0.2%); '60 plus' (1.1%); 'pensioners' (1.1%) and 'elderly' (6.6%). The most-mentioned terms 'senior citizens' and 'older people' seem to indicate two main points; the former implies the quality of being wise ('senior') and having the equivalent rights and duties held by the rest of the society ('citizens'). This not only emphasises the point that older people are the same as others and in no way 'separate' from the community, but also might be seen to imply a positive identity. In addition, the preferred term ‘older people’ shows a rejection of the concept of being old. The preference is for being older but not old.

1Public opinion survey entitled “Age and Attitudes” conducted on behalf of the European Commission.
The American Psychological Association (1995) recommends the use of “older person”, claiming that the term “elderly” is not acceptable as a noun and is considered pejorative by some as an adjective.

Bytheway (1995) also pointed out the “need to critically examine the logic for creating a category of people and calling it the elderly, the old or the aged” (p. 115). He rejects ageism on the basis that people tend to classify together any changes that come with age and create stereotypes, thus deliberately distinguishing between ‘us’ and ‘them’. On the other hand, he favours older people being considered as a social group when it comes to political participation and citizenship; which is a point supported throughout this thesis. Finally, he proposes to abandon ageist language such as ‘elderly’ and use instead a more relative rather than absolute age vocabulary.

The need to consider the intersection of intergroup relations and power in social psychology has been recently pointed out by Reid & Ng (1999). In particular, they emphasise the need to understand intergroup language in relation to power; the interrelationships between language and power being regarded as dynamic and intimately related to processes of social change.

In their discussion of when language routinises power, they argue that the political or social dominance of one group over another is often followed by linguistic dominance, in which the more dominant part imposes its own language on the population as the standard language:

“When it occurs, the routine use of the imposed language in everyday life would serve to further reinforce the dominance relation, eventually making it appear natural. The linguistic routinization of power inhibits the ability of low-power groups to organize social change, because it acts to reduce the opportunity for group formation and collective protest.” (Reid & Ng, 1999, p. 122).

The term ‘older’ has been adopted throughout this thesis. In addition, due to theoretical reasons, it cannot be assumed that this particular section of the population identify with the term ‘old’, as the present thesis deals with a large age group, in which the assumption of homogeneity does not apply. This latter concept is further
reviewed in the following section in which the need to study older people from a social psychological perspective is pointed out.

2.6 Connecting older people and social psychology

What older people themselves wish, and their own views, should be a main strand in the literature, but there is a remarkable lack of this. As the social psychologist Coleman (1993a) has already pointed out:

"Most early research work on the psychology of ageing concentrated on the subject of intelligence. As a result, we have a rather unbalanced picture of the changes that occur with age. This is the more so because investigations on intelligence have examined the decline in basic mechanisms, but have paid little attention to the continued development of particular areas of expertise which enable individuals to excel in many fields of life, such as politics and art, late in life." (p. 95).

In addition, most of the research about older people is concerned about losses, and not gains (Coleman, 1993b). That has led to associate older people with issues such as pathology and disability, which only addresses a process of ageing where there is evidence for physical or mental pathology (Baltes et al., 1992). So, according to the latter authors, pathological ageing would alter the qualitative state of older people; as other processes such as normal and optimal ageing, which depict older people as healthy should be also considered for research on older people. Similarly, the so-called 'gerontophobia' is itself encouraged by the same research, which makes the ageing process be seen as more distant (also called the 'misery perspective on ageing' by Sherman in 1993).

Moreover, our culture - through patterns of social interaction - comes to marginalise its older members and to define them as a minority group (though not in the numerical sense) and consequently they are treated as a homogeneous group, rather than as a heterogeneous section of the population (e.g. Baltes et al., 1992; Crosby et al., 1993; Ng, Liu, Weatherall & Loong, 1997). As a consequence, the study of old age is a
biased and unexplored area. Differences, rather than homogeneity among older people, still require research.

Some social gerontologists have already claimed the need to provide and explore empirical research on heterogeneity among older people instead of just acknowledging it (Grigsby, 1996; Morgan & Kunkel, 1998) and to examine heterogeneity on a wide range of variables (Dannefer & Sell, 1988). Thus the present research attempted to address this in response to the above observations (e.g. investigating variations in the political attitudes of older people). Also the way heterogeneity is conceptualised in this thesis does not involve comparisons of groups to try to understand their different experiences of ageing, since there is always a reference group to whom everyone else is compared and the implicit use of a dominant group as a point of comparison would reinforce the reference group's experience as normal, minimising the experiences of the other group-s (e.g. older men vs. older women). A recent publication which has discussed heterogeneity among older people by considering individual differences in studying older people from an ethnic minority (Whitfield & Baker-Thomas, 1999) has also emphasised the above.

Instead, this research attempted to focus on groups of people in a particular context (Calasanti, 1996):

"Certainly, research that is sensitive to diversity involves comparison. However, examining similarities and differences across and within groups is only the method. Incorporating diversity involves more than content, or comparison. It provides a theoretical framework that is built upon the experiences of a particular group or groups as they are situated in the web of interlocking power relations." (p. 148).

In addition to the above, the life experiences which older people have accumulated, often rich in variety and content, have frequently been neglected by previous literature:

"The very fact of survival and longevity, experiences of interacting, coping and succeeding in difficult life situations, occupational skills acquired over a long time, home management and child-rearing skills, skills in relating to different individuals and groups, as well as other inherent strengths could be tapped and harnessed to facilitate participation and

Little attention in social psychological research has been paid to the perspectives of older people, and the necessity of this has already been pointed out (Hansson, 1989; Pratt & Norris, 1994). Part of the existing literature on older people derives from social gerontology. This discipline has provided the notion of ‘life-span’ by contemplating the interrelationships among health, psychological (especially life satisfaction) and social functioning. Moreover, this has provided important data with which to feed the study of old age in social psychology. In the sections below some results from existing research addressing several psychological and social aspects will be reviewed, which are relevant to the study of older people within this thesis. This existing body of research is characterised by its multi-disciplinary approach (e.g. developmental psychology, political psychology, social gerontology, sociology), which encompasses a variety of conceptualisations and methodological approaches and may result in different or contradictory results. This will be taken into consideration in the reviews presented below.

The next task is to introduce the two social psychological aspects considered within this thesis in order to inform the study of collective action among older people. Both identity and attitudinal aspects will be reviewed. The role of identity in the study of older people will be presented first.

2.7 Identity and older people

Many of the existing studies on identity among older people derive from a developmental approach. As will be presented below, this thesis will base some of its assumptions upon the theoretical framework of Identity Process Theory (Breakwell, 1986, 1988, 1992a, 1993).
2.7.1 The concept of successful ageing: psychological perspectives

Successful ageing derives from a developmental approach to the study of older people and denotes that individuals are satisfied or contented with their lives. In other words, they have found ways of maximising positive aspects in their lives and minimising the impact of age-related losses (Morgan & Kunke, 1998). However, as will be presented below, this concept does not necessarily lead to a totally positive old age.

Two main lines of research within a developmental approach were found useful in order to address the concept of successful ageing, i.e. the ‘Stages of Life’ model by Erikson (1982) and the ‘model of selective optimisation with compensation’ by Baltes & Baltes (1990).

Erikson distinguishes between separate stages throughout the life-span. For instance, the developmental issue in young adulthood is ‘intimacy vs. isolation’, in which developing intimacy (close personal relationships) would involve learning to unite one’s own identity with that of another person. In this way, people who do not develop intimacy would remain isolated, although still relating to others. This stage is followed by the development of ‘generativity vs. stagnation’ in middle adulthood. The concept of generativity is that referred to the ability to support others, particularly the concern for one’s children and/or other members from younger generations, in which an interest is shown in making a contribution to the social world one lives in. In contrast, the concept of stagnation is related to when an individual does not learn to contribute to others. Lacking interest for others, specially younger generations; a feeling of non-contribution and of just going through the motions would characterise stagnation. According to Erikson, generativity appears to increase in importance and strength up through middle adulthood and then decrease in old age.

The above stage is followed by the last one in the development of a person’s identity, i.e. ‘ego integrity vs. despair, disgust’. Thus, according to Erikson, ego integrity in old age involves being able to see one’s life as meaningful and the acceptance of both negative and positive characteristics of someone’s identity, and to be unthreatened by
this acceptance. Conversely, despair would be the result of rejecting one's life and the feeling that there is not enough time to accommodate new and positive aspects to one's identity.

Erikson's theory is relevant for this thesis in the sense that it acknowledges (i) the development of an identity across the life-span and (ii) attempts to study the meaning of old age. However, the scientific validity of his theory has often been criticised because of the difficulty of measuring its concepts (e.g. Atchley, 1994) and the fact that this theory was first formulated in the immediate postwar years. The existence of differing models of psychological development when considering older people and about generational aspects has already been pointed out (Pedersen, 1993). This last aspect is concerned with the idea that every generation of older people will have to cope with internal and external changes, where the struggle for identity will remain the same but the strategies adopted will be slightly divergent because of the specific historical and socio-cultural background each generation has.

Thus, older people in the developed world have a higher life expectancy and other factors such as increase in number of coexisting generations have arisen. Thus, Erikson's theory cannot account for the many older people who live long after having apparently completed their life's story (Coleman, Ivani-Chalian & Robinson, 1999). Moreover, human development does not necessarily involve discrete and incremental stages in which one has to precede the other in order to guarantee a successful growth. This is supported by further research which contradicted Erikson's predictions on 'generativity'. It was found that older adults were more reflective than when they were younger and that there was no decline in generativity from middle to late adulthood (Ryff & Heincke, 1983; Mc Adams, de St. Aubin & Logan, 1993).

Finally, this theory has ignored the fact there might be other alternative and overlapping stages. In addition, although Erikson acknowledged the existence of social influences, he failed to account for them and subsequently emphasis has been given to the individual life course. This thesis attempts to integrate both dimensions
The position adopted in this thesis is that one’s identity is flexible and dynamic. It is both subject to the constant changes occurring in the person and the person’s environment. Thus we need to take individual differences into account; these may have an impact on adaptation to the changes. This is supported by Baltes & Baltes’ (1990) ‘model of selective optimisation with compensation’. This model posits two main processes whereby older people can maintain high levels of functioning even in critical life areas, i.e. selection and compensation.

The first process is selection. This suggests that across the life-span one has to select amongst a wide range of choices and that it is when one gets older that available resources (cognitive, social, physical, and economic) may start to lessen. According to this model, by keeping the resources which one feels are more important, adaptive functioning may be maintained for a longer period of time. The second process, compensation, is related to one’s ability to find alternative ways of achieving important tasks. So, it is assumed that as long as older people are successful in compensating for losses, an active life involvement may be also extended for a longer period of time.

The success claimed from the above processes is anchored in a framework of seven propositions. These propositions are referred to as (1) “major differences between normal, optimal and pathological ageing” (this echoes the claim made earlier that older people who are healthy should be considered when conducting research instead of only focusing on pathological ageing); (2) “interindividual variability in ageing” (highlighting again the claim of heterogeneity among older people); (3) “latent reserve” (cognitive plasticity and wisdom, the latter understood as expert knowledge in the pragmatics of life permitting insight and judgement involving complex and unclear matters); (4) “ageing loss near the limits of reserve” (age-related losses when one approaches upper limits in the cognitive mechanics, e.g. mnemonic strategies involving processes of mental imaging); (5) “cognitive pragmatics compensation for
losses in cognitive mechanics” (knowledge and pragmatics compensating for the losses experienced mentioned in the previous proposition); (6) “when ageing the balance between gains and losses becomes less positive” (concerning the overall balance of life development, calculated as positive and negative changes concluding that adaptive capacity becomes less positive in old age and that can reach an overall negative value), and (7) “the resilient continuity of the self in old age” (despite the reported losses in the previous propositions, this one posits that older people, on average, do not show a reduction in selfhood related indicators such as self-esteem or self-efficacy). This latter proposition of “resilient continuity of the self in old age” maintains that older people do not differ from young people in reports of their subjective life satisfaction or on self-related measures. According to the authors, this is due to three factors, namely, (i) multiple selves; (ii) social comparison and (iii) the possibility of a change in goals and new levels of aspiration.

Firstly, multiple selves relates to the notion that identity consists of several aspects, which can provide an effective mechanism for adjusting to different circumstances (e.g. if one aspect is challenged, such as retiring from a job, another aspect could take its place). Secondly, social comparisons (Festinger, 1954) suggest that individuals evaluate themselves based on comparisons with others and the choice of whom one compares himself/herself with becomes important. In particular, Taylor & Lobel (1989) and Wood (1989) have identified two different types of social comparisons involved in the maintenance of selfhood, i.e. upward social comparisons (looking for those who are better off and set them as the standard) and downward social comparisons (comparisons with those who are less well off so that one can make himself/herself look better by comparison).

The last strategy involved in the psychological management of life goals and levels of aspiration during old age is change in goals and levels of aspirations. Thus, in this principle it is postulated that if certain goals cannot be achieved anymore, their structure and content can be transformed; then levels of aspirations can be adjusted and new goals can be considered.
Finally, Baltes & Baltes (1990) showed that many older people adjust very positively to changes in themselves and in their circumstances. Moreover, it was shown that self-esteem does not diminish with age, and may even increase moderately compared to early years. However, one must bear in mind that these models of adjustment in later life may not be applicable in societies in which the older person has a positive social value.

In sum, Baltes & Baltes (1990) highlighted how older people are endowed with reserve capacity and plasticity. They presented the fact that older people are not fully activated and that those who remain healthier are able to learn new cognitive skills. The same conception is also present in the named "continuing development" of the "elderly" (Snowdon & Brodaty, 1986). This emphasises the fact that older people may continue to produce new forms of adaptive capacity, which would explain their ability for readapting and redefining their identity in order to acquire a positive self-concept (Brandstätter, Wentura & Greve, 1993).

Under the above described proposition number seven of Baltes & Baltes (1990) of "resilient continuity of the self in old age" the principles of self-esteem and self-efficacy were introduced as being relevant to understanding identity processes among older people. These principles, together with those of continuity and distinctiveness, represent the four principles which guide the processes operating in the structure of identity. The theoretical framework in which they are presented, Identity Process Theory (Breakwell, 1986, 1988, 1992a, 1993) will be reviewed in chapter four.

Existing literature on older people has paid specific attention to both self-esteem and self-efficacy principles. Although these principles have not been studied within the Identity Process Theory (IPT) theoretical framework adopted in this thesis, the most relevant research on self-esteem and self-efficacy will be reviewed here. These principles formed the starting point of the work presented in the thesis and have also been shown to be important concepts for understanding collective action.
2.7.2 Self-esteem

The concept of self-esteem has been defined as a feeling of personal worth or social value, in which high self-esteem has been described as when individuals have self-respect and consider themselves a person of worth (but not necessarily considering themselves superior to others) and low self-esteem meaning that "the individual lacks respect for himself, considers himself unworthy, inadequate, or otherwise seriously deficient as a person" (Rosenberg, 1979, p. 54). The extensive existing research concerning the self-esteem of older people presents different if not contradictory positions and conclusions, which may be affected by its different conceptualisations and contexts in which it has been studied.

Self-esteem has been used in most of the existing research among older people as a measure in order to predict outcomes of a diverse nature. Thus, when the outcome has been successful ageing, studies have concluded that self-esteem is maintained with age and tended to explain this as a compensatory defence mechanism (e.g. Baltes & Baltes, 1990, as expounded in the section above). In contrast, when the studied outcome has been health (e.g. depression), emphasis has been given to low self-esteem among older people. For example, Hunter, Linn & Harris (1982) concluded that a low self-esteem among older people is associated with poor self-reported health and higher disability.

On the other hand, those studies that conclude that there is a decrease in the self-esteem of older people attribute this to identifying with negative stereotypes and in addition might be compounded by existing social beliefs about 'elderliness'. In Rodin & Langer's (1980) review it was stressed:

"Given that stereotypes and social labels are in a sense simply summaries of cultural expectations, such expectations might be assumed to affect all members of the culture, including those about whom the labels are held. If one's self-image and behaviour come to portray these negative stereotypes, self-esteem should decline." (p. 13).

Another line of research in which self-esteem has received some attention has been where specific emphasis is given to social interaction between older people and other
segments of the population. This will receive particular attention in this chapter under the so-called sociolinguistic approach (see section 2.8.1.1). For instance, Cai, Giles & Noels' (1998) study on intragenerational communication included a set of analyses examining how perceptions of interactions with older adults and young family and young non-family adults predicted self-esteem. It was shown that high self-esteem was associated with greater avoidance of older people rather than with young non-family people, suggesting that older individuals with high self-esteem may distance themselves from other older members, and thereby misidentify with that age group.

Finally, previous research has revealed that the act of reminiscing is used by some people as a mechanism for evaluating and analysing their lives, and there is evidence that this may help to maintain or improve their self-esteem (e.g. Coleman, 1993b; 1993c), mood, and life satisfaction or other cognitive functioning (Kovach, 1990).

As an example on existing studies on the maintenance and management of self-esteem among older people, Coleman et al. (1999) recently conducted a longitudinal study among a sample of older people over a 20-year period, by using a narrative approach. Results from their qualitative study emphasised the concept of dynamic identity, in which the individual's life comes to be represented as a whole story, and consideration of the future is placed in the context of a developing life history. Here, self-esteem was studied as the outcome, in which different trajectories of self-esteem in later life were identified, i.e. continued maintenance; maintenance until advanced frailty; continued absence; loss and recovery; and alternating loss and recovery.

An important aspect emerging from the study of self-esteem among older people and brought forward within this thesis is, as emphasised in sections above, that of individual differences encountered in the structure of individuals' identity. Self-esteem will be shown to be a principle operating in the processes of people's identities (chapter four). This principle has been seen to operate in tandem with that of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997). Self-efficacy has also received much attention when reviewing the existing literature related to the study of old age. This is presented in
Chapter Two

2.7.3 Self-efficacy

With respect to the study of self-efficacy, i.e. one's belief in the ability to perform behaviour (Sherer, Maddux, Mercandante, Prentice-Dunn, Jacobs & Rogers, 1982), Bandura (1986) already accounted for the fact that advancing age produces losses in physiological functions (e.g. physical stamina, memory). Supporting this, some attention has been given to the study of physical self-efficacy among older people in a health context (e.g. Godin & Shephard, 1985; Davis-Berman, 1990; Hickey, Wolf, Robins, Wagner & Harik, 1995; Parkatti, Deeg, Bosscher & Launer, 1998).

Level of psychosocial functioning needs also to be taken into account in the study of self-efficacy. Drawing together the various lines of research to date, it cannot be generalised that perceptions of control decline with age. Rather, there is a tendency towards stability in perceptions of control, and decline only in some particular factors (Lachman, 1986). In particular, Lachman distinguished between “domain specific” measures of control (e.g. beliefs and attributions about control over intellectual functioning; control over others) and “generalised” measures (e.g. internal personal efficacy) and found that older people showed lack of control over others, but on the other hand personal efficacy, conceptualised by the author as internal control, was not likely to be affected. Thus, for this latter aspect it was suggested that “the ageing individual comes to know his or her own capabilities and limitations and, possibly, to compensate for them” (p. 39). These examples highlight the different ways in which the concept of self-efficacy has been measured and the need to take into account sample differences (for instance, the present thesis incorporated the physical efficacy, since it has been shown to be particularly important among older people).

The same potential problem identified above in relation to self-esteem was found in the existing literature on self-efficacy among older people. That is it has been studied in a variety of contexts and is sometimes as a predictor and sometimes as an outcome variable. The literature thus lacks coherence in this area.
This thesis paid attention to self-efficacy due to its use in some of the existing literature on political participation (e.g. Wollman & Stouder, 1991). As will be expounded in chapter three, this has been considered by different theoretical approaches as an important predictor of political participation in the study of collective action.

A final aspect considered in this thesis within the study of identity among older people is the one known as ‘denial of ageing’. The next section provides a review and further discussion in relation to this research.

2.7.4 Denial of ageing

The now classic phenomenon known as ‘denial of ageing’ (Bultena & Powers, 1978; Puglisi & Jackson, 1978) has provided evidence that older people tend to dissociate themselves from the category ‘old’ and judge themselves as younger than their age in years.

Bultena & Powers’ (1978) ten-year longitudinal study among a sample of 235 non-institutionalised older people (60 and over) gave evidence of the psychological resistance to ageing and the ‘logical’ deterioration as persons grow older (in terms of identity transition) and measured under age-identification (old-elderly-middle aged). However the study also introduced the element group (reference-group perspective associated with age identity), in which respondents were asked to compare several aspects of their lives with those of other persons of their age. In accordance with Baltes & Baltes’ (1990) explanation of the process of social comparison, the authors accounted for the different comparisons that are held between different people of the same age.

Within Bultena & Powers’ (1978) study, there appeared to be less resistance to identification with ‘old’ in the second stage of the study (ten years after the first study), e.g. the number who defined themselves as ‘old’ and ‘elderly’ considerably increased. However, one-third of the respondents did not want to abandon a middle-
aged self-conception. This denial of ageing was not only present in the younger cohorts, but also to people with the most advanced ages. This study highlighted that the 'middle-aged' identification appeared to be clearly differentiated from the 'old-elderly' identification, suggesting that the most critical point in age-identity probably occurs when the middle-aged conception must be dropped. Finally, reference-group comparisons were found to be associated with age identity. When respondents were asked to compare their life situations with older persons on four dimensions (need for help; interaction with siblings; physical independence; and health), those who perceived favourable comparative situations were more often those who saw themselves as middle-aged.

Closely connected to the paper above, Puglisi & Jackson (1978) measured age identification in relation to the self-concept. They compared those people living in retirement communities and those living in nursing homes, concluding that young and middle-aged identifications are associated with positive self-concepts. This suggested that chronologically older subjects may use 'denial of age' in order to insulate themselves from societal devaluation and for those specifically being active and healthy; "denial of old age may be an affirmation of reality" (p. 790). However, small sample size (n=71) and gender bias (only used women) may limit the extent to which these results may be generalised. Other factors (e.g., gender, level of activity, social class) may influence whether an older person identifies with older people and how this identification is evaluated. Additionally, several respondents may not necessarily share the same social attitudes of what it means to be old (which could affect their age identification); and by having a wider range of participants this could have been controlled. Furthermore, with regards to this research, it has been noted that age is not a particular salient category for older people. As Miller, Gurin & Gurin (1980) indicated, the failure to identify with an age category could imply a lack of age salience rather than age denial.

In addition, neither Bultena & Powers’ (1978) nor Puglisi & Jackson’s (1978) work consider the maintenance or adjustment of identity. This seems to have been
addressed by Furstenberg (1994) under a social work perspective, whose research is particularly relevant to this thesis. In particular, she focused on normative beliefs, which links views of ageing with behavioural responses: about “how one ought to behave in the face of age-related changes” (p. 225). In order to examine these beliefs, she used ethnographic interviews among a sample mainly consisting of women, and focus groups. A detailed examination was provided of the ways older people describe (i) their thinking about old age, (ii) their own age and (iii) their responses to the changes arising with age. It was revealed how participants expressed “rules for ageing”, i.e. principles they acted on to manage the process of ageing well. Three main categories emerged to account for the data, which were not conceived as mutually exclusive. They were (i) older people who advocate strategies for resisting or counteracting age; (ii) older people supporting ways of behaviourally accommodating to / working around the changes that age has brought and, (iii) older people who advocate ways of managing the emotional impact of the threat/changes of age.

Within “counteracting age”, which incorporated the beliefs representing the ‘denial of ageing’, ageing was believed to be avoidable and controllable, in which it was specified that one can counteract age by keeping some degree of physical and mental activity and getting involved in social activities. Growing old was perceived to be a matter of attitude, in which it was specified that with the proper attitude, one does not need to grow old. In the second category, “conceding and accommodating to age”, limited control on ageing was acknowledged and accepted. It was identified as a way of prolonging function and increasing well-being. Positive aspects of ageing were enhanced, such as decrease in obligations (allowing sense of freedom) and pursuing satisfying hobbies. Within the third category, “controlling one’s thinking”, a few defensive cognitive means were suggested by the participants in order to mitigate the impact of changes, e.g. avoiding worry; keeping one’s sense of humour; reliance and support on religion. Within this category, ageing was perceived to be uncontrollable.
This work has introduced us to the second important aspect taken into consideration within this thesis, that is, attitudinal aspects of older people. A section is provided below, in which specific emphasis will be given to existing knowledge about attitudes towards the process of ageing, in particular relating to stereotypes.

2.8 Attitudes and older people

There is evidence suggesting that people are often categorised on the basis of their age in ways that will affect how others will perceive and relate to them. Individual differences among older people are repeatedly ignored and they become targets of generalised attitudes (Ng, 1998). Attitudes, have been defined by Scott (1968) as “an enduring organization of motivational, emotional, perceptual and cognitive processes, with respect to some aspect of the individual’s world” (p. 204). They embody both conative aspects (affective components and an action tendency) and cognitive components (with evaluative dimension). This latter aspect is notably emphasised in the existing literature on attitudes towards the process of ageing. Below are presented some studies on this.

There is evidence about the diversity of attitudes and aspirations held by older people. To start with, it would be misleading to state that age alone is an adequate predictor of attitudes and aspirations. Other factors come into play (e.g. wealth, health status, gender). Moreover, the way older people experience later life can also be shaped by their attitude to life in general (Hayden, Boaz & Taylor, 1999).

Existing literature on attitudes towards ageing has mostly shown that the process of growing old is viewed negatively by young people and older people alike (e.g. see Bennet & Eckman, 1973; Beverley, 1975, for reviews). A possible explanation for this has already been pointed out by Slater (1995):

"Whatever stereotypes we have in youth about 'the old', we have the chance to take such notions with us as we become 'them'. This is probably one reason why some of the stereotypes about 'the elderly' may be held as much by 'the elderly' themselves as by younger people." (p. 14).
For example, Perry & Slemp (1980) carried out a comparative study which investigated attitudes of American young adults, middle-aged and older persons (sixty five years and over in the study) towards themselves and towards others in each age group. Ten aspects of life were measured (e.g. happiness, desire to be needed, perceived ability to learn) in an attitude questionnaire. Respondents were required to rate how important each of the aspects were for them and for the three age groups (young-middle-aged and older persons). Younger adults appeared to rate older persons less favourably than they rated themselves. Still, they rated older persons more favourably than the older persons group rated themselves. However, these results have been partly contradicted by Netz & Ben-Sira (1993). Although a negative linear relationship was found between age and attitudes, it was revealed that older people rated themselves more favourably than did other groups (middle-agers and youngsters). Global concepts of 'youth', 'adult', and 'old person' (described by identical bipolar adjectives) were used and rated in comparison with the 'ideal person' to a sample constituted by individuals of 62 three-generation families in an Israeli population (youngsters, middle-aged and older people).

However, whilst it is clear that older people have been shown to hold more negative attitudes towards ageing and life in general it is not clear whether these attitudes are a result of ageing per se or of its concomitants. Although this point was emphasised thirty years ago (e.g. see Bennet & Eckman, 1973; Beverley, 1975, for reviews), research on attitudes towards ageing held by older people is still in its infancy. Moreover, the existing studies seem to use different sets of measures, and with samples of diverse ages, and of different cultural backgrounds and countries, which may help to explain existing contradictory results. This thesis, by providing a particular context (i.e. collective action) in which attitudinal aspects towards ageing will be explored, will at least cover possible further criticisms of not being comparable to other research. Thus, results derived from this research are not intended to be generalised to the whole population of older people, only to older people relating to a similar social context (in this case on willingness to engage in collective action).
An example of contradictory results which might be due to the fact that each study conceptualises ‘young’ in different ways (including different age ranges) and used different methods, is found in the following studies. Thomas & Yamamoto (1975) conducted a study among children in order to identify their attitudes towards young, middle aged and older people, and revealed that they held positive attitudes towards older people (they used both story writing and semantic differential techniques). The fact that the sample for Thomas & Yamamoto’s (1975) study comprised children may account for contradictory results found when compared with other studies in which the sample was comprised by much older young people. For instance, Goldman & Goldman (1981) concluded that children and adolescents hold negative stereotypes of older people. In this latter study, adolescents as well as children were sampled. A different research method (i.e. interviews) was also used in this research.

Moreover, this research generally explores attitudes held about older people, rather than exploring the representations of the older people themselves. It has particularly focused on younger people’s views, where it has been shown how stereotypes influence how they evaluate and interact with older people (e.g. Thomas & Yamamoto, 1975; Goldman & Goldman, 1981; Schmidt & Boland, 1986; Hummert, 1990; Aday, Rice Sims & Evans, 1991; Battistelli & Parneti, 1991). Other groups researched with regards to attitudes towards older people have been caregivers (e.g. Weiler, 1998).

With regards to attitudes towards the process of ageing held by the same older people, Hayden et al. (1999) ran a series of focus groups and in-depth interviews in which barriers to active ageing were identified. Attitudinal aspects emerged as the key barriers, i.e. how others value older people and how older people value themselves. Participants felt that the experience of older people was seen to have little value in a society that puts a premium on youth, speed and technology.

A study of social representations of older people in nursing homes was carried out by Joulain (1995). The question of “what is an old person?” was asked to a subset of
three samples constituted by older people living in the nursing home, nurses and finally students (perhaps unsurprisingly, they were Psychology students). Overall, homogeneity among the three groups was observed, i.e. negative representations were shared (e.g. psychological difficulties, anchored in the past). However, those results need to be interpreted carefully, as the sample was very specific to a particular reality of older people (living in a nursing home) and the same with the younger cohorts. Despite its simplicity, Joulain's (1995) study is relevant in that it introduced the idea of linking the study of older people with social representations. The research project presented in this thesis, which uniquely researches with older people, will attempt to cover the above identified existing lacuna in the field of attitudes towards the process of ageing and will be further developed under the theoretical framework of Social Representations Theory (SRT) (see chapter four for its theoretical development).

The following section comprises some more detail on ageist attitudes and stereotypes about older people, which emerged as important aspects affecting older people’s willingness to engage in collective action within the context of the research project presented within this thesis.

2.8.1 Stereotypes

Research by Kuypers & Bengtson (1973) identified the so-called ‘social breakdown’ syndrome, conceived of as the process in which older persons experience negative adjustments in later life. According to the authors, this process comprises four stages: in the first, negative societal perceptions are internalised by the older person as self-descriptions; stage two would follow when doubt about an older person’s capabilities is expressed by other people such as the family and friends. In the third stage, the older person is expected to accommodate to a sick role, i.e. illness and dependence. Finally, in stage four the older person internalises this new self-perception, that of being inadequate and incapable of independence. The cycle may repeat itself becoming a downward spiral. Subsequent changes include low self-efficacy, changes in perceptions of control (from an internal to an external locus), depression, discouragement, or learned helplessness. However, the downward progression can
also be interrupted, slowed or even reversed through inputs at any point of the cycle (societal, environmental and psychological interventions). Overall, their research has shown the significant effect negative stereotypes about ageing have on the self-concept.

Studies on stereotypes of older people show them to have often been the target of a diverse list of stereotypes (e.g. stressing intellectual and physical decline) and used as a justification for discrimination. Brought to an extreme, there is the concept of 'ageism', conceptualised as “a systematic stereotyping of and discrimination against people because they are old, just as racism and sexism accomplish this with skin color and gender” (Butler, 1989, p. 139). Ageism has been claimed to be very preponderant in Western societies and, as pointed above with regards to general attitudes towards the process of ageing, existing literature does not extensively report older people’s views of how this phenomenon impacts on their lives (Minichiello, Browne & Kendig, 2000).

Minichiello et al. (2000) conducted a series of qualitative interviews with a sample of 18 older people living independently. Participants showed an internalisation and acceptance of negative stereotypes when they were asked what being old was (e.g. living outside the mainstream; frail; unattractive; narrow-minded), which, rather than referring to chronological age, was about a state of being, about how one sees oneself. However, a distinction was made between being old and feeling old, the latter believed to be by the participants that once one feels old, he/she will be treated as old by others and will be acting in the ways which would be expected from an ‘old person’.

A striking and important point derived by this research was the classification of different aspects encompassing ‘interactive ageism’. This resulted in one of the main contexts in which participants were able to identify forms of discrimination and stereotyping in their experiences (e.g. being treated with indifference by younger

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4This term was already mentioned in the section of Terminology of this chapter (Bytheway, 1995).
people). In contrast, positive stereotypes were also mentioned ("sageism"). For instance, participants enhanced the fact they had more wisdom and therefore people might listen to them more now. This would support the older people’s self image and their capability of engaging in the social world. Finally, interactive ageism also included “keeping watch”. This aspect was referred to the process by which people observe and keep track of older persons for signs of oldness - not just physical changes but others such as engaging in social activities, and keeping healthy. This was also perceived to be a positive process, in which keeping watch would consist of an aspect of caring for older people.

What emerged as an important contribution from this study was to show that although various forms of stereotyping and discrimination may impact on older people’s lives, they might not necessarily express these experiences on discrimination based on their age. This might be for various reasons: not perceiving older people to be different from other disadvantaged groups; not identifying as old; social comparisons with others who would be perceived to be old rather than themselves.

On the other hand, it has been shown that the stereotypes of older people are not wholly negative. Schmidt & Boland (1986) found there are multiple stereotypes, ranging from “perfect grandparents”, “sage” at the more positive end, and “bag lady” and “shrew” at the negative. With similar results, Hummert (1990) found that younger adults do not equate the more negative stereotypes as necessarily typical of all older people. This duality of both positive and negative stereotypes in the above mentioned studies responds to the fact they emphasise category differentiation in stereotyping. According to this approach, which was integrated and adopted within this thesis:

"Stereotyping is not a one-stage process that begins and ends at the categorization of persons as elderly, but also involves the further differentiation of these individuals as particular types of elderly persons. For example, the category ‘older adult’ may function as a superordinate category that encompasses several specific stereotypes." (Ng, 1998, pp. 104-105).
Other authors have uncovered different results. For instance, Goldman & Goldman (1981) looked at a range of attributes both psychological and physical, and found that children and adolescents hold unfavourable stereotypes of older people. The most convincing support for negative stereotypes has been identified from a research paradigm which compares semantic differential ratings of the young person with ratings of the old person. Further criticism has been received from this, in which it has been claimed that it was knowledge of cultural stereotypes that was being measured instead of personal stereotypes (Braithwaite, Gibson & Holman, 1986). Thus, within this thesis it was intended to take account of these criticisms and avoid any comparative procedure when addressing attitudinal aspects of older people.

Furthermore, it has been shown that when research focuses on the relationship between children and grandparents, children provide significant positive evaluations of them (e.g. Battistelli & Farneti, 1991). In a similar way, in the following section some findings will be presented under a sociolinguistic approach. It will be shown that younger people have positive communication with older people who are family members rather than with non-family members (e.g. Ng et al., 1997).

Further, other studies revealed that while older people are themselves likely to hold negative views of older people, they reserve the negatives for other older people rather than as being applicable to themselves (e.g. Luscz & Fitzgerald, 1986; Furstenberg, 1989; Minichiello et al., 2000). This could be interpreted as a way of "remaining young" (as discussed above with the term "denial of ageing"), and as one response to the ageist assumptions and associations in our culture which are present in everyday interactions. There is even evidence that older people express ambivalence towards older people as a group and that they perceive themselves to be atypical group members (Russel, 1981). The concept of ambivalence has been described by Breakwell (1978) as a failure to develop permanent affiliations to the group to which one belongs.
The sub-section below is based on intergenerational communication, in which younger people’s discourses are compared to older people’s.

2.8.1.1 Sociolinguistic approach

Under a sociolinguistic approach, several studies have focused on intergenerational attitudes. For instance, Coupland, Coupland & Giles (1991) had shown how age and health identities are negotiated, in several talks held between older persons and younger adults. They looked at sequences of sharing their troubles and moments of painful self-disclosure by older people. This provided an examination of how talking to younger people can threaten the identity of older people and reinforce social divisions.

Ng & Chan (1996) studied young people’s perception of older people. They based their empirical study with a Hong Kong sample on the linguistic category model, which mainly focuses in how language mediates between cognition and reality. In particular, they paid attention to the distinction between concrete and abstract words. The former refers to information that is situation-specific and easily falsified, whereas the latter to information that is personal, context-free, endurable and not easily falsified. In parallel, the authors based their group conceptualisation on the Social Identity Theory (SIT) (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). This theory encompasses the concept of intergroup bias, understood as a product of the need people have to reinforce their group-based social identity. Overall this leads to members of the group making favourable comparisons of their group relative to others.

As predicted, results showed a positivity bias by younger people towards their peers. However, the predicted negativity bias towards older people appeared to be non significant. The authors suggested the latter results would be indicative of ambivalence rather than negativity towards older people due to either cultural differences or methodological reasons. There was some evidence of linguistic intergroup bias in that the wording used by young people’s desirable attributes and of older people’s undesirable attributes were more abstract than those words of young
people’s undesirable attributes and of older people’s desirable attributes.

Further research by Ng et al. (1997) focused on communication experiences reported by a wide range of younger adults of either Chinese or European descent, using a variety of research methods. It was concluded that younger adults experienced the least positive communication with older people who were not family members, greater positive communication with older family members and the most positive communication with own-age peers. The authors concluded that communication experiences were based less on cultural orientations towards older people and more on conversational management skills, possibly related to gender. In addition, there appeared to be a notable influence of concrete social relations associated with family membership.

Latterly, Ng et al.’s research incorporated the concept of power when studying intergenerational communication (Reid & Ng, 1999). As noted in the Terminology section of the present thesis when considering the way in which language routinises power, the authors explain that because of the dynamic nature of power, it can be suggested that not all power differences are stable. Hence, when power differences are perceived as unstable, the system might be challenged. Reid & Ng (1999) suggest that this instability in intergenerational communication occurs for two main reasons in Western societies: firstly the increase in the number of older people, which would lead them to achieve greater political and social power and secondly the number of linguistic techniques available for older people which would help to create “conversational control”. Similarly, from a sociological perspective, Dowd (1981) said that for older people to remain active exchange partners they must appreciate the substantial degree of power that they possess: talk would be the means by which power affects social interactions. Several strategies that might achieve this were proposed by Dowd (e.g. pay attention to the situational context in which the conversation occurs and means of social control affecting one’s reputation). Similarly, Wood & Kroger (1993) analysed several conversations in which an older person was interacting with nurses and doctors. They consequently argued for
recognition of the power of older people and the need for them to use strategies to exert control to help maintain status and integrity of their self.

Further cross-cultural research on intergenerational and intragenerational communication has recently been carried out (Williams, Ota, Giles, Pierson, Gallois, Ng, Lim, Ryan, Somera, Maher, Cai & Harwood, 1997; Cai et al., 1998). The authors based their empirical studies on the “Communication Predicament of Ageing Model” (CPA). This attempts to summarise the types of communication problems and dilemmas facing old and young interactants, over time and across different contexts. Cai et al. (1998) hypothesise the following:

“Being the longstanding recipient of stereotyped (even ageist) communication from young people can not only constrain intergenerational communication, and lead to a lowered self-worth, but also be a critical ingredient of the social construction of aging, life dissatisfaction, and physical demise.” (p. 36).

According to CPA, when a younger and an older person meet, certain physical traits may trigger intergroup categorisation and related age stereotypes. These would prompt particular types of speech behaviour from the younger to the older, that are consistent with those stereotypes.

Williams et al. (1997) studied young people’s perceptions of their conversations with older people across five Eastern and four Western cultures. The study was based on “Communication Accommodation Theory” (CAT), understood as the theoretical impetus of the CPA and said by Williams & Giles (1996) to “describe and explain aspects of the way people modify their speech and conversational strategies according to situational, personal, or even interactional variables” (p. 223-224). This theory highlights the importance of accommodative and non-accommodative behaviours (including positive and negative aspects of the group being stereotyped) (Coupland, Coupland, Giles & Henwood, 1988). Williams et al.’s (1997) study revealed four major factors: “elder non-accommodation” (young participants perceived that older people negatively stereotyped young people); “elder accommodation” (young people perceived older adults as supportive and attentive); “respect/obligation” (young people
were guarded in their communication with older people, e.g. they felt obliged to be polite) and “age-irrelevant positivity” (young participants perceived conversations with older people as emotionally positive). Surprisingly, it was found that in those collectivist societies (Eastern) there appeared to be less positive perceptions of young people’s conversations with older people than in the Western societies.

In Cai et al.’s (1998) study with a Chinese sample in intragenerational communication, older people were involved as research participants. Their research examined how older adults perceived their interactions with family and non-family younger people, relative to older adults. Results showed that non-family young adults were perceived as less accommodating (e.g. supportive, attentive, polite) than older adults and young family members. Other older adults were perceived as more non-accommodating (e.g. complaining, stereotyping, closed-minded) than the younger groups. The combination of accommodating and non-accommodating patterns lead to the authors to account for conflicting perceptions of older people. In addition, older people experienced fewer negative emotions with young family members than with the same age peers and with non-family young members.

Furthermore, Cai et al.’s (1998) research showed that communication with certain age groups may have implications for psychological health; aspects of intragenerational communication being better predictors than intergenerational communication. As an example, high self-esteem was associated with greater avoidance of older people rather than with young non-family people. It was suggested that because of negative stereotypes associated with old age, older individuals with high self-esteem may distance themselves from other older members and therefore misidentify with that age group. Thus, the extension of the CPA model was established, so that health implications of intragenerational communication were taken into account and the distinction between family and non-family members was considered.

Thus, it can be said consistent results were found between the studies presented above when younger and older people were asked about their communication experiences.
Ng et al. (1997) concluded that younger adults experienced the least positive communication with older people who were non-family members than the other comparative groups. And when older people were surveyed in Cai et al.'s (1998) research, it was shown that non-family young adults were perceived as less accommodating than the remaining groups.

Having acknowledged both identity and attitudinal aspects of older people which will be taken into account within this thesis, attention will now focus on the concept of political participation and its contextualisation in the study of older people.

2.9 Political participation among older people
This thesis is concerned with collective action among older people. As was noted in the previous chapter, both terms i.e. political participation and collective action are used interchangeably in this thesis. Most of the existing literature on collective action among older people refers to the term ‘political participation’. Before introducing existing literature of political participation among older people, it is now appropriate to consider how political participation might be defined and the types of political participation identified in the literature.

2.9.1 The concept of political participation
The idea of political activity/participation originates from the interaction between political authorities and citizens made through the medium of political institutions. In this interaction, under a democratic setting, it will be the citizens’ attempt to influence political decisions (Verba & Nie, 1972). However, theorists of political participation have not always presented formal definitions of the concept and have rather limited the concept to a variety of specific activities (Bennett & Bennett, 1986). Thus, the starting point in this thesis for investigating collective action among older people was through the identification of a series of activities (see chapter five). The research literature suggests that when referring to political participation, it cannot be limited to
Chapter Two

2.9.1.1 Types of political participation

One of the most influential authors in the study of political participation are Verba & Nie (1972). According to these authors, to be considered as a form of political participation, the action must involve voluntary choices by citizens. In other words, only action intending to influence public policies, directly or indirectly, by selecting those who undertake policy decisions, would constitute political participation. Verba & Nie (1972) ran two studies based on American data from the 1960s and reported the need to consider multidimensionality in the study of political participation. They identified four dimensions, i.e. voting, campaign activities, communal/co-operative acts and personalised contacts with political representatives and concluded that they are independent of one another, with the exception of campaign and communal activities, which were strongly correlated; voting was moderately associated with both of them. Derived from these results, they concluded that (i) different types of political participation are performed by different persons, and (ii) the fact that voting, campaigning, and communal activities are at least weakly associated would suggest that they “share a common motivational base - presumably some concern for issues beyond the individual’s immediate life space” (p. 75). On the other hand, Olsen’s (1982) identification of six dimensions of political participation, has suggested that the different types of political participation do not occur in isolation from one another. They are identified as cognitive, expressive, electoral, organisational, partisan and governmental. The first three would include ‘passive’ acts and the remaining ones ‘active’ acts. ‘Passive’ acts are composed of actions that do not demand much motivational strength or expenditure of energy by the individual, while ‘active’ acts involve some degree of active commitment and involvement (Olsen, 1982).

Furthermore, in discussion of political action based on Western European democracies, a unidimensional and cumulative pattern of participation has been revealed instead. Here a distinction between ‘conventional’ and ‘unconventional’
political action has been made (Marsh, 1974; Barnes et al., 1979). The majority of stimuli designed to evaluate conventional political participation are related to the electoral process. Unconventional participation is defined as behaviour which does not correspond to the legal norms and customs of the system that normally regulates political participation. Examples include legal demonstrations, boycotts, illegal strikes, damage to property and personal violence. In terms of research, political participation has been criticised for the heterogeneity of behaviours it includes, especially with regard to non-conventional political participation (Sabucedo & Arce, 1991).

In order to operationalise the definition of ‘unconventional’, it must be noted that unconventional political participation depends on the social context in which it takes place. What is unconventional at one particular time might later become accepted. For this reason, Valencia (1990) suggested making reference to Non-Institutional political participation, i.e. behaviours intended to influence the political powers via non-institutional channels.

Furthermore, under the collective action and resource mobilisation theories (see chapter three) Wolfsfeld et al. (1994) studied dimensions of political action in a cross-cultural analysis where most of the subjects were young and political activists and they distinguished two forms of political action: one legal and one illegal. In the same way, Muller (1982) used an integrated explanatory model and tried to differentiate between democratic participation, which included conventional (e.g. voting, community activities) and unconventional (e.g. boycotts, demonstrations) methods of legal political activity, and aggressive participation (civil disobedience and political violence) considered an illegal political behaviour.

Sabucedo & Arce (1991) proposed a new classification of political participation by adopting an empirical perspective instead of the above rational-logical approaches. Thirteen types of political participation were used as stimuli to a sample of fifty-seven students. The main meaningful dimension was ‘within-system’ (e.g. voting, attending
political meetings) versus 'out-of-system' (e.g. armed violence, boycotts). Lastly, four types of political participation were confirmed; the first two corresponding to legal activities: (1) electoral campaigns, (2) actions within the current rules and attempts to influence the flow of social or political events in various distinctive ways, and the second two to illegal activities: (3) violent forms and (4) non-violent forms. The authors labelled these behaviours as 'electoral persuasion', 'conventional participation', 'violent participation' and 'direct non-violent participation'. Thus, the authors have emphasised the fact that there are other types of political participation against the system which are not of a violent nature.

Finally within social psychology, political activity has been classified in terms of the saliency of the individual: 'easy forms' refers to when the individual is not visible (e.g. voting in union elections) and 'difficult forms' to when the individual is more visible (e.g. speaking at union meetings) (Kelly & Kelly 1994).

To conclude, it seems each of the above classifications of political activity have in common the fact that each of the activities are aimed to influence public policies. Independently of whether political participation is conceptualised as unidimensional or multidimensional, most of them often distinguish between activities involved in electoral process from activities which do not directly correspond to the legal norms (e.g. Marsh, 1974; Barnes et al., 1979; Muller, 1982; Sabucedo & Arce, 1991). In parallel, others have emphasised individuals' subjective interpretations of the actions, i.e. the extent to what they demand much involvement for the individual (e.g. Olsen, 1982; Jennings & Markus, 1988; Kelly & Kelly, 1994).

There seem to be two ways in which the above studies emphasise the need to classify political participation actions. On the one hand some of the studies have illustrated how some people are more willing to take some actions rather than others. For this, existing research has often classified between 'types of individuals'. For instance, Barnes et al. (1979) distinguished between five action types: 'inactives' (no action), 'conformists' (exclusively conventional participation), 'protesters' (exclusively protest
activities), 'reformists' (conventional and legal forms of protest behaviour) and 'activists' (all forms of political participation). In a similar way, Wolfsfeld (1986a) distinguished between 'inactives' (no action), 'conformists' (exclusively institutional actions), 'dissidents' (exclusively mobilised actions) and 'pragmatists' (participated at least in one action, either institutional or mobilised) (as discussed in section 3.3.4, chapter three). For most of the studies of political participation described above in this section, the operational definition of political participation has been provided by the list of types of actions.

In contrast, other studies have empirically tested whether types of actions are predicted by different factors. For instance, research which has focused on the factors of political efficacy and political trust has revealed that people who are assured of their political efficacy and perceive their governmental system to be responsive to citizens' demands (high political trust) show high involvement in conventional modes of political action, whereas those who are still politically efficacious but who show a low political trust tend to favour more unconventional actions (Craig, 1979; Finkel, 1985; Pollock, 1983; Zimmerman & Rappaport, 1988; Parry et al., 1992). Thus these studies showed that conventional political participation will be better predicted by presenting a high political trust and unconventional political participation by a lower political trust. Another example is that of Kelly & Kelly's (1994) study in which it was shown that 'easy forms' of participation were associated with group identification, outgroup stereotyping and a collectivist orientation, whereas in the case of 'difficult forms' of political participation the only significant factor was group identification.

Section 2.9.2 will focus on the existing literature on political participation among older people. Several studies show that particular political activities have already been studied among older people. A primary focus of this section will be on the need to examine wider issues of participation. These issues are not uniquely related to old age. Indeed, as stressed throughout, older people are not a homogeneous group. This is also applicable in terms of their political participation.
2.9.2 Age Factor

Despite the predicted increase of the older population and the evidence that older people may have an impact on politics, it is clear from the literature that the older generation are generally excluded from discussions of political behaviour (e.g. Kam, Cheung, Chan & Leung, 1999). This might be due to the fact that political activism has not been seen as an enduring and lifetime activity (Andrews, 1991). However it would seem to be a highly relevant population group to study in the light of the imminent growth in size of the older population; the prediction that people over sixty will be increasingly involved in politics in the coming years (Neugarten, 1975; Cutler, 1977) and that the increase in the percentage of active and well-educated individuals in or near retirement will facilitate change in the current socio-political system (Amann & Bohmann, 1991). This is also supported by a recent article published in 'The Guardian' by Matathia & Salzman (1999), in which several remarkable changes in this century were discussed. One of them related to older people:

“As the number of elderly continues to increase, so will this group’s power in terms of influencing public policy. Images of the elderly as victims will become historical; instead, we will see seniors who grow more active in politics and who maintain and even increase their economic power as they move into their second half century of life.” (p. 2).

Disengagement Theory states that as a consequence of old age, individuals in Western societies begin to disengage themselves from social and physical involvement (Cumming & Henry, 1961). Some authors point out that this theory cannot be applied to the social reality of the UK. The legacy from this tradition, has painted a portrait of older people as being passive and submissive and therefore not interested in political participation. The theory even claims that political disengagement would be the optimal mode of adjustment to old age. The reality however is very different. As an example, it has been demonstrated that older people in UK often maintain high social involvement through community organisations (e.g. Pratt & Norris, 1994).

The Eurobarometer survey in 1992 (see Terminology section above) gave a picture of older people as active citizens, rather than passive ones. However, there appeared to be differences between the cohorts 60-64 and 75+; with the former leading busier lives.
than the latter. A set of different activities such as shopping, gardening, use of social amenities, participation in voluntary work and political activity were recorded for each of the samples. The British sample, together with the Italians, appeared to be the most active ones. Although the level of political activity was low in all of the countries, all samples seemed to be interested in politics: more than one in five mentioned local politics and one in four national politics, supporting the finding that older citizens remain concerned with the community.

At the present moment older people are increasingly organising themselves collectively (Arber & Ginn, 1991) even in areas where ageing is not perceived as a priority issue (Rao, 1995). The present propensity to protest has also been noted (Curtice & Jowell, 1995) with people's attitude now being that they would undertake more action than ten years ago, independently of age dimension.

There is however some contradictory research on political orientations in relation to ageing:

(i) some studies conclude that there is no substantial change with age on political orientations and activities (see review by Braungart, 1984) and there is further evidence for political involvement in five Western democracies including the UK, suggesting that when political climates have shifted, older adults were as likely to show a change in their political values as young individuals (Edinger, 1985). In addition, there is little evidence that older adults are distinctly more conservative in their political outlooks than others, or that they are more rigid and resistant to political attitude change (e.g. Tyler & Schuller, 1991 suggest the so-called "lifelong openness").

(ii) subsequently, it has been shown that a decline in political participation for more demanding types of participation is in fact a direct consequence of the ageing process per se and that the more passive forms of political participation remain steady (Jennings & Markus, 1988).
(iii) integrating the two positions, Jirovec & Erich (1992) state that the frequency of party identification and issue group membership increase in old age, but that other non-voting forms of political activity decline. They point out, though, that this moderate rate of non-voting political participation is comparable to that of other age groups. And further studies conclude that the frequency of party identification and group membership increase in old age (Powell & Thorson, 1990) and even that older people report being more interested in political issues than younger people (Marsh, 1977).

None of the above mentioned provide sufficient evidence to conclude that patterns of political participation change as a function of age, since only Jennings & Markus’ research is based on a longitudinal survey of adults who aged from 53 to 70. When age identification was taken into account in their study of collective action, it was revealed that those older people who do not identify with their age group are more politically active than those who do. Miller et al. (1980) justify the above results in terms of personal competence, remarking that due to the negative stereotypes associated with old age, to identify with that category is to exhibit feelings of low personal competence and esteem. The above authors suggest that to see oneself as ‘old’ directly implies powerlessness.

Additionally, one needs to take into account that older people are an heterogeneous section of the population with different needs, identifications and belief systems which may affect whether or not they engage in collective action and the types of action they are likely to consider. This will be addressed in this thesis.

Furthermore, it is important to raise the need in research to examine wider political issues not related to old age itself but which are likely to be important to older people themselves. It is not simply policies that relate directly to questions of ageing such as the provision of geriatric services by the state, levels of pension payments and pension reforms and adult education that are likely to concern older people. Walker & Naegele (1999) have already pointed out that older people can contribute to areas
which have overall social relevance beyond their specific interests (e.g. issues such as morality/censorship, law and order, animal rights are also likely to engage their attention), affecting sectors such as economy, education and culture. This thesis will examine the extent to which older people are concerned about these wider social issues.

Older people are not a politically homogeneous group (Yelaja, 1989; Binstock, 1992), nor are they only interested in age issues. Even when referring to age-interested groups that aim to influence policy through the electoral route in the UK, the evidence for this is very scarce. Moreover, the fact of being old per se is not a predictor of political participation. Other elements, such as gender, ethnicity, health, class, education, post-retirement relocation, previous political experience, group membership and belief systems could be equally significant (Trela, 1991; Bazargan, Kang & Bazargan, 1991; Peterson & Somit, 1992a; Jirovec & Erich, 1992, 1995; Rao, 1995). Indeed, within this thesis it is assumed that that ‘chronological’ age does not necessarily predict political participation among older people; rather social psychological factors are hypothesised to affect people’s choices about this.

With regards to the literature on political participation, most authors have mentioned people engaging in voting in a general election. It constitutes the main mechanism through which an electorate can influence its government and it remains the most common form of political expression among the aged (Wilson, 2000). As a result, it has been concluded that political participation in old age must be thought of in terms of political party identification and issue group membership (Jirovec & Erich, 1992).

In this domain, age has received much attention. As an example, Marsh (1977) considered political party identification and protest potential, establishing a curvilinear relationship, although not very strong. Age was taken into account, revealing that those party identifiers over sixty five presented a low protest potential, as well as those not being party identified. Besides this, Park’s (1995) work suggested party identification increased with age, as well as political interest and knowledge. In the
same way, Agnello (1973) concluded that those older groups voted in greater number relative to the young, but at the same time showed greater feelings of political powerlessness.

Trela’s (1971) research which was carried out many years ago and is still often referred to as the first to investigate group membership within the political arena. It used two samples of older people, in which group membership was studied according to whether participants in the study were members of an age-interest organisation or a mixed generational one. Results showed that participation in age-interest organisations facilitates political discussion and participation. Also, it was apparent that groups of age peers were more likely to engage in political activities than mixed generational groups. Although results showed members of each organisation provided different definitions of political participation, overall it was revealed that the best predictor of political activity was membership of an organised group, regardless of the age of its members.

There is also evidence that older people are also likely to engage in pressure groups uniquely constituted by older people. It should not be assumed therefore that there is a lack of political and social awareness among the population of older people.

There are only a few studies on the politics of old age in Europe (Walker & Naegele, 1999). In contrast, in the United States political activity among older people has been researched much more in depth (for example, see Hudson, 1981; Binstock, 1983; Peterson & Somit, 1992a; 1992b; Torres-Gil, 1992 for reviews). The main reason why there might be such a big difference between the American and the European tradition has been posited in their political systems. In the former, age-interest politics was born over twenty years ago and immediately began to receive interest from social scientists and policy makers (Walker & Naegele, 1999). Two influential groups in the American tradition are the so-called Gray Panthers founded and led by the activist Maggie Kuhn and the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP). Regardless of age issues, it has been noted that within the American culture there exists a
systematic fear and suspicion towards governmental power, leading often to unconventional acts. Additionally, the separation of powers, the division of government into specialised political entities provide citizens with a wider range of opportunities for participation than elsewhere (Bennett & Bennett, 1986).

In the UK there is evidence of an increase in the number of local pensioners’ action groups (e.g. Greater London Forum for the Elderly, Association of Greater London Older Women) and nationally organised ones (e.g. Association of Retired Persons, National Pensioners’ Convention, Older Feminists’ Network, British Pensioners’ and Trade Unions’ Action Association). All have expressed their concern with the poor level of the state pension in comparison to other European countries. However, they have other concerns too, such as civil rights and environment (Milne, 1994).

Furthermore, the profiles of the different old people pressure group organisations in the UK have been identified (Dourado, 1990). There is some evidence that the political impact and involvement of people over sixty will increase in the future, and at present older people in the UK are increasingly collectively organised in their plight for social change (Maclean, 1986; Arber & Ginn, 1991). However, the lack of media attention given to organisations of politically active older people has been perceived as discouraging (Ginn & Arber, 1999), and their influence in the political arena has been limited despite the growth in membership numbers and internal and external coordination.

Controversially, it has been pointed out that older people in the UK on the whole are remarkably unpolticised and that there are no signs of older people acting as a pressure group on old-age issues (Pratt, 1993; 1995). Pratt claims the apparent growth of older people organisations in the UK has been seen already in the past, but states that they were accompanied by new elements of vulnerability and potential weakness, which finally led to their decline. In addition, he suggests that those advocating on behalf of older people are likely to continue to face difficulties maintaining their political position on governmental agendas. Note however that these observations
have no actual empirical support, which reaffirms the need to study the prediction of political action; and not (as occurred in this case) merely researching those organisations currently active.

Each of the above aspects, do suggest that older people are interested in the social community, that they do engage in political activity and that they have a potential for bringing about social change in order to address several - not uniquely age-specific - social issues they are concerned with. It seems, thus, that there are grounds for studying older people in the context of collective action. Within this thesis the above political dimension in the study of collective action is considered but this will not exclude consideration of other ways of bringing about social change (not yet identified by previous literature) and not uniquely focused on influencing public policies. It is intended to do so by including older people who belong to a wide range of organisations, differing in nature (e.g. age-specific organisations vs. non age-oriented organisations). Moreover, it is assumed that not all older people are the same, i.e. not a homogeneous group, in which identity and attitudinal aspects might have an impact on whether individuals participate in political participation and on the type of actions they are likely to take.

2.10 Summary

To recap, the intention of this chapter has been to introduce the factors likely to make a contribution to the re-definition of 'old age'. They are:

1. The current and predicted future growth in size of the older population.
2. Improvements in health amongst older people.
3. The increase in life expectancy.
4. Increase in the proportion of older people who are active and well-educated.
5. The major role older people play as consumers.
6. Older people as providers of social goods (e.g. wisdom, knowledge, life experience, companionship).
Chapter Two

Following this, five key points have been identified that need to be reconsidered in the study of older people:

- The biological model of the process of ageing has prevailed to date and consequently the study of old age has remained biased. As a result, older people have been portrayed as disabled, powerless, associated with pathology and loneliness (Bond, 1993). Furthermore such studies have not considered the possibility of any degree of diversity amongst older people.

- Psychological research into the process of ageing has taken an excessively individualistic approach, rather than conceptualising ageing as a social process.

- Older people have been regarded as an homogeneous group - possibly due to ageist stereotypes. Therefore, differences among older people need to be considered.

- Existing literature which has conceptualised identity and attitudes among older people as static and only incorporating negative aspects. This research will provide a theoretical framework in which both identity and attitudes among older people are characterised by a dynamic and flexible nature, in which even positive aspects of them are enhanced by older people and how they might act as facilitators of social change.

- Linked to the above, the older generation have been generally overlooked in terms of their political contribution. The little existing literature is promising however, since it portrays older people as being both interested in politics and concerned with the community, not uniquely with issues related to old age. Moreover, it has been shown that age alone is not an influential factor in determining political behaviour.

From the discussion so far it is evident that there are two main areas of research that social psychology needs to address. The first refers to the issues of identity and
attitudinal aspects, as held by older people themselves. The second area to address is political participation, not just political party interest and membership, but the different types of political action available. It is intended that the present thesis will address both these areas, and in doing so will broaden our knowledge and understanding of older people in the context of social change.

The integration of both identity and attitudinal aspects of older people in the study of collective action will be described in chapter four, which outlines the theoretical framework used within this thesis.

Before this however, it is appropriate to focus on existing theorisations of collective action. This will be discussed in the next chapter and different aspects borrowed from some of the theories in order to develop this work will be outlined.
Chapter Three

Collective Action

"Come gather 'round people
Wherever you roam
And admit that the waters
Around you have grown
And accept it that soon
You'll be drenched to the bone.
If your time to you
Is worth savin'
Then you better start swimmin'
Or you'll sink like a stone
For the times they are a-changin'."

Bob Dylan (1963); The Times They Are a Changin'.

3.1 Introduction

In chapter two, aspects directly related to the study of older people were discussed, showing the importance to research of this particular section of the population in the context of collective action. This chapter addresses existing theorisations of collective action, which will be examined in relation to the present research. It will be shown that:

- The concept of collective action has been operationalised in different ways due to different theoretical traditions, and is consequently ill-defined.

- Several theoretical approaches, not specifically within a social psychological perspective, have provided the roots for further development of social psychological theory. However, incorporation of limitations of previous assumptions has not allowed integrative theoretical frameworks.
• Despite the above, some aspects of the different theoretical approaches reviewed in this chapter were found useful for this research and were therefore incorporated in the theoretical framework adopted: social psychological factors existing theories have drawn attention to are situated at different levels, ranging from an individual to a societal level.

The fact that a universal operationalisation of the concept of collective action does not exist will be outlined in the next section. It will also be noted that most of the existing empirical work has addressed social movements. A distinction between social movements and pressure groups will be made in order to clarify the concepts. This will be followed by a discussion on several theoretical approaches in the study of collective action, in which a distinction will be made between those strictly framed within a social psychological perspective and those which are not. Particular attention will be paid to those aspects borrowed from each of the theories reviewed in this chapter which were incorporated in this thesis.

3.2 The concept of collective action

The term ‘collective action’ has not been used by many of the different existing approaches within political psychology, yet each of them has, in its own way, adopted and shaped the concept. Not only has collective action attracted several and different research traditions, but the diversity of these approaches has led to a plethora of findings and interpretations. This diversity has complicated the interpretation and identification of a universal definition of collective action.

Political participation has been a significant area of interest within political psychology which is addressed and developed throughout this thesis in the study of collective action. As noted earlier, this concept has been used to refer to a number of different activities, mostly situated within a political dimension (e.g. voting; attending political meetings; discussing politics; signing petitions). This has received much attention and this thesis will demonstrate the breadth of the concept (chapter seven).
Most of the theories which will be discussed within this chapter have reported on social movements and pressure groups. It is, therefore, necessary to discuss these theories. Some examples will be provided, which will anticipate the different theoretical approaches that have been adopted in the study of collective action.

3.2.1 Social movements and pressure groups

Social movements and pressure groups vary in the form of their organisation. Initially, social movements have little organisation and arise spontaneously from the simultaneous consciousness across a group of people that share a common grievance (Breakwell, 1986). They are considered to be less institutionalised and therefore more open to the use of illegitimate methods of action. Pressure groups operate within the system's boundaries and are therefore assumed to use more legitimate methods. Violence is associated more with social movements, however in reality it can occur in any organised protest that becomes out of control (whether it be social movement or pressure group) (Breakwell, 1986).

An example of a consolidated pressure group established on behalf of older people in the UK is “The National Pensioners Convention” (NPC). It is an umbrella organisation of different pensioner organisations, such as Trade Union Retired Members Associations and Pensioners' Voice.

Most of the existing literature makes reference to social movements. Specific attention has been given to those conflicts related to the environment; in particular nuclear war, followed by the peace movement. Others are those concerned with gender; students’ protests; trade unions; political repression; spontaneous social movements and even a few with older people. Some examples of existing studies are shown in Table 3.1, classified according to the approach adopted, the social movement considered and the nature of the sample.
### Table 3.1: Examples of social movement studies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author(s)</th>
<th>Approach</th>
<th>Movement</th>
<th>Sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Di Giacomo, 1980</td>
<td>Social Representations Theory</td>
<td>Students</td>
<td>Students (active protesters)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guimond &amp; Dubé-Simard, 1983</td>
<td>Relative Deprivation Theory</td>
<td>Political repression</td>
<td>Francophones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Klandermans, 1984</td>
<td>Motivational model</td>
<td>Trade Unions</td>
<td>Activists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reicher, 1984</td>
<td>Social Identity Theory</td>
<td>Spontaneous communities: locals in opposition to police intervention- (Bristol, UK)</td>
<td>Subjects who had taken part in the movement / Others from the streets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opp, 1986</td>
<td>Public Goods Theory</td>
<td>Nuclear war</td>
<td>Opponents of nuclear power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wolf, Gregory &amp; Stephan, 1986</td>
<td>Individual characteristics (e.g. political efficacy)</td>
<td>Nuclear war</td>
<td>Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fox &amp; Schofield, 1989</td>
<td>Individual characteristics</td>
<td>Nuclear war</td>
<td>Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seelof &amp; Pavelchak, 1989</td>
<td>Individual characteristics</td>
<td>Nuclear war</td>
<td>General Population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opp &amp; Roehl, 1990</td>
<td>Public Goods Theory</td>
<td>Nuclear war</td>
<td>Opponents of nuclear power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gibson, 1991</td>
<td>Public Goods Theory</td>
<td>Political repression</td>
<td>Active members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opp &amp; Gern, 1993</td>
<td>Public Goods Theory</td>
<td>Political repression</td>
<td>General Population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kelly &amp; Kelly, 1994</td>
<td>Group Identity in a social psychological framework</td>
<td>Trade Unions</td>
<td>Activists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oegema &amp; Klandermans, 1994</td>
<td>“Psychologisation” of Resource Mobilisation Theory</td>
<td>Peace</td>
<td>General Population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foster &amp; Matheson, 1995</td>
<td>Relative Deprivation Theory and Resource Mobilisation Theory</td>
<td>Women</td>
<td>Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kelly &amp; Breintlinger, 1995</td>
<td>Group Identity in a social psychological framework</td>
<td>Women</td>
<td>Activists and non-activists women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reicher, 1996</td>
<td>Social Identity Model of Deindividuation (SIDE)</td>
<td>Students</td>
<td>Students (active protesters)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cameron, Brown &amp; Chapman, 1998</td>
<td>Social Dilemma -Social Value Orientations-</td>
<td>Pre-Environmental</td>
<td>Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simon et al., 1998</td>
<td>Motivational model</td>
<td>Older People -Senior Protection League Gray Panthers- (Germany)</td>
<td>Members</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The samples of the different studies listed above are often constituted by activists. This thesis will attempt to address this and incorporate those people who are not necessarily activists and what is more, who are merely older people. Each of the different theoretical approaches listed in the table will be further developed and discussed throughout this chapter with a specific focus on the degree to which this research borrows from such theories. Only those studies based on an identity approach will be addressed in the next chapter, in which the theoretical framework used in this thesis will be discussed.

Additionally, to come back to the distinction between social movement and pressure groups, it was reported by Grant (1995) that there may be broad social movements of which pressure-group activity forms only one part, such as is the case with the feminist social movement. In such instances the pressure group may itself reflect the characteristics of the social movement. Grant (1995) suggests that when individuals engage in a broad goal, they may differ in how that goal should be achieved.

Despite the differences in the type of group action, both pressure groups and social movements share three main objectives: (i) to seek a change in the value attributed to the considered qualities which characterise the people being represented; (ii) to seek to change the characteristics associated with the social category; and (iii) to seek to change the social order (Breakwell, 1986). This is similar to strategies from SIT.

The first objective is intended to make the group appear more positive. In this process, the re-evaluation of one member of the group may be dependent upon a change in the relative salience of others in the public image of the group and secondly the value of the group would never be objective, since it results from comparisons across groups. As Breakwell (1986) pointed out, only those characteristics that differentiate between groups will have the potential to include social value as a consequence of group action.

With reference to the second common objective, the group may try to include new elements and characteristics in the public image of the social category or to remove
specific elements that already existed within the group. As an example, the “Older Feminists Network” aims to become a significant influence in society and for that they enhance their intellectual traits (older people as owners of “activity”, “wisdom”, “creativity”). Additionally, they publicise types of activity (publication of a bi-monthly Newsletter; organisation of workshops with diverse topics such as ethnicity, sexuality, politics; ideology of the group). In doing so they demonstrate that feminists and older people are open-minded and not just interested in issues relating to gender or age. In this sense, the group has introduced a new characteristic.

Finally, with the objective of changing the social order, group action must revise the relative power of the group and formulate new ideologies. As suggested by Mugny (1982), the power, the population and the minority operate in the context of social change. Power refers to a dominant group or prominent norm exercising control; the population being the target for influence and the minority rejecting the power. In order to control social change, the minority will need to dominate the existing relationships between them (dominance between the population and the power; antagonism between power and minority; and social influence between population and minority). In Breakwell’s (1986) words:

"Identification with the minority assumes the assimilation of its beliefs or values and also accommodation in identity of salient characteristics associated with its membership. This may, in part, explain why minorities in the real world, rather than in the social psychology laboratory, have relatively little influence. The characteristics appended to them by the power’s ideology are negative, hardly likely to encourage identification.” (p. 143).

On the other hand, as Breakwell (1986) noted, the power of a minority to bring about social change would also depend on its power to use propaganda or polemic or rhetoric to influence the attitudes, beliefs and actions of the outgroups or other individuals.

The first attempts to explain collective action from a psychological perspective can be found in the individualistic approaches of ‘crowd behaviour’ (referred as ‘collective behaviour’). An important feature of this approach is the lack (or weakness) of
organisation within its definition of social movements, classifying them as spontaneous phenomena in the same way as crowds or fashions. The different versions of this theory were more focused on how to keep the crowd under control rather than considering that crowd’s behaviour may be a response to social inequality and a form of rebellion against the illegitimacy of the social system. Le Bon (1947) posits that individuals in the crowd lose their conscious personality. As a consequence, theorists ignored the social context in which the actions occurred, and several areas of enquiry were overlooked. Questions such as who does and does not participate, and what actions are taken during a collective event were never asked (Reicher, 1984). Reicher, also in an attempt to predict crowd behaviour, has argued for a Social Identity Model of Deindividuation, which will be further explained in the following chapter.

Additionally, the use of the term ‘social movement’ has often led to confusion (della Porta & Diani, 1999) as it has been utilised to mean both networks of interaction and specific organisations. Moreover, social movements do not have members, but participants. As della Porta & Diani (1999) have underlined, “the participation of the individual, detached from specific organisational allegiances is not necessarily limited to single protest events” (p. 17). Furthermore, in order to refer to social movements, the above cited authors stated that it is necessary that single episodes are perceived as components of a longer-lasting action instead of discrete episodes (e.g. anti-nuclear movements, with fervent activity in the 70s constituted a base for the protests following the Chernobyl incident in 1986). People who participate in them feel attached by ties of solidarity with those taking part in similar mobilisations. This latter element brings us to the definition of social movement provided by Tarrow (1998):

"Rather than seeing social movements as expressions of extremism, violence, and deprivation, they are better defined as collective challenges, based on common purposes and social solidarities, in sustained interaction with elites, opponents, and authorities. This definition has four empirical properties: collective challenge, common purpose, social solidarity, and sustained interaction." (pp. 4-5).
The above author referred to ‘collective challenges’ by suggesting that they are often marked by interrupting, obstructing or rendering uncertain the activities of others; the most characteristic action would be contentious challenge. Secondly, ‘common purpose’ would relate to the fact that common interests and values are the basis of the common actions held in a specific social movement. This concept is already evident in Toch’s (1965) work when he states that a social movement represents “an effort by a large number of people to solve collectively a problem that they feel they have in common” (p. 5). Thirdly, social solidarity would lead to participants’ recognition of their common interests and therefore be the potential for an active movement. Finally, by sustaining contentious politics against antagonists would be the only way in which a contentious episode would become a sustained interaction, a social movement.

Despite the above distinction between social movements and pressure groups and associated behaviour with each of them, this thesis will show that there are additional ways other than the ones accounted by them to study collective action, which are perceived as powerful by older people. It is now time to address the main existing theoretical perspectives on collective action. A distinction will be made between those theories which are not specifically framed within a social psychological perspective and those which are. It is the latter which were found more useful for the theoretical framework adopted in this thesis, which will be expounded in the following chapter. Before discussing social psychological theories, other socio-political theories will be presented.

3.3 Expressions of collective action based on different theoretical assumptions

As will be seen below, different genres of writing have abstracted particular elements of collective action research for their use. Incorporating this with their own specific assumptions has produced a diverse set of conclusions differing in content and direction.
3.3.1 Social Dilemma

The social dilemma is distinguished by a conflict of interests between individual and collective outcomes in which the individual has a choice of action: one action will benefit the individual but not the collective and the other will benefit all of the members of the collective. This conflict is both inter- and intra-individual, i.e. between self-interest and others’ interest and between self-interest as individual and self-interest as a member of a collective (Chase, 1992). Komorita & Parks (1994) provided the following definition:

"It is a situation in which a group of N-persons (N≥2) must choose between maximising selfish interests and maximising collective interests. It is generally more profitable for each person to maximise selfish interests but if all choose to maximise selfish interests, all are worse off than if all choose to maximise collective interest." (Komorita & Parks, 1994, p. 8).

Different types of social dilemmas have been proposed, such as The Prisoner's Dilemma, the Social Traps and The Public Goods Paradigm (represented by Olson’s theory below). Moreover, there are several activities within political science in which social dilemma has been applied. These are voting, power, diplomacy, negotiation and bargaining behaviour, coalition formation among political groups and logrolling (Shubik, 1982).

The way collective action is understood within the theoretical framework is by the use of games, which are always set up as laboratory experiments. In this way the group dimension is neglected and more importantly, one cannot claim that a game requiring co-operation between a minimum of two individuals compares well to complex reality or to the social group and its long history. Thus other collective actions, such as demonstrating and political discussions, cannot be explained within this theoretical framework. In all, the social dilemma approach has proved that field studies are necessary for providing a complete and integrated study of collective action, which is the purpose of this research.

A theory which has had much influence in the study of collective action and even penetrated social psychological studies on collective action is introduced below.
3.3.2 Resource Mobilisation Theory

This American tradition was most influential during the eighties, focusing on structural and organisational determinants of behaviour for the generation and continued occurrence of movement participation. It states that a) social movement activities are not spontaneous and disorganised and b) social movement participants are not irrational (Marx Ferree, 1992). According to a number of theorists, the pre-requisites for engaging in collective action are the availability of resources and opportunities (Gamson, 1968, 1975; McCarthy & Zald, 1973, 1977; Oberschall, 1973; Tilly, 1978 in Kelly, 1993). The three key elements from this theory are (i) costs and benefits of participation (this has led to a controversy over collective vs. selective incentives, as discussed below); (ii) organisation as an important resource for social movement; and (iii) expectations of success with respect to the collective incentives of participation (Klandermans, 1991).

As Kinder & Sears (1985) have pointed out, this economic approach proceeds to the descriptions of how people do behave politically as well as to prescriptions about how they should behave. Two main approaches have been developed under this theory, i.e. Private Interest Theory and Public Goods Theory of Rebellious Collective Action.

3.3.2.1 Private Interest Theory

Most studies of collective action make reference to the influential work of the American economist Mancur Olson (1965) who developed the “Private Interest Theory”. In stark comparison to the previous understanding of collective action, this theory takes an individualistic and aggregative approach. It claims that members of a collectivity will not act unless they receive incentives or sanctions (such as power and status rewards, financial gain), since the benefits from a given public good will be theirs. Thus, it is argued that any emerging conflict between the individual and the collective will be solved by the rational individual in favour of himself/herself. This position - which assumes the absence of collective aspects and definitions of identity - cannot explain why individuals do sometimes participate, even in the absence of selective incentives:
“Only a separate and ‘selective’ incentive will stimulate a rational individual in a latent group to act in a group-oriented way. In such circumstances group action can be obtained only through an incentive that operates, not indiscriminately, like the collective good, upon the group as a whole, but rather selectively toward the individuals in the group.” (Olson, 1965, p. 51).

Olson introduced the concept of free loading - known as ‘free riding’ in the American publications, which occurs when a person participates in the use or consumption of a good yet does not personally contribute to its provision in any way. He argued that there is such a big temptation to free load that public goods will almost never be provided, as no one will contribute to their provision.

Others have argued for collective incentives: the goal is valuable enough (Klandermans & Oegema, 1987); ideological incentives (Carden, 1978); group solidarity (Fireman & Gamson, 1979) and the public goods theory of rebellious collective action (Muller & Opp, 1986) which is described below. In addition, the explicit rationality in this model - including either selective or collective incentives - has been further criticised. Other authors have underlined the relevance of non-rational elements, such as emotions, affections and feelings (e.g. Marx Ferree, 1992).

Besides, derived from the importance given to selective incentives, the concept provided by Olson distinguishes between small and large groups. Smaller groups are considered as more durable and effective than larger groups:

“The small, or ‘privileged’, group is in a more advantageous position from the beginning, for some or all of its members will have an incentive to see that it does not fail. This is not true of the large group; the large group does not automatically find that the incentives that face the group also face the individuals in the group.” (Olson, 1965, p. 57).

In regard to the above distinction, it should be noted that certain social categorisations may lead to membership of very large groups of people (e.g. categorisation based on gender, age, nationality); but that this may still be sufficient to bring about collective action, even in the absence of a manageable sized grouping.
Finally, Olson's model has been criticised for lacking the diachronic dimension, as he interpreted only a specific and short period of time. On the contrary, the process of collective action develops over time, especially when considering the achievement of goals (della Porta & Diani, 1999). In particular, it has been observed that participants do not mobilise collective action on the basis of a static pre-existing identity, but that this may develop and expand in the course of the action itself or when considering engaging in collective action. Besides, dynamic group processes such as consciousness-raising and collective empowerment would together create a sense of group identification (e.g. Hirsch, 1990).

3.3.2.2 Public Goods Theory of rebellious collective action (in rational choice theory)

The term ‘public good’ was introduced by Samuelson (1954) in order to refer to those goods that can be used by many individuals at the same time, without reducing the amount available for any other person. Subsequently, the term has been related to instances of social change identified as either dissatisfaction with government policy (Barnes et al., 1979; Opp, 1986) or more general alienation from the political system (Muller, 1979; Muller & Opp, 1986).

The Public Goods theory claims that public goods (non-material and non-private incentives) appear to be the critical motivating factors in protest movements (Muller & Opp, 1986). Contrary to Olson’s predictions, this model has shown that public incentives are related to collective action, whereas private incentives are unrelated to participation. Muller & Opp (1986) stressed the importance of (i) the subjective probability of individual influence on the provision of public goods and (ii) the influence of the group as a whole, being a function of the observation of success/failure of non-conformist groups in the past:

"If dissident groups are perceived to have been generally successful, then perceived group influence on the provision of public goods will be high; if dissident groups are perceived to have been generally unsuccessful in the past, then perceived group influence on the provision of public goods will be low." (Muller & Opp, 1986, p. 484).
However, four main criticisms need to be taken into account with regards to this theory. Firstly, it has been pointed out that the authors based collective action on the premise of protesters' alienation from the political system; and as it has already been stressed by Gibson (1991), that may not be necessary for the mobilisation of protest action.

Secondly, when accounting for rebellious collective action, there appears to be a dilemma with the private interest theory: if expected private material and psychological benefits from rebellious collective action are inappreciable, then individuals will be free loading (as expounded above), and as a result, there will be a failure of collective action. Too much significance is given to free loading, as it presents an extremely individualised view of both costs and benefits. For example, it may be that a particular action has a unique collective purpose and people participate by just valuing that particular goal. Again, another aspect which is not taken into account by the theory is the history of a particular social group.

Furthermore, as Marx Ferree (1992) pointed out, “simply adding a ‘collective incentive’ term to the model (e.g. Muller & Opp, 1986) does not remedy the basic problem, which is the inability of rational choice theory to explain the variation in the extent to which people share and value a collective identity that fosters a sense of commitment to the good of the group” (p. 40).

Finally, this model does not consider the possibility that the goods from which the participant has to choose would be different from those to which this theory refers to. As della Porta & Diani (1999) have exemplified, there are goods produced in the course of action, which would be inconceivable if action had not occurred (e.g. the reinforcement of identity and transformations in private and public life that some women have achieved through militancy in feminist movements did not exist prior to their action).
Despite the above criticisms, some aspects from this model were found useful for this research. To begin with, the concept “public goods” fits in that most of the social issues studied are those referred to as public goods and not to matters uniquely linked to the individual. Furthermore, this model allows us to consider the group dimension on the provision of public goods, although in this thesis it is not conceptually defined as a “rational citizen’s decision calculus” (Muller & Opp, 1986, p. 480) and not uniquely studied with violent/aggressive behaviour. However, it was a starting point in order to consider an aspect of older people’s identity, i.e. ‘collective efficacy’ as a possible social psychological determinant of collective action among older people and how previous experience may contribute to their intention to engage in collective action. In order to address the problem of free-loading it is necessary to consider the work of Finkel, Muller & Opp (1989).

3.3.2.3 Solution to the free-loading problem

A theoretical problem has been identified in relation to how to incorporate demand for the public good into the individual without violating the logic of free loading (Finkel et al., 1989). The explanations given in this research break with the classical resource mobilisation approach and importantly considers both legal (e.g. “signing a petition”; “taking part in a permitted demonstration”) and illegal types of political participation (e.g. “taking part in a demonstration that breaks the law”; “seizing building sites”). The study, which involved surveying a large sample of German protesters (N=1709) was based on models of personal influence (supported by legal and illegal protest behaviour) and collective rationality (supported by legal protest). Models of personal influence assume an individual’s own actions will make a difference to the likelihood of obtaining the public good. The authors postulate that this is similar to an individual’s political efficacy, understood as a function of resources and previous political involvement. The model of personal influence in Finkel et al.’s (1989) study reveals that demand for public goods motivates individuals to contribute to collective action (legal and illegal) when both perceptions of individual influence and the overall likelihood of group success are high. On the other hand, collective rationality relates to instances of individuals acting on the basis of general strategic or ethical beliefs, of
which both group unity and moral duty are two sources. Within this model of collective rationality the authors show that the higher the perceptions of the likelihood of group success, the greater the likelihood that the individual will engage in legal collective action.

Combining the models of personal influence and collective rationality across all three samples produced results which show all variables to have a significant impact on legal protest participation but no impact on illegal protest participation. This implicitly shows that different factors explain different activities, an assumption which was included in this thesis.

Finally, in contrast to the assumptions of the conventional rational choice model, Finkel et al. (1989) show that many individuals believe that they are personally efficacious in providing public goods and many believe in the unity principle (which stipulates that the participation of all members is necessary for group success) and are also in favour of duty and moral obligations.

Thus, the need to take into account different instances of social change - although they were all contextualised in relation to policy dissatisfaction - was an aspect considered in the above study which also proved necessary in the research project for this thesis. Secondly, in addition to the importance of collective efficacy (as also suggested by Rational Choice Theory), personal influence plays an important part in individuals’ decisions on whether or not to participate in collective action, which emphasises the need to take into account both individual and group dimensions in the study of collective action.

The next section presents one approach which has been contrasted with the Resource Mobilisation theories presented above.
3.3.3 New Social Movement Approach

The above theorisations on collective action have been often compared and contrasted to the so-called "New Social Movement Approach". With its tradition in Europe, this approach focuses on the growth of new protest potentials resulting from the development of new grievances within the highly industrialised societies. It stresses that the new movements differ from the old in terms of their values (breaking with tradition and seeking different attitudes to nature); action forms (use of unconventional forms of action); constituency (two population groups: people paying the costs of problems resulting from modernisation i.e. the marginalised; and people sensitive to problems arising from modernisation i.e. middle class); new aspirations (changed values and reaction to the welfare state) and finally satisfaction of endangered needs (as a consequence of industrialisation and bureaucratisation) (Klandermans, 1991).

This approach offers several possibilities. Firstly, it accounts for the 'why' of action instead of the 'how' considered in the American tradition, and defines the structural conditions that generate deprivations and aspirations which make people receptive to the appeals of social movements. As Buechler (1995) points out, new social movement theory addresses the macrolevel of structure and context. Secondly, importance is given to the participant, and thirdly it captures characteristics of movements, rather than simply adopting the criteria of economic resources (Klandermans, 1991).

Some major contributions within this approach are provided by Castells' neo-Marxist analysis of urban social movements (Spain); Touraine's emphasis in the control of historicity in relation to social classes in the post-industrial society (France), and Habermas' theory of modern social structure which distinguishes between a politico-economic system governed by power and money and a life world governed by normative consensus (Germany) (see Buechler, 1995 for review).
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On the other hand, Buechler (1995) described two main limitations of new social movement theory, one empirical, and one theoretical. The first is referred to the historical specificity of the theory, in that it only applies to a limited number of movements in Western societies, and is further biased towards white and middle-class participants. The second is related to the type of questions the theory has addressed. By focusing on the cause ('why') of action, it has contributed very little to explain the 'how' of the movement process. Furthermore it has been criticised for not addressing the 'when' or 'where' of irregular social movement formation which take place across societies but which contain structural similarities with others.

Additionally, della Porta & Diani (1999) raise two major problems that stem from this approach: - the analysis of mechanisms which lead from conflict to action, and the existing risk to assume certain coincidental traits as absolutes (in particular the emphasis of novel elements among those involved in new collective movements).

Although this thesis does not adopt a fixed position with regard to these different theoretical approaches, some of the work which will be discussed later in this chapter within a more social psychological perspective has been influenced by them.

Before introducing work situated in a more social psychological tradition, the sociological approach will be discussed briefly, particularly the work of Barnes, et al. (1979) which is frequently cited in studies on political participation.

3.3.4 Sociological approaches to the study of political participation

This approach focuses on the causes of political action, indexed by demographic variables (e.g. education, social class, occupation, gender, ethnicity and age). Most of the existing studies were carried out in the United States, taking into consideration the act of voting (e.g. Verba & Nie, 1972). Further studies accounted for both conventional and unconventional types of political participation (e.g. Barnes et al., 1979; Parry et al., 1992). However, this approach remained at the descriptive level and the conclusions drawn were specific to the context in which they were conducted.
As cited above, Barnes et al.'s (1979) instrumental and rationalistic approach is considered to fall within the sociological tradition and their contribution is still relevant to the discussion of political action. The project puts much emphasis on the elements of choice, in which it is assumed that a particular participatory act is selected as a precise means for the political actor to achieve specific goals at minimum cost. They argued that there was a lack of theoretical and empirical work on political action in the industrialised countries of the West. They selected five countries (Austria, Great Britain, the Netherlands, the United States, and West Germany) with which to carry out a comparative study. Their main goal was to explore relationships between specific independent and dependent variables evident in all or most of the countries. They did not consider the impact of each country as an independent variable, because they had not included any structural or aggregated cultural variables in their research, and secondly because they claim to be focusing on social psychological variables (which, in their view, are unlikely to vary much across political systems) and giving specific attention to the individual level.

They found a new political classification among the parents and children they studied. For instance, level of formal education was found to be the most powerful predictor of unconventional political involvement (also cognitive skills; and postmaterialism, which refers to the substantive values of democracy in opposition to the materialist values).

What does remain conceptually relevant to the study of collective action is their theoretical distinction between political action and political involvement. The former was divided into expressive and instrumental political action and the latter reflected the dimensions of both political motivation and understanding (political apathy/political detachment). To begin with, respondents' subjective political interest was used as an operationalisation of political involvement and whether the respondent was active or not was used as an operationalisation of political action. They paid particular attention to the balance between expressive and instrumental political styles found in the five countries. Expressive political action was defined as “an orientation
toward political action without political motivation/interest” (p. 527), seen by Barnes et al. (1979) as very disruptive if put into action. It follows that such a style would undermine the basis for rational decision-making by preventing rational interchanges between authorities and partisans. Thus, it is here when the balance between expressive and instrumental political action becomes so relevant “at the level of the political system” (p. 528).

Comparing political types and styles across the five countries highlighted a uniform pattern of results. The ratio of the different types of political action consistently showed conformists least, followed by reformists, and activists in greatest number. Protesters consistently revealed a more expressive political style. Both reformists and activists were ‘highly’ involved in conventional politics, and ‘medium’ to ‘highly’ involved in unconventional politics. The conformists were also found to be extremely instrumental, although their expressive political style was a traditional one. Finally those who adopted a protester style did not show any inclination to conventional political participation. However, according to the authors, their high level of expressive participation (rather than instrumental) may be transitory, as they were predominantly young and female compared with other groups.

Besides this, it was shown that conventional participation, electoral in particular, increases with age. Moreover, that interest in politics in general increases with age. The expansion in education, employment and growing political mobilisation of women, might contribute to protesters becoming activists.

A small minority placed social equality issues as a main priority, on the basis that they could not be compromised to the same extent that economic issues could be. Highly educated, efficacious and participating minority groups were forced to use unconventional political strategies, due to the fact the conventional methods related directly to the authorities - according to the authors -, who would in turn respond to the majority’s demands and not the minority’s.
Finally, it was shown that for protesters to be mobilised, two additional factors were required: contextual stimulation and availability. Furthermore, the mass media would play an important role in this process. Coincidentally, an example was given of an active group of political older people (the American “Gray Panthers”) arguing that whilst they may still have a middle-class bias in their leadership, they may be able to mobilise citizens from all strata of society.

Additionally, Wolfsfeld (1986a) attempts to provide a theoretical model of collective action using data from a sample of the Israeli population. He focuses on those particular attitudes and norms which are related to the choice of different types of political action, based on actual behaviour instead of intentionality. He distinguishes between mobilised and institutional action. The former is defined as “any attempts to influence the political system which are organized outside of the formal political institutions” (p. 772) and institutional action is defined as “organized within formal institutions of the system” (p. 773). Although this distinction is close to that made by Barnes et al. (1979) between conventional and unconventional action, Wolfsfeld claims to be avoiding the implication that protest actions are always unconventional. In parallel, four political action types were tested in the model, i.e. inactives (those who did not participate in either mode of action); conformists (had only participated in institutional actions); dissidents (had only taken part in mobilised action); and pragmatists (had participated at least in one action which was taken from each of the two modes of action), although resulting attitudinal, normative, and background profiles for each type are not reported here.

Respondents were asked about their past experience during the last three years on each of the different types of mobilised and institutional actions; membership of a political party and if they were active in some type of political organisation; perceived effectiveness of the actions as an evaluational measure; subjective norms (respondents were asked to indicate the degree to which they approved or disapproved to the several actions); level of political discontent; and need for influence (measured with the item “I feel an obligation to try to influence what happens in this country”). Individual’s
political resources and skills included three indicators: psychological involvement; internal efficacy and organisation membership. Psychological involvement was measured by (i) level of interest in politics; (ii) the degree to which the respondent read about politics in the newspapers; (iii) and the frequency of discussing politics; internal efficacy (it included items of political efficacy); and with regards to organisational membership respondents were asked if they belonged to any non-political organisation. A regression analysis allowed a comparison of the different factors. There appeared to be a common factor among each of the two modes of action (i.e. psychological involvement). The evaluational dimension (measured by perceived effectiveness of the actions) proved to be the best predictor of each mode of political behaviour. Besides, organisational membership was only related to institutional action and political efficacy and subjective norms were related to mobilised action.

The above research, still reporting on behaviour uniquely based on a political dimension and not accounting for intentionality to engage in collective action, is relevant to the position adopted in this thesis, since it was shown that some factors may be common to all types of political participation but also that some factors may be different for specific modes of actions. In particular organisation membership, previous experience, political efficacy and perceived effectiveness of a specific action were incorporated into the model of collective action examined in this research. More specifically, organisation membership and previous experience were taken into account in the first empirical study (chapter five) and each of them were tested in the final study (chapter nine).

3.4 The explanation of collective action from a social psychological perspective

Some of the theories that have been included here, clearly draw upon a social psychological perspective, but they have been often influenced by other research traditions such as the Resource Mobilisation Theory presented above. These will be presented below: first the 'relative deprivation theory' will be expounded, which has
influenced the study of collective action from a social psychological point of view. In parallel, as an example of a model of collective action within social psychology, the 'motivational model' proposed by Bert Klandermans will be discussed. These are all theories or models within social psychology that have been used in order to predict collective action. All have influenced the research design for this thesis.

3.4.1 Relative deprivation theory

Relative deprivation theory has been the most important approach to participation in collective action within social psychology [see any social psychology review on collective action, e.g. Kelly (1993)]. Further, disciplines outside of psychology also cite relative deprivation theory as the contribution that social psychology makes to the study of collective action. It refers to the 'perceived discrepancy' because of the social comparison made between what one has and what one feels entitled to (Davis, 1959; Gurr, 1970; Crosby, 1976). It can be stated that this theory predicts the desirability of social change. However, it has been shown that the sense of deprivation fails to predict the individual's protest potential (Muller, 1972; Marsh, 1974; Martin, Brickman & Murray, 1984; Finkel et al., 1989) suggesting that the classical direct relationship between protest potential and various forms of relative deprivation may be an ecological fallacy. In particular, it is necessary to examine further the predicted link between relative deprivation and collective action on 'minority' group membership (Moghaddam & Perreault, 1992).

Two types of deprivation have been identified: (i) egoistic deprivation: an individual compares his/her situation to that of others or to his/her own situation in the past; (ii) fraternalist deprivation: members of a group compare the situation of their group to that of other groups or to its own status in the past (Runciman, 1966). It has been proved that they are separate psychological conditions. For example, Walker & Mann (1987) examined the differential effects of both egoistic and fraternalistic deprivation among a sample of unemployed people and how they predicted the number of stress symptoms reported by the participants and the respondents' orientation for social protest. Fraternalistic deprivation was found to be more relevant to the phenomenon
of social movement participation, whereas feelings of personal deprivation were associated to number of stress symptoms reported by the individual.

The distinction between egoistic and fraternalistic relative deprivation constitutes an important step towards reducing the individualistic nature of earlier versions of relative deprivation theory, and which also takes into account the group dimension. Kinder & Sears (1985) favoured tests of fraternal deprivation (more faithful to relative deprivation theory) instead of the many existing tests of egoistical deprivation, which ignore entitlement and blame. In line with the fraternalistic approach, it has been concluded that people who believe that the ingroup of which they are members is relatively deprived, are more likely to participate in social movements and to actively attempt to change the social system using group strategies (Guimond & Dubé-Simard, 1983; Martin & Murray, 1983; Walker & Pettigrew, 1984; Dion, 1986; in Kawakami & Dion, 1993).

"Cognitive" and "affective" relative deprivation have also been differentiated (Cook, Crosby & Hennigan, 1977; De la Rey & Raju, 1996). For instance, Cook et al. (1977) distinguish between the magnitude (cognitive) and the intensity (affective) components. The former refers to the perception of deprivation and the latter to the value and emotional significance of the perceived deprivation. It has been found that the affective component is a more important motivating factor for protest action than the cognitive component (Guimond & Dubé-Simard, 1983; Birt & Dion, 1987; De la Rey & Raju, 1996).

Moreover, relative deprivation theory can be enriched by the self-categorisation theory by means of linking specific aspects of identity to the different levels of social comparison, i.e. intragroup versus intergroup (Kawakami & Dion, 1993). It has been suggested that salient aspects of identity can affect feelings of relative deprivation and collective action intentions either solely or in combination with relevant individual or group levels of comparison.
More recently, Mummendey, Kessler, Klink & Mielke (1999) tested and evaluated the predictive power of a social identity theory model together with that of the relative deprivation theory model in relation to inferior and dissatisfying ingroup positions. They found that individual strategies are better explained by the social identity theory, whereas collective strategies are more associated with the relative deprivation theory.

Thus, this thesis accounted for the desirability of social change but not just compared with past, as stated by Runciman (1966). The next section describes the motivational model, which exemplifies the influence of other traditions on social psychological theories which have provided predictive models of collective action.

3.4.2 The Motivational Model

In this chapter it was observed that both resource mobilisation and new social movement theories complement each other, in the sense that the former focuses on factors which generate resources (‘how’) and the latter pays particular attention to those factors which generate grievances (‘why’). Nevertheless, both resource mobilisation and new social movement theories have been criticised for not explaining what makes people define their situation in such a way that participation in a social movement seems reasonable, and that they do not account for the fact that social problems are not objective facts. In the latter aspect, it has been pointed out that a social problem may not necessarily become an issue and that even if it does, it is not necessarily a catalyst for a social movement (Klandermans, 1991).

Resource mobilisation theory has received further criticism for wrongly assuming a direct relationship between objective circumstances and individual behaviour. In other words, it did not take into account the mediating processes through which people attribute meaning to events and come to interpret particular situations (Klandermans, 1991). In order to cover such gaps, a social construction of protest approach has been proposed, where specific emphasis has been given to the so-called multi-organisational fields. Klandermans (1991) places himself within this approach, claiming that both the supporting and opposing sectors of the multi-organisation are
considered and therefore overall a more dynamic approach is achieved.

Klandermans' (1984) consideration on consensus mobilisation and Melucci's (1989) study on collective identity are two examples that fall within this approach. Consensus mobilisation refers to the attempts made by social adherents to diffuse their views to various sectors of the population. This process is assumed necessary but not sufficient for action. Social actors will consider not only the desirability of the objective but also the costs and benefits of achieving-obtaining it. As will be discussed in the following chapter, this would include four stages, i.e. (i) the formation of mobilisation potential; (ii) the formation and activation of recruitment networks; (iii) the inducement of the motivation to participate and (iv) the removal of barriers to participation (Klandermans & Oegema, 1987). However there is some evidence to suggest that consensus mobilisation may indeed be sufficient to generate collective action, when decisions are based upon the belief of the justness of the cause, and not on costs and benefits. Once a consensus has been reached and individuals believe in the justness of the cause then they may become insensitive to personal costs and accept that collective action involves sacrifices (Kelly & Breinlinger, 1996).

Within the model presented by the social psychologist Bert Klandermans, collective action is perceived as the result of rational decision processes where people weigh up the costs and benefits and in which the individual's behaviour is a function of the value of the expected outcomes of behaviour (Klandermans, 1984).

From the above it can be shown that Klandermans intended to expand the resource mobilisation theory. As was stated before in this chapter, according to resource mobilisation theory, the prerequisite for engaging in collective action is the availability of resources and opportunities (Gamson, 1968, 1975; McCarthy & Zald, 1973, 1977; Oberschall, 1973; Tilly, 1978 in Kelly, 1993 and Klandermans, 1997). This approach defines the structural conditions that generate the deprivations and aspirations that make people susceptible to the appeals of social movements. However, this particular approach cannot account for why sometimes individuals do
participate, even in the absence of selective incentives.

For this reason, Klandernans incorporated the value-expectancy theory (Feather & Norman, 1982), in which an individual's behaviour is considered to be a function of the value of the expected outcomes of behaviour. Three motives underlying participation were identified in Klanderman's (1984) research: goal motives (referring to the achievement of the collective goal and suggested to be the most important one); social motives (expected reactions of significant others) and reward motives (non-social costs and benefits of participation). Following that, willingness to participate would be the weighted sum of these motives, therefore a function of the value of the incentive (selective or collective) and the perceived probability that it will be provided. Each of the three different expectations of success that influence participatory decisions (expectations about the behaviours of others, expectation that action goal will be reached if many others participate and expectation that own participation will increase likelihood of success) must be above zero for the goal to motivate participation (Klandernans, 1997).

However, Klandernans' model has been criticised for not providing the social psychological roots of collective action. Firstly, it has received criticism in relation to the lack of attention paid to the level of group identification. As Kelly & Kelly (1992) in Kelly (1993) suggested, the calculations for costs and benefits will be more important as determinants of action amongst individuals characterised by low levels of group identification.

Secondly, Schrager (1985) suggested that Klandernans is too individualistic and does not examine properly the role of social context in shaping attitudes. Thus, Schrager stated that he is far away from identifying the factors determining collective action and how they affect the internal structure of groups and their disposition to act collectively. Similarly, Valencia (1990) and Rodriguez, Sabucedo & Costa (1993) conducted research with the aim to integrate the individual and social level in the study of collective action. They tested Klandernans' model and both studies
concluded that the motivational variables were not the strongest predictors of action—only the collective motive seemed to have a major influence.

Recent research has considered Klandermans’ model and related it to group identification (Simon et al., 1998). The authors considered two studies, the first of which is the Gray Panthers movement in Germany and the second one was on the gay movement in the United States.

In the first study, willingness to participate was investigated in relation to the three motives postulated by Klandermans (1984), i.e. collective, social and reward motives and two levels of collective identity were considered: (i) social category of older people and (ii) the social movement of the Gray Panthers. A questionnaire survey was used with a sample of 95 members from the above mentioned social movement. The authors included four types of action in order to measure willingness to participate, but they did not reflect any theoretical assumption and consequently they were added together in an overall score for the analysis (the same with the second study). Results show that each of the above factors mentioned were positively correlated with willingness to participate. In particular, both the collective and reward motives and identification with the Gray Panthers remained significant and independent predictors of willingness to participate. The fact that identification with the social movement of Gray Panthers appeared to be a better predictor than identification with older people, was suggested to support the idea that a specific activist identity is contributing to social movement participation.

In the second study the same elements were measured in the gay movement context, with the addition of an experimental manipulation of the strength of identification with the gay movement. The common fate as members of a threatened minority was made salient by written instructions. From this manipulation, it was brought to light that both identification with the gay movement and willingness to participate increased significantly when common fate as a threatened minority was made salient. With reference to findings in the first study, similar results emerged, even when past
behaviour was added as a variable (it did not appear to be a significant predictor). In both studies, identification with the respective social movement appeared to be a unique predictor of willingness to engage in collective action, even when the motivational factors were taken into account. Furthermore, identification with the movement had a mediating effect on identification with the broader social category (older and gay people respectively).

In conclusion, the authors attempted to offer a model by considering the existence of two independent pathways, i.e. both the calculation of costs and benefits (derived from the resource mobilisation theory and the motivational model by Klandermans) and identification with the movement (SIT). However, this model still assumes motivation operates within a restricted and dual framework (whether people get motivated to participate in collective action either more by calculation or more by identification processes), far from providing an integrative picture of collective action. Identification with the movement (Simon et al., 1998) was taken into account for the design of the different studies in this thesis. It was assumed that the fact of belonging to a particular organisation would affect participants’ willingness for participation. In this thesis, a main distinction was made between those participants who belonged to social issue organisations (e.g. environment, pensioners) and those who belonged to non-social issue organisations (e.g. sports, educational).

In brief, the model which will be presented in this thesis, like with the one provided by Klandermans, is also motivational in the sense that intentional behaviour was measured among the participants (considering previous experience). However, in this section it is suggested that his model does not properly investigate the role of social context in shaping attitudes. This thesis intends to pay specific attention to this (e.g. considering different instances of social change; possibility that factors being situated at different levels account for different activities and by studying the older population question the fact that the same factors might differ among the same population). As expounded in the next chapter, the concept of barriers - as related to individuals’ costs and benefits by Klandermans - has been adapted and incorporated in this thesis.
Two further social psychology aspects are of importance when studying collective action, i.e. individualism versus collectivism and political efficacy.

3.4.3 Individualism versus Collectivism

Social psychological research on individualism versus collectivism is based on work which considers the relationship between individuals and groups. Hinkle & Brown (1990) clarify the distinction between individualism and collectivism: “the extent to which cultures emphasise interpersonal competition, individual achievement and separation from the in-group versus co-operation within the group, collective achievements and close ties with in-group members” (pp. 65-66).

They argue that the tendency to favour the ingroup over the outgroup is more dominant in group contexts characterised by (i) a collectivist orientation and (ii) a comparative or relational ideology (ingroup evaluation is acquired by social comparison with other groups).

According to Triandis, Bontempo, Villarreal, Asai & Lucca (1988) the above is also manifest at a subcultural level as (i) distinct orientations within different social groups in a given society and (ii) at an individual level as idiocentric or allocentric personalities. They paid specific attention to the study of collective groups, concluding that it is only collectivists (either groups or individuals) who are likely to be concerned with how their group is faring in comparison to others. The social mobility/change approach runs in parallel to the individualist-collectivist orientation. It has been suggested that the latter is anchored at a more general level, which makes it more appropriate for distinguishing between different kinds of groups. (Hinkle & Brown, 1990). Moreover, it offers the advantage of cross-cultural, subcultural and individual measurement (Triandis et al., 1988). However, as Hinkle & Brown (1990) have already observed, one could argue that a collectivist orientation does not in itself guarantee that a comparative form will be taken. Thus, in this thesis it will be shown how this factor, together with others, will help predict willingness to engage in collective action.
Even though this approach does not relate directly to individual participation in collective action, Kelly & Breinlinger (1996) suggest that it is able to address conflicting intergroup behaviour. The findings from this approach appear to be consistent with the notion that individuals with a collectivist orientation will be more likely to engage in collective action. This notion was tested in the present study.

3.4.4 The shared factor: political efficacy

Political efficacy is a concept frequently considered by different disciplines. The concept of political efficacy was defined by Campbell, Gurin & Miller (1954) as “the feeling that individual political action does have, or can have, an impact upon the political process” (p. 187). This concept, which is focused at an individual level, has been found to be an important factor when referring to the instrumentality of collective action. Two aspects have been identified: (i) level of personal efficacy and (ii) social systems (Bandura, 1997). The former is “needed to produce results by enlistment of effort and proficient use of capabilities and resources. This constitutes the personal side of the transactional control process” (p. 483). The latter aspect is concerned with “how amenable social systems are to change by individual and collective influence” (p. 483). Bandura (1997) added that human behaviour is very much influenced by beliefs about personal efficacy and the controllability of the social system rather than by their objective characteristics. Thus, he has suggested that in a particular social environment with transient barriers, people who present a high sense of efficacy will be able to have more control over it, whereas those with a low sense of efficacy will give up more readily when facing obstacles.

Most of the existing research on political efficacy and political participation shows that people who present high efficacy are more likely to participate at a higher level than those with low efficacy (e.g. Barnes et al., 1979; Wolf et al., 1986; Fiske, 1987; Breakwell, 1992a). In particular there is a large body of research relating to nuclear war issues, which addresses the study of political action. For instance, Wolf et al. (1986) suggested that the anti-nuclear activist is motivated by a sense of personal political capability and a belief in the efficacy of political action.
However there are a few studies in the nuclear war context which did not support the above relationship between efficacy and participation. Tyler & McGraw (1983) show that the activists’ sense of political efficacy is linked to a broad sense of personal, rather than external, control over life events in general, suggesting that activist behaviour is related to a sense of moral responsibility. Furthermore, Schofield & Pavelchak’s (1989) study (using a television film about nuclear war) shows an increase in intentions in anti-nuclear behaviours although also pointing to a reduction in levels of efficacy. In the same way it was found by Fox & Schofield (1989) that efficacy is not a predictor of anti-nuclear behavioural intentions. Other variables such as gender, prior political activity, and the importance of the issue to the individual were found to be predictors of intention for action. In addition, Parry et al. (1992) show that an important element in the relationship of the participants with their study of political participation in the U.K. was a series of background factors (such as education) and group resources.

Kelly & Kelly (1994) found that individual political efficacy is a more important element in those individuals who identify weakly with a group (in the context of trade unions), suggesting that political efficacy may act as an alternative route to participation where social identity is weak. They add that the possible moderating effect of group identification found in their study may explain the inconsistent findings mentioned above. By contrast, Miller et al. (1980) contextualise their study of political participation among a sample constituted by older people and found that political efficacy was more important among those individuals who identified with older people. In particular, old people who felt politically efficacious as individuals and who believed that older people as a group could have much influence in society (collective efficacy), participated at higher rates than those who felt politically ineffectual and believed that older people as a group cannot have that much influence in society.

Another element considered in the political efficacy literature is political trust. According to Gamson (1968) people are moved to social action when they feel...
politically efficacious and show low political trust. However, people who believe they can help to achieve desired futures will act on that belief regardless of their political trust.

Similar results were found by Curtice & Jowell (1995). They conclude that a fall in political trust is not responsible for a decrease in political action when there is an increased willingness of people to take action in general. Instead, in their view, political efficacy appears to be more strongly related to action.

In addition, when studying the effects of political efficacy and political trust on action, a distinction between conventional and unconventional action has been made. It has been shown that people who are assured of their political efficacy and perceive their governmental system to be responsive to citizens’ demands show high involvement in conventional modes of political action, whereas those who believe they can bring about social change, but show low political trust tend to favour more unconventional actions (Craig, 1979; Finkel, 1985; Pollock, 1983; Zimmerman & Rappaport, 1988; Parry et al. 1992). Thus, conventional political activism will be better predicted by high political trust, whilst unconventional activism will be better predicted by low political trust.

Finally, in considering the relation to group membership, it has been found that those individuals who are politically inactive have a low sense of political efficacy and view all modes of political action as ineffective, whereas those who are active within the political system believe that they can influence it (Wolfsfeld, 1986b; Parry et al., 1992; Curtice & Jowell, 1995). However, this conclusion has been criticised by Bandura (1997) who argues that the crucial factor is not organisational membership per se but collective mobilisation.

This section has shown the importance of the concept ‘political efficacy’ for the study of collective action across various theoretical approaches. It has also drawn attention to political trust and its effects on action. Both concepts were considered for the
prediction of collective action in this research.

3.5 Summary

A very influential approach in the study of collective action can be distinguished, i.e. the resource mobilisation theory. As shown above, collective action has been characterised by an economic and individualistic perspective and to date it still presents unresolved problems (e.g. the calculation of costs and benefits in which free loading has remained a research issue). This has affected the way existing theories in social psychology have studied collective action, i.e. by the incorporation and emphasis on an individual dimension.

In parallel, the apparent complementary theory of new social movement provided by paying attention to those factors that generate grievances has not proved sufficient to increase knowledge on those processes involved in collective action.

It was explained earlier in this chapter how within Social Psychology attempts were made in order to provide a predictive weight for the study of collective action. However, it is apparent that old economic theories have been re-used as well as social psychological theories such as the relative deprivation theory, which only predicts the desirability of social change. Similarly, studies are not comparable as different ways of measuring the outcome of collective action (i.e. either by past behaviour or intentional behaviour) are being used. The fact that some variables accounting for collective action may differ depending on the populations being studied has also not been considered when conducting research on collective action.

Five main aspects of the empirical and theoretical work on collective action described in this chapter are particularly important for this thesis. The first is the way in which the outcome of collective action is being measured. As mentioned above, some studies exclusively focus on past behaviour (e.g. Wolfsfeld, 1986a; Muller & Opp, 1986; Finkel et al., 1989) whereas other studies focus on intentional behaviour (e.g.
The second aspect was that social movements in the study of collective action have received major attention. However, there seems to be a lacuna in the study of other possibilities which could be identified as collective action not being so notorious and obvious to the public eye. We need therefore to explore other forms of interaction which may provide solutions to the 'individual-group-society' dilemma.

Thirdly, it was suggested that different variables might explain different activities (e.g. Finkel et al., 1989; Wolfsfeld, 1986a), hence the context of different instances of social change should be taken into account (e.g. Barnes et al., 1979; Finkel et al., 1989).

The fourth point concerns other social psychological aspects which have contributed to explain collective action in some of the reviewed studies and which were incorporated in this thesis. They were as follows: political efficacy (e.g. Marsh, 1977; Barnes et al., 1979; Wolf et al., 1986; Breakwell, 1992a); political trust (e.g. Marsh, 1977; Barnes et al., 1979; Parry et al., 1992); collectivist orientation (Triandis et al., 1988; Hinkle & Brown, 1990; Kelly & Breinlinger, 1996); self-efficacy (e.g. Miller et al., 1980; Finkel et al., 1989); collective efficacy (e.g. Muller & Opp, 1986; Rodriguez et al., 1993; Reykowski, 1998). Others were group membership (e.g. Marsh, 1977; Wolfsfeld, 1986a); perceived effectiveness of the action (e.g. Marsh, 1977, 1990; Wolfsfeld, 1986a); previous experience (e.g. Muller & Opp, 1986; Jirovec & Erich, 1995). From these factors, it is shown that the efficacy component seems to be addressed by different constructs (i.e. political efficacy, self-efficacy and collective efficacy). This will be incorporated in the current research.

Finally, it has been shown that the social psychological factors various theories have drawn attention to are situated at different levels, ranging from an individual to a societal level. However, it seems that those theories do not explicitly recognise the potential role of factors other than the ones they are specifically concerned with and
also they do not consider that factors may be located at different levels and interact in different ways.

In the following chapter Social Identity Theory will be reviewed. This has provided much empirical work on collective action. An alternative theoretical framework will be discussed, which attempts to integrate two different theories, i.e. Identity Process Theory and Social Representations Theory.
Chapter Four

Identity Process Theory, Social Representations Theory and Collective Action

"An idea that is not dangerous is unworthy of being called an idea at all."

Oscar Wilde; (1854-1900).

4.1 Introduction

In chapter three, several theoretical approaches on collective action were discussed. Some of the theoretical assumptions of this literature were useful and form the basis for some of the assertions made in this thesis. However, this chapter will specifically address a body of literature which will facilitate identifying a theory which is able to provide a theoretical framework for this research. In developing the theoretical position taken here, Tajfel’s Social Identity Theory (SIT) and Turner’s Self-Categorisation Theory (SCT) were examined since much of the social psychological work on collective action has been influenced by these theories (some examples were provided in chapter three, Table 3.1). It was decided, however, that these latter theories could not provide an adequate background to this research. This will be discussed in each of the sections addressing both SIT and SCT.

An alternative theoretical framework was found useful in this research, that is Breakwell’s Identity Process Theory (IPT) and Moscovici’s Social Representations Theory (SRT). The theoretical construct of barriers, in this research conceptually incorporating both identity and representational aspects, was the key and central core which enabled the integration of both theories.
Within this chapter, it will be explained and emphasised how age is not understood as “the definitive aspect of identity”, but as a fully integrated part of the identity of the person, in which other aspects of an individual’s identity are also assumed to affect willingness to engage in collective action. For this, IPT will prove to offer a robust theoretical framework within which to examine this assumption. In parallel, social representations will add content and value to individuals’ identity.

This chapter will first outline SIT and review some of the literature based on SIT in order to predict collective action. This will be followed by a review of SCT and of some studies on collective action within that theory. Finally, IPT and SRT will be discussed and the need to integrate them within this research will be explained. This chapter will end with a description of the main research aims formulated in this thesis.

4.2 Social Identity Theory

The development of SIT was mainly in response to the need for an explanation of intergroup behaviour, in particular intergroup discrimination. That was achieved through the so-called ‘minimal group paradigm’. In order to do so, Tajfel carried out a series of experiments which reproduced a two group situation in which the saliency of each group’s characteristics and the nature of their relation were minimal. That is to say, they lacked the common characteristics of real contexts, constituting a ‘no discrimination’ situation. The purpose was to examine the necessary preconditions for intergroup discrimination. The results were unexpected: by merely categorising individuals in terms of an ingroup and an outgroup, intergroup discrimination took place - with ingroup favouritism and outgroup discrimination, and this occurred even when these groupings were based on random assignments. The essential point emerging from these experiments is that even arbitrary social categorisations lead to discrimination. Moreover, group behaviour would arise from a shared sense of social category membership.
SIT is an attempt to answer questions about this discrimination process, in particular whether discrimination is a direct consequence of the process of social categorisation. Three basic notions are central in the definition of this theory, social identity, social categorisation, and social comparison. This theory refers to "part of an individual’s self-concept which derives from his knowledge of his membership of a social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership" (Tajfel, 1981, p. 255).

The first consideration is that of self identification with a social group. The acquisition of social identity parallels the process of social categorisation, which is associated with the cognitive segmentation of the social world into different social categories. This operation systematises the social world and at the same time provides the self with a system of orientation. In that way, the individual’s place in society is created and defined.

Social comparison is another key process in SIT, related to the tendency to evaluate the categories constituting the context by means of comparing them along relevant dimensions. In this way, an individual’s own social identity may be either positive or negative according to the evaluations of the groups therein. The central core of SIT is the individual’s attempt for positive social identities to achieve a positive self-concept, i.e. the attempt to gain and preserve self-esteem through social comparisons. This could explain the findings derived from the minimal groups experiments.

Finally, within SIT collective action is the means by which low status group members (perceiving inequality) adopt particular strategies to achieve a positive social identity. Tajfel & Turner (1986) distinguished between three strategies, ‘individual mobility’, ‘social creativity’ and ‘social competition/change’. Individual mobility (physical or psychological) refers to the individuals leaving or dissociating themselves from their former group. In the social creativity strategy, the group members alter or redefine the elements of the (comparative) situation, which does not necessarily imply any changes in the ingroup’s objective social position. It may use three possible ways: comparing
the ingroup to the outgroup on some new dimension, changing one's values so that previously negative comparisons are perceived as positive, or changing the outgroup against which the ingroup is compared, i.e. not using a dominant comparison group. Social competition/social change is a group level tactic, and leads to collective action. Group members achieve positive valued distinctiveness through direct competition with the outgroup.

Both cognitive alternatives of ‘perceived illegitimacy’ (degree to which the groups perceive their status relations to conflict with superordinate values of justice, fairness or equity) and ‘instability’ (groups’ perceptions that their status positions can be changed) will encourage members to adopt one strategy or the other. Perceiving current status relations as illegitimate and unstable, will increase the likelihood of engaging in collective action.

According to the original model proposed by Tajfel & Turner (1986), the adoption of a ‘social change’ strategy (involved in collective action) is more likely in individuals identifying strongly with their social group. The group members would achieve positive valued distinctiveness through direct competition with the outgroup. Individual action would then be likely to be taken by those individuals who identify weakly with their social group. However, this relationship has been questioned. Condor (1989) observed that the term ‘social change’ as formulated by the above theorists addressed self-perception and consciousness and not the change of social structures.

SIT has been further criticised by Kelly & Breinlinger (1996). They claim that it does not provide precise hypotheses concerning the conditions which establish which of the alternative responses will ultimately be preferred. According to them, SIT also fails to specify which variables may lead disadvantaged group members to perceive the intergroup situation as illegitimate and unstable in the first place.
Furthermore, Skevington & Baker (1989) suggest that the minimal group experiments on which the theory is based, are not realistic. By removing each of the characteristics of each member of the group, the participants were left with one single membership. In real life, however, people have both multiple group memberships and other personal characteristics with which to form categorisations and their social identity. As these authors already pointed out, experimental research cannot account for the meanings of different group memberships in real life, such as how people come to conceptualise their group memberships, and which variables explain levels of identification. This gap will be addressed in this thesis. Additionally, in real life, ingroup favouritism and outgroup derogation are not necessarily occurring together, i.e. ingroup favouritism does not necessarily lead to outgroup derogation.

Below are presented three studies which have studied collective action within SIT, i.e. The Five Stage Model (Taylor & McKirnan, 1984); Social Identity Model of Deindividuation (Reicher, Spears & Postmes, 1995); and other work which has been conducted by Kelly (e.g. 1993).

**The Five Stage Model**

The five stage model (Taylor & McKirnan, 1984) implicitly relates to the study of group membership. It predicts that low status group members will give priority to individual mobility. It assumes that assimilation into the advantaged group is a more attractive option (for the low status group) than is identification as a low status group member. However, this model does not consider that individuals may develop ingroup loyalty, even when they have the possibility to pass into the advantaged group, as shown by Moghaddam & Perreault (1992) in their study of ethnic minorities. The five stage model conflicts with Moghaddam & Perreault's (1992) study showing self-esteem to be a predictor of individualistic or collective mobility strategies, concluding that individuals who present a low self-esteem will be more motivated to adopt an individual strategy. On the contrary, Taylor & McKirnan's model implies that a high self-esteem is associated with moving from the disadvantaged group to the advantaged (via individual mobility). Wright, Taylor & Moghaddam (1990) state that
"A group member engages in collective action anytime that he or she is acting as a representative of the group and the action is directed at improving the conditions of the entire group" (p. 995).

This description includes more than one form of action, distinguishing between collective and individual behaviour. However, it assumes that individual action is directed at improving one’s personal condition. Their intergroup definition is limited in that it does not consider the following cases: individuals who are located at the individual extreme of the individual-collective dimension but who still represent the disadvantaged group and bring about collective action; when the individual is a member of the group and yet is not representing the group; when the individual is a member of the group but does not change the conditions of the group.

**Social Identity Model of Deindividuation (SIDE)**

Though SIT pays close attention to the immediate realities of crowd events - explicitly concerned with the social nature of the self and its relationship to group behaviour - it has remained open to two criticisms:

(i) the explanation of how norms emerge is inadequate to deal with situations where crowds act and change rapidly;

(ii) the character of the norms that emerge is determined by the predispositions of prominent individuals or by the predispositions of them in the crowd (Reicher, 1996).

In order to explain crowd behaviour, Reicher, Spears & Postmes (1995) had already argued for a 'social identity model of deindividuation'. The main difference between social identity and deindividuation theories would be that in the former, theorists posit a switch of identity in the group, from personal to social, while in deindividuation, a loss of identity in the group is posited (Hogg & Abrams, 1988).

Reicher et al. (1995) attempted to reconduct the traditional approach of crowd behaviour using their model of deindividuation. The idea that self can be defined at various different levels including the categorical self as well as the personal self, was presented on the basis of an intergroup context - in contrast to classical
deindividuation studies. Following a series of different experiments, it was shown that deindividuation manipulations gained effect through the ways in which they affect the salience of social identity and through their effects on strategic considerations relating to the expression of social identities. Finally, and contrary to the classical deindividuation theory, it was shown that the combination of psychological group membership and anonymity in the group, resulted in enhanced conformity to group norms, rather than anti-normative behaviour. Thus, the authors' model would assert that identity (created) is a facilitator of action.

Reicher's (1996) later study, contextualised in a violent confrontation between students and police during a demonstration, paid particular attention to power relations ("battle of Westminster") and confirmed the importance of social identity and self-categorisation processes to collective action.

Particular attention was given to how the collective conflict is initiated and developed. In accordance to SIT, conflict is shown to manifest when the behaviour of the outgroup is seen as illegitimate together with the occurrence of attempts to ban and stop the ingroup rights.

The author however distinguished between those subgroups of demonstrators who considered violence as illegitimate and those who did not, and showed how changes in the self-categorisation of members occurred according to the phase in which the conflict was taking place. Early on, the ingroup was fragmented and the majority of members disassociated themselves from those who were promoting the confrontation with the police. In the later stages the group was more homogenous and the majority now associated themselves with those promoting confrontation. In addition, conflict was explained in terms of efficacy, a unique intervening factor. Conflict would occur whenever it was seen as efficacious.

Reicher (1996) concludes that SIT is useful for understanding collective action, but that there is a need to understand how social categories are constructed and
reconstructed in the dynamics of intergroup interaction. He also points out the need to correct the conception that categorisation and context are two independent terms, and that categorisation and context are interchangeable, as a function of intergroup relations. He stresses the need to explore the possible interlink between these observations, and to look at the different phases of intergroup relations.

**Identity on an integrative framework of previous approaches**

Within the SIT framework, Kelly ran several studies in order to predict participation in both a Trade Union context (Kelly & Kelly, 1994) and in a gender context (Kelly & Breinlinger, 1996). Their model postulates that SIT should enable the examination of a direct causal link between ingroup identification and ingroup favouritism. In their research, the important role of group identification as a correlate of participation is revealed in both studies. Individuals express willingness to be involved in collective action to the extent that they feel a sense of identification with the group (trade union/gender category). The role of group identification as a moderating variable was examined and was found to be relevant in both contexts, although it was much more evident in the gender context.

In Kelly & Kelly’s (1994) study (on trade unions) the results show an individual’s level of group identification (strong/weak) as the strongest predictor of participation, among the three measures of political participation (‘easy’; ‘difficult’ and ‘total’). In addition, it appears that total participation and easier forms of participation were positively and highly associated with collectivist orientation and stereotypical perceptions of the group for both strong and weak ingroup identification, whereas for difficult forms of political participation it is only significant for strong identifiers. In particular, the latter was positively and highly associated with collective relative deprivation and stereotypical perceptions of the outgroup.

According to Kelly (1993), after having been involved in collective action, a more direct route to participation may be established. However participating in collective action will not be the end, as it will feed back to affect individual attitudes and
perceptions and may lead to the development of a new social identity as an activist, which would facilitate further participation.

From each of the studies reported above, it has been shown how collective action has been conceptualised and measured in different ways. For instance, in Reicher's model, an attempt was made to explain what is the nature of crowd behaviour. For this, he paid attention to previous experience and used a qualitative methodological approach. On the other hand, Kelly's model is an attempt to predict collective action. She studied several activities which were mostly situated on a political dimension and referred to intentional behaviour. This was measured by using a questionnaire.

4.3 Self-categorisation theory

Self-categorisation theory (SCT) is considered complementary to SIT (Turner et al., 1987; Oakes, Haslam & Turner, 1994) and is concerned specifically with intragroup behaviour. Both SCT and SIT share the assumption that individuals may define themselves primarily in terms of their group membership, and in turn a group-defined perception of the self would produce specific psychological effects which may affect subsequent social behaviour.

The core of SCT is the process by which people conceptualise themselves in terms of social categories, aiming at the explanation of the cognitive mechanisms underlying social identity and group processes. That is to say, in SCT emphasis is given to the fact that a collection of people will act as a group as long as they feel that they are part of it; i.e. members of the same social category. Group formation is assumed to precede most interpersonal phenomena and is seen as an adaptive social psychological process which makes social cohesion, co-operation and influence possible (Turner et al., 1987).

According to SCT, individuals can categorise the self at three main levels of abstraction. Firstly, at a superordinate level: the interspecies self-categorisation. The
self is grouped as similar to all human beings, and as different from all other species in nature (definition of one’s human identity). Secondly, at an intermediate level: intergroup self-categorisation. The self is grouped as similar to the members of the ingroup and as different from the members of the outgroup (definition of one’s social identity). Categories such as ‘old’, ‘British’ and ‘Pensioners’ activist’ belong to this level according to this theory. Finally, at the subordinate level: interpersonal self-categorisation. The self is unique from other ingroup members (definition of one’s personal identity).

When self-categorisation operates at the intermediate level, then stereotypic norms are accentuated, which consequently increases group homogeneity, leading to a process of depersonalisation. In Turner et al.’s (1987) words, depersonalisation refers to: “the process of ‘self-stereotyping’ whereby people come to perceive themselves more as the interchangeable exemplars of a social category” (p. 50).

In this way, members of the group will differentiate between ‘us’ and ‘them’ instead of ‘I’ and ‘me’, and consequently to perceive members of the group as interchangeable rather than unique individuals. Processes of social influence and crowd behaviour, amongst others, can be considered a result of depersonalisation. In such cases, the cognitive redefinition of the self in terms of shared social category memberships and stereotypes is responsible for mediating group behaviour.

Once it is established that the existence of a shared self-categorisation is a necessary pre-condition for group identity, a question emerges: why in particular circumstances do some categories become salient and others do not? (referred to as ‘psychological significance’). SCT posits that it is the interaction between accessibility and fit. The former is related to the tendency to use those categories which are meaningful in terms of past experience and ongoing intentions. The latter refers to the degree of correspondence between the categories being selected and the stimuli in reality to be represented.
The main implication of this is that self-concept is context dependent. In other words, social identity depends on which social categories are salient in a particular moment. Thus, the variability and fluidity of self-categories remains as a central characteristic of SCT. At the same time, changes in the comparative context can produce changes both in ingroup-outgroup relationships and in the intra-category structure.

Hogg & Turner (1987b) claimed that the adoption of a particular response to status inequality would be affected by the so-called 'referent informational influence' with its underlying process of self-categorisation. It would occur in three stages:

"First, individuals categorise and define themselves as members of a distinct social category or assign themselves a social identity; second, they form or learn the stereotypic norms of that category. They ascertain that certain ways of behaving, perceiving and believing are criterial attributes of category membership; that certain appropriate, expected or desirable behaviours are used to define the category as distinct from other categories; and, finally, they assign these norms to themselves and thus their behaviour becomes more normative (conformist) as their category membership becomes salient." (p. 149).

Thus, referent informational influence can be considered to be a process of self-stereotyping. Therefore, referent informational influence will affect the response that individuals adopt to status inequality. Their responses will be compatible with their self-categorisation: if ingroup norms encourage individuals to see social change as desirable and possible this will promote favourable intentions to participate in collective action. Individuals whose ingroup does not support a normative structure of social change will be more likely to engage in individual action. In turn, intentions to engage in collective action will affect attitudes and identity (Kelly, 1993).

This study differs from the SCT position in which groups are viewed as 'givens', i.e. individuals are not able to interpret reality in different ways or bring about change through their own actions. This is implicit in the 'accessibility X fit' hypothesis, in which fit remains the only mechanism by which category salience is determined.

Similarly, SIT depicts groups as homogeneous and consensual entities. SCT posits that group members would share the same self-stereotype and would stereotype the
other groups in a similar way, as a consequence of depersonalisation. Reicher (1996), following self-categorisation theory, noted that social influence follows the depersonalisation of self to an ingroup category. His central argument is that categories are not fixed structures, but are flexible and ‘socially’ constructed (within language).

To recap, SIT and SCT understand group behaviour as an outcome of individuals categorising themselves as group members, depicted by these theories as homogeneous and consensual entities. Besides, these theories assume a distinction between the personal and social components of identity (e.g. SCT distinguishes between human identity; social identity and personal identity, as expounded above) and they do not take into account the temporal dimension of identity.

Moreover, assuming that identity-related behaviour is motivated by a need for positive self-esteem, which can lead to biased social comparisons, then these theories can also account for prejudice and discrimination. On the other hand, neither theory takes into account the dynamics of this motivation nor any alternative forms of behaviours. Thus, in relation to this thesis, these theories cannot account for the dynamic nature of identity.

Alternatively, IPT describes the nature of identity in terms of the content and the value dimensions. The content includes the various social identities (e.g. group memberships; roles; values; attitudes) of a person and the distinction between social and personal identity is abandoned. Each aspect of the content dimension has a specific value (positive or negative) attached to it. Both content and values are subject to constant revision, depicted as expanding over the life-span. Thus, identity structure is “seen as fluid, dynamic, and responsive to its social context in a way (...) which is purposive” (Breakwell, 1986, p. 19). Besides, the attempt to gain and maintain self-esteem in SIT can only be seen as an example, since IPT departs from the assumption that identity processes are motivated by self-esteem alone. The next section outlines Breakwell’s Identity Process Theory to explain how identity is conceptualised within this thesis.
4.4 Identity Process Theory

Identity Process Theory (IPT) (Breakwell, 1986, 1988, 1992a, 1993) is a model of identity which can provide the basis for understanding the effects on a person's identity when 'age' and 'collective action' are taken into account. This theory extends to the explanation of behaviour which is not immediately related to a group or category context.

The theory proposes that identity is the dynamic social product of an interaction between the capacities of memory, consciousness and organised constructs - which are characteristic of the biological organism - with the physical and societal structures and influence processes that constitute the social context, along a temporal dimension. Identity is manifested through thought, action and affect in a context of personal and social power relationships, and can be described in terms of its structure and processes.

The structure of identity includes both content and value dimensions. The content dimension - understood as dynamically organised and dependent on the social context - includes the characteristics which define identity; in other words, those traits that make the individual unique. This comprises attitudes and belief systems, behavioural styles, self-ascribed attributes and belief systems, and group memberships. The content dimension ignores the distinction between the elements that have been arbitrarily labelled personal (e.g. values, motives, emotions, attitudes) and social identity (e.g. group memberships, roles, interpersonal relationships), since it is assumed that the content dimension is "continually present across time and is cumulative" (Breakwell, 1986, p. 18). Breakwell (1983) proposes that: "Current personal identity is the product of the interaction of all past personal identities with all past and present social identities. But the reverse is also true: current social identities are the product of the interactions of all past social identities with all past and current personal identities" (p. 12).
Each element in the content dimension has a specific value attached to it, either positive or negative, subject to change according to changes in social value systems and the individual's social position. Hence, the value dimension of identity comprises the values attached to each element of the identity. Evaluations change over time because of changes in the individual or in the external social world, which characterises identity as dynamic. In this research, a person’s identity does not only encompass who an older person is today, but also who was in the past and who this person may become (Markus & Herzog, 1991), which is in constant development. Breakwell (1986) states that:

"Identity development takes place in the arena of subjective temporality. Identity content and value dimensions are themselves instrumental in shaping the perception of time; especially with respect to biographical time, the meaning of which they will dictate in the short term but which will, in turn, be instrumental in determining their structure in the longer run. The fact is that identity which develops through subjective time will also be a fundamental determinant of that subjective temporality." (p. 21).

In addition to ‘biographical time’, which “is experienced as major spans of meaning, constructed and reconstructed across the entire course of life” (p.21) Breakwell (1986) also refers to ‘social time’, which “represents a temporal landscape which records significant events” (p. 22).

An example which emphasises the temporal dimension on older people’s identities in the context of collective action is the one provided by Andrews’ (1991) research, which explored political activism among a sample of fifteen older British men and women who were/had been very politically involved during their life. Different interviews were conducted and it appeared that for them old age enhanced their identity. They considered their political activism as one of the major sources of meaning in their lives. Their continued political commitment with the respective organisations seemed to function as a link across time.

Furthermore, it was revealed that the respondents, through their long-term political involvement, had been accumulating several beliefs and ideas throughout their experiences, which had gradually become more complex. The development of the
respondents would not have followed a linear progression but as Andrews states, “would more accurately be depicted in the form of a spiral” (p. 176). At the same time, their personal growth would continue not only by having new experiences, but also by re-examining past experiences.

According to Breakwell (1986), the structure of identity is regulated by the cognitive processes of assimilation-accommodation and evaluation, which are deemed by IPT to be universal psychological processes, i.e. not culturally dependent. They are both part of the same processes that mould respectively the content and value dimensions of identity structure, interacting dynamically with each other. Assimilation is associated with the incorporation of new components into the identity structure, and accommodation refers to the adjustment made by the existing structure to incorporate new elements. Evaluation leads to the allocation of meaning and value to existing identity contents. Both processes of assimilation/accommodation and evaluation interact to determine the content and value of identity over time.

Coleman et al. (1999) and Furstenberg (1994), whilst not working strictly within an IPT framework, showed examples of assimilation/accommodation among older people in order to highlight dynamicity in identity. For instance, Coleman et al.’s (1999) work refers to the term “successful assimilation” as demonstrated by one of the participants in their research, Mrs. Darby:

“At the age of 97, she is still seeking ways of maintaining her relational self, through social contact and work for charity. She has successfully found social clubs to attend most days of the week, and fought obstacles that stood in the way. She has written to the council on separate occasions, complaining about uneven paving stones in the local streets, and the speed of traffic outside (...) At the same time, examination of the evidence on Mrs. Darby’s self-ascriptions during her period in residential care (1988-93) shows that she was capable of modifying her goals. In that period she made more references to her inner strengths and positive attitude to life, as well as hoping for better times. Her family also became a more evident source of self-esteem. But on return to independent housing, she was quick to pick up her previous active and outgoing lifestyle.” (pp. 835-836).
This example clearly shows the constant interplay of both assimilation and evaluational processes in the identity structure of someone who happens to be 97, confirming the dynamicity of identity across the life-span, in which one of the new elements incorporated in this person’s identity has been engaging in collective action.

These processes of identity are guided by four motivational principles, which define desirable states for the structure of identity. They are integrated within a single framework. Unlike the processes, they are culturally and temporally specific. In Western industrialised cultures they are: continuity; self-esteem; distinctiveness (Breakwell, 1986) and in further publications an efficacy principle has been added (Breakwell 1992a, 1993). Each of these principles manifests itself across the life span of the individual:

1. Continuity refers to the motivation to maintain a sense of “continuity across time and situation” (Breakwell, 1986, p. 24). It implies that there is some conceptual link or narrative that connects temporality (past, present, future) within a person’s identity. Breakwell (1986) specifies that consistency and continuity are not the same, “consistency requires that elements be non-contradictory, continuity merely requires their persistence over time” (p. 167) and that “there could quite easily be continuity in inconsistency: elements which are incompatible co-existing across time” (p. 167). People attempt to maintain a sense of continuity when experiencing disruptions such as bereavement or job loss (Breakwell, 1986). Late life rises questions of continuity of identity (Birren, Kenyon, Ruth, Schroots & Svensson, 1996). More specifically, self-continuity has been linked to goal stability and it has been argued that the effective adaptation to life events such as retirement requires an ability to maintain a sense of purpose and direction (Payne, Robbins & Dougherty, 1991).

2. Self-esteem is associated with a feeling of personal worth or social value. There is an extensive work on self-esteem by diverse social psychological theories which enhance the relevance of this principle in identity. It is seen to operate in tandem
with the desire for self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997). IPT understands the maintenance of this concept to be a motivating element directing the diverse identity processes.

As discussed in chapter two, one of the areas of research has been among older people (e.g. Rodin & Langer, 1980; Baltes & Baltes, 1990; Coleman et al., 1999) and contradictory results have arisen, which might be due to different conceptualisations and contexts in which they have been studied.

3. Distinctiveness refers to the means by which a person differentiates himself/herself from others, in addition to the so-called ‘positive distinctiveness’ defined by Tajfel & Turner (1986). This principle is also influenced by the desire for self-esteem.

Taking into account social comparison, distinctiveness may be achieved not through what the individual is, but through the way in which identity components are valued by individuals and how they establish relationships between those components. Vignoles, Chryssochoou & Breakwell (2000) suggest that distinctiveness has a fundamental role in the construction of meaning within identity. These authors have argued that this principle is not incompatible with non-Western cultural systems and a distinction between three sources of distinctiveness (i.e. ‘position’, ‘difference’ and ‘separateness’) has been proposed.

4. Self-efficacy refers to the motivation to maintain feelings of “competence and control” (Breakwell, 1993, p. 205) of one’s life. Although it originated from Bandura’s conceptualisation, identity process understands the maintenance of this concept (as explained with self-esteem) to be a motivating element directing the diverse identity processes. Feelings of self-efficacy have been related to feelings of well-being and increases in personal and collective efficacy (Bandura, 1982). Other studies have focused on the loss of belief in one’s self-efficacy in relation to severe depression (Seligman, 1975). Likewise with self-esteem studies among older people, it cannot be generalised that self-efficacy declines with age (Lachman, 1986). Moreover, a distinction is made within this thesis between physical self-efficacy and self-efficacy among older people (as discussed in chapter two).
If individuals find that either of the above principles is threatened, they will use strategies in order to protect or recuperate them. These coping strategies can be at the intrapsychic, interpersonal or intergroup levels (Breakwell, 1986). Intrapsychic strategies would include the operation of assimilation-accommodation and/or evaluation to alter the identity structure; strategies at the interpersonal level would involve mainly the change of one's relationships with others and, finally, intergroup strategies would refer to behaviour at a group level (both social mobility and creativity accounted by SIT would be included in this last strategy). IPT argues that ageing - amongst other events or statuses - represents a threat because it annuls the principles which guide identity processes (Breakwell, 1988). For this thesis, the way principles are studied is to determine whether each of them may either facilitate or hinder collective action among older people. Moreover, in response to heterogeneity claimed among older people within this thesis, it is assumed that there is not only one old age, but several. Results obtained in this thesis with regards to principles operating within older people's identity structure cannot be generalised to all persons belonging to the same age group.

According to Breakwell (1986), identity is created “within a particular social context within a specific historical period” (p. 191). The social context can be represented along two dimensions, i.e. structure and process. The difference is that “while the structure of the social context represents its material existence, the process generates its ideological substance” (p. 37). In relation to the structure dimension, the social context is comprised of interpersonal networks, group and social-category memberships, and intergroup relationships. Besides, the content of identity is assimilated from these structures. The second dimension comprises social influence processes (such as education, rhetoric, polemic, propaganda), which “establish systems of value and beliefs, reified in social representations, social norms, and social attributions, which specify both the content and value of individual identities” (p. 192). However, identity is not totally determined by its social context; the individual still has some choice in formulating the identity structure, which leads to an important point in this theory: “the person has agency in creating identity” (p. 192).
With regards to empirical work which has used IPT, most research has focused on looking at coping responses when identity is threatened. Breakwell (1986) examined identity threat and coping strategies at several levels (intra-psychic, interpersonal and intergroup) in several contexts, e.g. unemployment and gender differences at work. Other areas in which a range of potential threats have been studied are: incompatibilities between cultural, religious and sexual identities among Jewish gay men (Rafalin, 1998), the process of 'coming out' among lesbian women (Markowe, 1996), the impact of an organisational merger (Marson, Sullivan & Cinnirella, 1998), the enforced relocation of a mining community in Derbyshire, England (Speller, Lyons & Twigger-Ross, 1996), the threat to place identification caused by beach pollution (Bonaiuto, Breakwell & Cano, 1996), the abortion debate in the Republic of Ireland (Cullen, 1996), the political changes associated with European integration (Breakwell, 1996) and the emotional and cognitive reaction to threats to identity experienced by immigrants to Britain from the former Yugoslavia (Timotijevic & Breakwell, 2000).

Most of the above studies (e.g. Speller et al., 1996; Breakwell, 1996; Rafalin, 1998) use IPT as an interpretative framework, in contrast to Vignoles (2000) who tested the theory. Others have provided statistical evidence for the operation of identity processes in coping with threats to identity (e.g. Bonaiuto et al., 1996).

Other studies have not particularly focused on threat (e.g. Twigger-Ross & Uzzell, 1996; Devine-Wright & Lyons, 1997; Vignoles, 2000). Twigger-Ross & Uzzell (1996) studied attachment and non-attachment to a local area and explained differences with reference to distinctiveness, continuity, efficacy and self-esteem. Besides, Devine-Wright & Lyons (1997) examined the role of historical places in the construction and meaning of Irish identity, by taking into account the contribution of each place in terms of feelings of distinctiveness, continuity, self-esteem and cohesion of Ireland and Irish people. Vignoles (2000) developed a new method for measuring the strength of pressures towards self-esteem, distinctiveness, continuity and self-efficacy by focusing on the relationships between multiple elements within the
structure of identity among the Anglican clergy.

With the exception of these few studies mentioned, IPT has been criticised for having been applied almost exclusively to situations of identity threat and the examination of coping strategies (Bosma, 1995). For this thesis it is not intended either to test IPT or to focus on situations of threat but to use the theoretical framework of IPT to conceptualise identity among older people in the context of collective action and develop a predictive model of collective action.

In sum, the following assumptions of IPT were found relevant and useful to the study of collective action among older people for this thesis:

- The first is the concept of identity as a structure described in terms of the content and value dimensions, which is regulated by the dynamic processes of accommodation/assimilation and evaluation. These processes are guided in their operation by four motivational principles (i.e. continuity, self-esteem, distinctiveness, self-efficacy), which define desirable states for the structure of identity.

- There is no separation in IPT between individual and social identity. Within this research, aspects such as age as a relevant group membership (identification with ‘older people’); roles related to age (e.g. ‘grandparenthood’); other general categories (e.g. ‘activist’, ‘British’, ‘man/woman’); and personal physical characteristics; all constitute the identity of a specific older person. Moreover, identity encompasses a constellation of various levels (from intraindividual to societal/group).

- Dynamic and flexible nature of identity. For instance, the two processes of accommodation/assimilation and evaluation interact to determine the changing content (e.g. re-definition of the meaning of identity) and value of identity (e.g. changing the importance of the identity) over time (this highlights importance of
the temporal dimension in identity); changing patterns of assimilation involving changes in evaluation and vice versa.

- In this research, content of identity is considered to comprise several self-related representations (identities), each of them with a value attached to them. Moreover, none of the several aspects constituting the structure of a person’s identity function in isolation from any other, or the whole hierarchically organised structure of identity. Thus, in this thesis, age is not a unique definition of identity. Age is understood to be one of the characteristics/components of the identity structure of the person, which might include aspects such as personal traits; group memberships. In addition, some aspects of ‘age’ might be more important for some people and less relevant for others, in response to the assumption of heterogeneity among older people as proposed in this research. In order to explain collective action among older people, the whole identity structure will be taken into account, not just an age-related definition (‘age’ identity).

- Identity is created within a particular social context, which can be represented along both social structure and its processes. The social position of an individual (e.g. being ‘old’) will indeed create and set some limitations for actions taken by the individual. However, as Breakwell (1986) points out, there are contradictions and conflicts within the “ideological milieu” (p.192), reified in social representations; social rules; rituals and orthodoxies; and social attributions. At any time, individuals have to make choices between different ideologies in which they will then engage in a process of interpretation. This refers to ‘subjective meaning’ of the social positions an individual holds within the social context, in which the person has agency in creating and directing the meaning of identity.

Lastly, social representations “provide a system of interpretation, labelling and exchange which orient people appropriately in their particular social context” (Breakwell, 1986, p. 54), which specify both the content and value of individual identities. This theory was found useful for this research in order to understand
collective action among older people and, as discussed in chapter two, the position adopted was that attitudinal aspects towards the process of ageing would be framed within this theory (this will be explained in the following section). Below an outline of Social Representations Theory is provided and some studies based on this theory which are specifically contextualised in collective action will be expounded.

4.5 Social Representations Theory

SIT as described earlier assumes groups to be compact and consensual wholes. The same premise is made by the social representations theory (SRT), conceived by Moscovici to address particular aspects of group processes and the general mechanisms through which people collectively construct shared realities.

Social Representations Theory (Moscovici, 1961, 1984, 1988) has proved to be a rich approach to social psychological phenomena. The creator of the theory, Serge Moscovici, points out that they are situated at the cross-roads of collective and personal processes as the approach connects the macro-social discourse level with individual social behaviour, cognition, affect and symbolic understanding (Moscovici, 1984, 1988). The concept of social representation was born with the publication “La psychanalyse: son image et son publique” by Moscovici in 1961, in which he paid specific attention to the process of transformation of scientific ideas. Moscovici studied the way opinions about psychoanalysis developed during the fifties in France, by asking people from different backgrounds questions about psychoanalysis. He then carried out an analysis of media articles (national and regional; catholic church and the communist party). He then classified these sources in terms of diffusion, propagation and propaganda, which correspond to different types of social knowledge, i.e. opinions, attitudes and stereotypes respectively (Moscovici, 1961). Moscovici argues that opinions have an evaluative function, characterised by a dynamic, unstable and contradictory nature and pervasive influence. He suggests that attitudes have a regulatory function and that they are determined by an ordered arrangement of opinions and responses, with a persuasive form of communication. Finally,
stereotypes are said to be more rigid, to comprise a prescriptive function and to be determined by imperative means of influence.

Within this thesis specific attention is given to attitudes and stereotypes, the latter as embodied by attitudes (see chapter two for review) and framed within SRT. This is in line with Fraser’s (1994) assumption made of ‘widespread beliefs’, in which he argues that the central issue of SRT is that of shared views of the world but that SRT is not the only framework within which widespread beliefs can be studied (other frameworks are, e.g. attitudes, public opinion and ideologies) and that social representations can be merely conceived as sets of attitudes. To start with, Fraser makes a distinction between social representations and attitudes, viewed as alternative and compatible frameworks for reaching the same goals: a social representation is described as “a structured system of beliefs” (p. 15) and “used to study widely shared within-group similarities in views of the world” (p. 16), whereas an attitude is “seen as more limited, more discrete, more narrowly focused” (p. 15) to “measure within-group differences” (p. 16). Fraser further suggests that as a way of studying social representations, one should study sets of attitudes which are widely shared (called as ‘social attitudes’). The benefits of fusing the two will be to “increas[e] the chances of understanding the social and psychological mechanisms involved in creating, sustaining and transmitting socially significant belief systems” (p. 17) and it is proposed to do so by complementing both quantitative and qualitative methods. In a similar fashion, Echebarria & González (1993) show that attitudes are to some extent explained by previous social representations.

Returning to Moscovici’s work, his essential point is not his original reference to psychoanalysis but to its new social functioning. This was and has remained his only empirical contribution to the study of social representations. Its impact started to take effect in the eighties, when studies on social representations became more common.

The antecedents of SRT can be mainly found in Durkheim’s sociological and anthropological conceptualisation of ‘collective representations’ (as opposed to
individual representation). However, there are two major conceptual differences between them. Collective representations are understood as a type of conscience, imposed on individuals by society on a level with religious activity and myths. On the other hand, social representations are generated by social individuals in the modern and changing society. Durkheim's use of collective representations was mainly referred to the analysis of primitive cultures. As Ibáñez pointed out in 1988, 'collectivity' cannot be confounded with 'social'. The former refers to what is shared by individuals, whereas the latter is related to the significant and functional nature which can be found in particular elements. In addition, collective representations imply a reproduction of social elements. Conversely, the notion of representation within the social representations theory is understood as a production and an elaboration with a social nature, with no need to be externally imposed to individuals (Elejabarrieta, 1991).

Social representations are characterised by having both a cognitive component - which pays attention to the subjective side - and a social component, since the way cognitive processes operate is determined by the social conditions in which a social representation is elaborated and transmitted (Moscovici, 1988).

Social representations are understood to be shared by all members of a particular social group and it is this sharing which contributes to group formation. SRT posits that they allow group members to organise their knowledge about reality, through the constant integration of information within an intelligible cognitive structure. They facilitate the location of the ingroup and the outgroups in social reality, and in so doing they define people's identity and contribute to reinforcing the specificity of groups. Additionally, they are also guides for action because they contribute to the definition of specific situations and direct the pertinent behaviour and practices. This will be exemplified within this thesis.

At the same time, social representations can reflect an existing group identity or even create an alternative identity for the group. According to Breakwell (1993), there are
three ways in which social identity might influence processes of social representations and therefore shape their development; i.e. (i) exposure; (ii) acceptance and, (iii) use. Thus, group membership would affect exposure to specific aspects and the target of a social representation; acceptance or rejection of the social representation and finally the extent to which the social representation is used. The latter would include frequency with which the social representation is communicated to others and addressed, i.e. used as a source in decision-making, assimilating/accommodating new information and evaluating a particular situation (Breakwell, 1993).

In conclusion, as Breakwell (1993) notes, there is a dialectical relationship between social identity and social representations. However, directional effects between the intersection of the two have not been addressed in this thesis, since it is expected that they operate in both directions. Any further investigation would require alternative methodologies to those adopted here.

When referring to power within SRT, ideology has been conceptualised as "the means by which relations of power, control and dominance are maintained and preserved within any society" (Augoustinos, 1998, p. 159). This author argues for the use of social representations theory within the context of the following: "The study of ideological representations needs to be contextualized within a framework which sees the individual as being in a dialectical relationship with society, both as a product of society and an active agent who can effect change in society" (p. 169).

The structure of social representations includes both content and processes. Content refers to opinions, activities, evaluations, which underlies the social meaning of the objects, people or events. The content is characterised by three dimensions: (i) information; (ii) the field of representation, and (iii) attitudes (Elejabarrieta, 1991). The information dimension accounts for the amount, level and quality of knowledge an individual has on the social object being represented. The field of representation refers to specific elements that serve to contextualise the object, e.g. time and space. Finally attitudes, which precede the above, form the 'evaluative orientation', and
operate even under conditions of diminished information or unstructured imaging. All three dimensions allow the detection of characteristics such as structure and evaluative tendency, and further offer the possibility of analysing social groups according to these characteristics (Elejbarrieta, 1991).

The processes of social representations are referred to as the generation and transformation of what is unfamiliar into familiar, what is strange into conventional, and to the dynamics articulating the individual with the object. One of the principal assumptions of SRT is that content and processes are interconnected.

Furthermore, the complementary processes of 'objectification' and 'anchoring' are fundamental in SRT. They are the means by which we understand the generation and transformation of social representations and their relationship with behaviour. They provide the characteristic dynamism of social representations. The process of objectification is the mechanism by which abstract objects (e.g. love, friendship, education) are made concrete, and in terms of SRT it involves making something unfamiliar familiar. Examples of objectification within SRT literature can be found in the context of the phenomena of AIDS [see Markova & Wilkie, (1987) for a review]. On the other hand, anchoring is the means by which something novel becomes integrated into existing ways of thinking. In Moscovici's (1984) words, “to anchor is to classify and to name something” (p. 30). Markova & Wilkie (1987) have suggested that essentially, it is equivalent to the process of assimilation in the sense that anchoring is an active process concerned with the modification of existing cognitive structures. At the same time, anchoring embeds new representations in pre-existing ones, integrating social reality.

Within SRT there are two distinct approaches to the structure of social representations, i.e. 'structural' versus 'dimensional'. They are mutually exclusive of each other. The 'structural' approach proposes that social representations are organised around a coherent collection of characteristics in two systems, a 'central core' and 'peripheral' system (e.g. Abric, 1984). Central elements would be decisive for the structuring of a
representation and peripheral ones would serve to adapt a representation to different contexts, modifying the social representation according to the situation. This approach has tended to use experimental and laboratory-based research (e.g. Flament, 1994; Moliner, 1995), but by so doing has contributed to minimise the influence of temporal and situational factors.

The 'dimensional' approach emphasises dimensions, facilitating the examination of the individual or group position in relation to the field of social representation (e.g. Di Giacomo, 1980; Doise, Clémence & Lorenzi-Cioldi, 1993):

"There are therefore at least two kinds of generality which must be taken into account in the study of social representations. First, there are indications of a certain generality in the content of the representations themselves, and second there are postulated general mechanisms of an individual, inter-individual or positional nature which can account for transformations in these general contents. The study of social representations thus spans many different levels of analysis and benefits from their articulation." (Doise, 1984, p. 257).

The dimensional approach has also used experimental research but with the difference that it has included field-based studies, in which methods such as factor analysis, MDS, cluster analysis and correspondence analysis were used.

Thus, on the basis of the current research, the dimensional approach seems more appropriate to this research due to the fact that through the variety of methods of analysis it includes, it highlights the existence of dimensions rather than dual systems (as proposed by the structural approach). Furthermore, the dimensional approach has proved to incorporate one of the fundamental attributes of social representations: dynamism; with a preference to let the theory evolve in relation to empirical studies, which the structural approach does not.

When reviewing the literature on social representations and collective action, the need to embed the economic theory of rational choice in a societal context has been underlined. For that, direct reference has been made on the contribution of the model of social representations (Valencia & Elejabarrieta, 1994). In the authors' view of
social representations both as rationalisations of previous social practices and transpositions of previous values and ideologies shared by individuals and groups, they stressed that the theory of social representations would enable consideration of the interdependence between decisions taken by different individuals - accounting for 'how' and 'why' - and the study of the relationships between the macro and micro processes taking part in rational choice. As was explained in chapter three social psychological theories (here social representations) still incorporate other traditions based on rational choice ("rational citizen's decision calculus").

To date, there is very little evidence of the study of social representations and collective action. To start with, Bhavnani (1991) explored the ways in which young working-class people discussed issues in the political domain within the context of unemployment in the eighties. Although her work has been considered to be descriptive rather than analytical (Sapiro, 1993), it is remarkable in that it provides a first attempt to investigate the political domain by using a social representations framework.

Her study considered the theory of social representations under a clear theoretical and practical feminist influence, using a critical notion of ideology: "ideology is understood as the means by which meanings serve to regulate, and can also serve to contest relations of domination and subordination" (p. 68). She acknowledged them as "discursive configurations" by taking into account the power relations between individuals in the context of institutional systems. For this she suggests that the notion of 'representations' implied an overly static and specific formulation when referring to the way in which arguments of political issues were organised. Instead she proposes the use of the term 'figuration'. Conversely, it was indicated that the themes appearing in her research were flexible and mobile. However, her claims and criticisms of the theory were merely based on language differences, hence it should not be confused with the actual characterisation of the social representations theory, which is particularly noted for its dynamism.
Bhavnani used qualitative methodology, in particular the ethnographic approach (open-ended interviews and group discussions). Following a set of discussions on democracy and voting, the theme of ‘disenfranchisement’ appeared as the configurative element which included beliefs that (i) politics is boring; (ii) politics is difficult to understand; and (iii) there is no point in voting. Those elements were linked to the fact participants showed lack of political efficacy. But the essential point here is that it was found that political cynicism was not necessarily an indication of the presented apathy amongst the participants. Thus, this research implicitly showed other explanations should be investigated for accounts of apathy and lack of participation in the political system.

Catellani & Quadrio (1991) also explored the representation of politics. First they studied its semantic field and then attention was given to the features of the concept of “politics”. An initial study focused on the representational field of politics, in which the diversity of contents and their organisation in meaning structures was emphasised. Participants in the study, by giving spontaneous meaning to the term ‘politics’ showed a tendency to set ‘politics’ (understood by individuals as definitions of the ideal) against the ‘politician’ (as definitions of the real). Following this, a second study aimed to determine how these two concepts are perceived and to establish how the features that characterised them are organised hierarchically. Individuals were asked to evaluate a series of definitions on ‘politics’ and a series on attributes of the ‘politician’ identified in the previous study using a Likert-type scale. Participants were grouped according to their political involvement, i.e. constituted by politicians, ordinary party militants, individuals not involved in politics but interested in political problems and others not politically involved and declaring themselves as indifferent to politics. Active militancy was shown to be a socio-cultural variable influencing the representation of politics. For instance, although power appeared to be a central content category in the definition of politics in all the groups, it took different meanings according to which contents the different groups believed were connected to it. While politicians admitted the functionality of power as a means of achieving political ends, the militants’ attitudes presented some degree of ambivalence and those...
individuals not involved in politics only saw politics as a tool for the personal gain of politicians.

Still at an exploratory level, Di Giacomo's (1980) research took into account an analysis of the social representations within a students' protest movement which created a committee to fight against the Belgian government's decision to increase the university fees. However, after an initial success, the movement failed to bring about action. A free association method within a student sample was used, which included associations evoked by the committee (e.g. "extreme left"; "workers") and students' representation of themselves (e.g. "students"; "executives"). An evaluative component of social representations was observed. These were mainly organised on the basis of belonging or not belonging to a political world, in which the students placed themselves in a non-political one. They refused cooperation with the committee because they defined it and its culture as distant and incompatible with themselves. Students perceived the committee as a different cultural group. That is to say, the structure of social representations would be explaining the lack of success of the protest movement in terms of intergroup differentiation. Di Giacomo's work, therefore, provides evidence of the need to increase our knowledge of social representations and collective action. Moreover, he points out that the concept of social representations should be linked and studied to the concept of social identity.

Vala (1990) conducted a study on social representations of power within a democratic context in a Portuguese sample of ages comprised between 18 and 70 years-old with the use of a structured questionnaire. Four types of social representations were identified, i.e. 'meritocratic individualism'; 'egalitarianism'; 'fatalism'; and 'social conflict and collectivism'. In brief, 'meritocratic individualism' corresponds to the belief that individual control is possible over power and social order; 'egalitarianism' referred to positive attitudes towards democracy and loyalty towards institutional power (which would correspond to the social belief of political trust); 'fatalism' as the belief that individuals do not have any control over power; and 'social conflict and collectivism' corresponds to the belief that societal power originates from dominance.
relations and that individuals are capable to control this power by engaging in collective action. More specifically, Echebarría & González (1993) focused on people’s social representations of power, democracy and the electoral process and tested the influence of these representations on voting behaviour. Social representations appear to be justifications or rationalisations of previous social practices (in their study they were voting in a political election) and they are also regarded as simplifications of certain ideological discourses different groups of people have, all guiding behavioural intention.

Finally, identity and social representations of politics were examined using data from the ESRC 16-19 longitudinal study on identity development and economic and political socialisation (Breakwell, 1992a). Results highlight that the social representations of the political system held by the young people are related to their political involvement. Political party allegiance was taken into account and it appeared that those who present some preference for a specific political party, are more likely to represent the political system mainly as democratic. On the other hand, those who show a much more determine political party preference, are more likely to coherently reproduce the patterns of policy-related social representations dividing left from right tradition in the British political system. Hence, coherence is provided by membership of the respective political party.

Thus, most of the studies of collective action and social representations have addressed democratic political participation - mainly about the activity of voting - by using both quantitative and qualitative methodological approaches and focus on aspects of diverse nature, e.g. power; ideology; intentional behaviour (Fife-Schaw & Breakwell, 1990; Vala, 1990; Bhavnani, 1991; Catellani & Quadrio, 1991; Echebarría & González, 1993). This thesis aims to cover a range of activities not uniquely set within a political dimension and primarily aimed in predicting intention. It was intended to do so by adopting a multi-methodological approach.
In sum, the premises presented below with regards to SRT were taken into account in this thesis:

- Social representations are a particular type of everyday knowledge by which people interpret their world and make it meaningful. They are socially elaborated; in other words, its origin remains in the activity carried out by social groups and those individuals constituting them.

- Their homogeneity and distribution within the groups being involved is broad. They are constituted domains of knowledge with functional consensus and their main domains are referred to ‘scientific divulgation of theory’ and ‘scientific knowledge’; ‘cultural imagination’ and ‘social realities and events’. Within this thesis, older people are considered in terms of a content based social representational approach. Social representations of older people originate from what is called ‘cultural imagination’, which creates a reality for objects set in the social world. It relates to objects with a long history, such as sexual roles, the woman, the human body or anomalies of the human existence, e.g. illness, insanity or incapacity. These representations allow specific social interactions that not only recreate the same objects, but also define the actors as supplementary parts of the objects. Thus the social subjects develop the sense of belonging to specific cultures and communities.

- Social representations are defined by both content and processes, intertwined with each other. Content provides the social meaning of the objects, people or events (e.g. attitudes, context) and processes include ‘anchoring’ and ‘objectification’, which are the means by which the generation and transformation of social representations and their relationship with behaviour is understood.

- The approach adopted within this research with reference to the structure of social representations is dimensional; which takes into account temporal and situational factors. This approach allows the theory to evolve in relation to empirical studies,
which -likewise identity processes - enhances the nature of social representations as being dynamic.

- Identity processes will contribute to determine which social representations an individual adopts (through influencing exposure, acceptance and use of social representations) but in parallel social representations will contribute to the definition of identity (both its content and evaluation).

The last aspect above introduces the next section, in which the theoretical integration of IPT and SRT is suggested for the study of collective action among older people within this thesis.

4.6 The study of collective action by integrating identity and social representations

The theoretical framework of the present research, in order to understand collective action in older people, derives from an integration of the principle insights provided by Identity Process Theory (Breakwell, 1986, 1988, 1992a, 1993) and the Social Representations Theory (Moscovici, 1961, 1984, 1988). The two approaches share some similarities. In particular, (i) both IPT and SRT do not assume a distinction between the level of the individual and society; (ii) both theories make the processes of accommodation and assimilation explicit (in the form of anchoring in SRT); (iii) both theories are concerned with temporality; by emphasising factors that influence change in identity (IPT) or social knowledge (SRT); and also include an affective component in the notion of coping with a threat to identity (IPT) or in the process of familiarisation (SRT).

Within IPT, a series of studies illustrate that individuals in the same social category will accept and use a specific social representation to differing degrees according to its potential impact upon their identity. For instance, Bonaiuto et al. (1996) show individuals will reject social representations of their local community as being
polluted - despite evidence showing that it is indeed polluted - if attachment to that place constitutes an important aspect of their personal sense of distinctiveness. On the other hand, it has also been shown how social representations are equally salient in identity development. As an example, Rutland (1996) shows the affect of social representations on the development of national identity in British children; the older children generate social representations which enable the development of a positive national identity, whereas younger children do not show a strong national identity due to their specific social representations. However, as suggested in a study on innovation (Breakwell, Lyons, Purkhardt, Rutland, Sani & Twigger-Ross (1996), it needs to be emphasised that identity processes affect the individual’s willingness to accept and use social representations but at the same time social representations will dictate or partially determine which aspects of identity are relevant to any particular innovation. However, this is not tested in this thesis.

One of the concerns of this thesis is the relation between social representations and action. Within the context of older people, social representations and identity processes may have an impact on whether old people participate in collective action and on the type of action they are likely to adopt. However, it is important to take into consideration nested identifications and their salience for older people, together with other relevant belief systems such as political participation interest and ideologies.

Within this thesis, the construct of ‘subjective barriers’ incorporates elements addressed by both IPT and SRT. Previous research has incorporated the concept of barriers in the study of collective action. This is presented in the next section, and the way barriers are conceptualised within this research will follow.

4.6.1 Barriers in previous research

Previous literature on collective action has implicitly shown that there are barriers at the cost of the individual/group level. A selection of research studies that have in some way considered the term ‘barriers’ are presented below. Note however that here the concept has been used differently.
Ajzen & Madden’s (1986) theory of planned behaviour states that pure intention is not sufficient and that many factors can interfere with control over intended behaviour. They distinguish between factors which are internal and external to the individual. Internal factors include knowledge, skills and abilities (can possibly be overcome) and emotions and compulsions (less likely to be overcome). External factors include opportunity, and the dependence of the behaviour on the co-operation of other people (in both more possibility to be overcome) and other’s people influence. Although these factors represent obstacles to behaviour and are therefore a form of barrier, the model itself does not relate directly to the collective action framework.

The literature on barriers in relation to collective action is scarce. The work by two social psychological approaches needs to be mentioned, i.e. the motivational model (Klandermans, 1984) and the group identity framework (Kelly & Breinlinger, 1996).

4.6.1.1 Barriers in the motivational model

As was discussed in the previous chapter, this model’s theoretical definition of collective action states that the willingness to take action is a function of collective, social and reward motives (Klandermans, 1984, 1997; Klandermans & Oegema, 1987). Indeed the last step towards participation is the ‘removal of barriers to participation’. The previous ones are (i) becoming part of the mobilisation potential, (ii) becoming the target of mobilisation attempts and (iii) becoming motivated to participate. It is suggested that motivation interacts with barriers in order to bring about participation, consequently the more motivated people are, the higher the barriers they will overcome.

On the basis of the aforementioned assumptions, two strategies are identified for the development of a social movement: maintaining or increasing motivation and/or removing barriers. According to the authors, barriers are expected to be removed if both knowledge and resources are available to individuals. Three main problems arise from this:
1. The authors only consider removal of barriers by motivated people. They do not take into account the fact that the lack of motivation may itself be a barrier.

2. Their attempts to expand the resource mobilisation theory, where the pre-requisite for engaging in collective action is the availability of resources and opportunities, appears to establish limitations for explaining the removal of barriers and its nature. Barriers are uniquely understood in terms of the resources available.

3. As a consequence of the above assumption, the authors seem to be unaware of the possible existence of multiple stages between the willingness to participate, and barriers to participation, during which other processes may be operating.

Finally, there are two additional considerations to be made. In their study of campaigning against nuclear armament (Klandermans & Oegema, 1987) the sample questioned about barriers is only constituted by those individuals who did not engage in collective action but who have previously showed their intention to participate. However, the sample does not include individuals who engaged in collective action yet who still may experience obstacles to their participation.

Secondly, their study is solely based on one type of action, i.e. demonstrating. Their conclusions may be misleading in that different results may emerge for different actions. Additionally, Oegema & Klandermans' (1994) study focuses on the action of signing a petition, but again, the way in which the barriers are operationalised is in terms of opportunities, which again confirms the authors' close connection to the resource mobilisation theory. To exemplify this, the authors emphasise that levels of action preparedness, friendship networks, weak mobilisation attempts and the presence of barriers appear to be more important than the free loading logic. This thesis aims to address all of these limitations.
4.6.1.2 Barriers in the Group Identity framework

Kelly & Breinlinger (1996) studied non-activism in both Trade Union and gender contexts. In the former context, an open-ended question was given to members of a Trade Union asking for reasons for non-involvement. In the latter context, the research was more extensive, including interviews with women who were actively involved in formal groups or campaigns and also non-active women answering the same question presented to the Trade Union sample. A final study comprised interviews with activists women asking why they thought other women did not wish to get involved.

In both cases, respondents make reference to the cultural context, claiming that in some instances collective action is an ineffective means of bringing about social change, but that instead, individual action is perceived as more effective. These results are in line with the concept of individualism, which maintains the primacy of the individual and achievement of personal goals over group goals. Further to this, Kelly & Breinlinger (1996) suggest that this may lead people to have a negative view of groups and group membership in general. This implicitly places psychological threat to social identity and makes collective activity less likely.

Furthermore, activists appear to be negatively perceived in both contexts (e.g. as being too aggressive), providing some evidence of the way in which minority behaviour may be psychologised and hence reducing its influence over the majority (e.g. Mugny & Papastamou, 1980). Thus, the authors support the idea that representing minority behaviour as deriving from the psychological characteristics of outgroup members is a very effective way of increasing the psychological cost of accepting minority influence.

Within the gender research, three levels of explanation are offered: (i) individual, (ii) group and (iii) societal level. At the individual level, the following factors are identified: the feeling of not being a 'natural joiner' of groups; lack of confidence, either socially or politically; apathy; perceiving no personal need for the group's
support; no personal experience of discrimination; lack of resources (e.g. lack of time, transport, personal contacts).

At the group level, beliefs about women's groups and feminism are expounded. These include elements such as style and image; gender issues; group membership; group structure/organisation; and group process. Finally, at the societal level, cultural context appear to be associated with beliefs that collective action is ineffective and a feeling of powerlessness. Individual mobility emerges as a way of improving the position of women. In spite of the innovative idea to study collective action from the perspective of non-activism, and despite their work on the concept of barriers, their research remains at the descriptive and exploratory level only.

Other research that has focused on barriers to participation, has tended to be at a purely descriptive level and context oriented. In Lawrence's (1994) research on gender and trade unions, specific obstacles are identified in relation to three types of cost: union-related, work-related and cultural-personal (similar to Wertheimer & Nelson, 1975 in Kelly & Breinlinger, 1996). However, these studies do not pay any attention to the psychological processes possibly operating as barriers.

4.6.2 Barriers in this research

From the above, it seems there are grounds to state that barriers have not only been under-researched, but also the ways barriers have been conceptualised presents some limitations, since they are either (i) previously defined by the researcher; and/or (ii) referred to material barriers, without taking into account subjective barriers in their conceptualisation of barriers (with the exception of the work by Kelly & Breinlinger, 1996). This thesis attempts to address these limitations.

Within this research, perceptions of barriers to engaging in collective action (including subjective barriers in addition to material barriers) will enable the theoretical integration of both IPT and SRT. These are conceptualised as the recipients of both identity and representational aspects, i.e. subjective barriers as including both identity
and representational aspects, all of which (as explained in the above theoretical sections) have a subjective meaning attached to them. Besides, since barriers are conceptually shaped by identity and representational aspects, it is assumed that various levels will be operating, ranging from the intraindividual level to the group/societal level. This would be in line with Hermann’s (1986) suggestions to including the issue of adopting the appropriate unit of analysis when studying collective action, being in favour of moving between levels of analysis during research:

“The problem involves constructing, not only theoretically, but also empirically, the chain of interactions and transactions that links the individual actor to the collectivities of which he is part. This dilemma presents a challenge to those in political psychology. It suggests that no single level of analysis can dominate research; that the emphasis, indeed, needs to be on developing the rules for moving from one level of analysis to another - from the individual to the collectivity, from the collectivity to the individual.” (p. 5).

Moreover, the need to provide predictive theories of behaviour within psychology has already been underlined (Doise, 1986; Breakwell, 1996). In relation to social psychology, the predictive power is bound to increase by incorporating complex relational rules, calling upon constructs which are based on different levels of analysis, i.e. intrapsychic, interpersonal, intergroup and societal levels (Doise, 1986; Breakwell, 1996).

Within the context of collective action among older people, based on theoretical grounds and existing empirical findings reviewed in the previous two chapters, identity is expected to comprise age characteristics (e.g. age as a relevant group membership, in which the individual may identify with ‘older people’; collective efficacy; roles in which age aspects are included, such as grandparenthood; interpersonal relationships with younger generations; physical self-efficacy). However, the fact that age-oriented aspects of identity are specifically addressed within this thesis, does not necessarily imply that age is the most important aspect of older people’s identity when considering whether or not to engage in collective action. Other aspects embodied in the structure of identity not directly related to age are also expected to affect one’s choice for engaging in collective action, such as other properties and roles (e.g. nationality, gender, being ‘activist’, etc.); collective
orientation, collective efficacy and belief systems such as political trust (this latter ones borrowed from previous work, as discussed in chapter three). Besides, a clear example of the temporal dimension of one’s identity can be the influence of previous experience in collective action for motivation to engage in present and/or future collective action. Finally, this research will also take into account processes operating and moulding the content and value dimensions of the structure of identity (e.g. self-efficacy as one possible principle). Moreover, each of these components - each having a value attached to them - can be classified according to different levels, from intraindividual to group levels, none of them functioning in isolation from any other ones. Each of the above aspects are taken into account within this research.

Furthermore, social representations - in particular social representations of older people in the context of this research - are expected to provide meaning to what it is being an older person and specify and re-define both content and value of individuals’ identity. In particular, each of the above mentioned aspects of identity will be influenced by social representations shared by individuals (e.g. including social beliefs of older people’s level of political efficacy, collective efficacy, etc. which might even operate as barriers to engaging in collective action). Thus, this thesis will examine the extent to which perceptions of barriers - also including several aspects of the structure of identity - may differ according to the social representations of older people held by individuals in this research and the extent to which each of the above aspects, encompassed within IPT and SRT, will operate as either facilitators or inhibitors of collective action.

To conclude, the benefits of integrating both theories (Breakwell, 1993) would not only be theoretical, but also methodological. The theoretical integration requires drawing upon a diverse set of empirical approaches; the choice of method of data collection or analysis in a specific study being determined by the theoretical proposition to be tested. As Breakwell (1993) has specified, “integration is not at the level of empirical findings, but at the level of theoretical conclusions” (p. 214).
4.7 Summary

Several aspects of the theoretical and empirical work on identity and social representations described in this chapter are particularly relevant for this thesis. The position adopted is that identity is a dynamic product, understood in terms of formation, maintenance and change across the lifespan and context. This is also applied to the study of the content and dimension of social representations of older people. Besides, in order to predict collective action among older people, the incorporation of the concept of barriers seems to be a suitable way of developing a predictive model of collective action in this research. The way perception of barriers to collective action is conceptualised within this thesis, as embracing both identity and representational aspects, allows us to argue for the theoretical integration of both IPT and SRT, in which several levels need to be taken into account (from individual to group/societal).

With regards to identity, the first is the concept (from IPT) of identity as a structure described by both content and value dimensions, which is regulated through the processes of accommodation/assimilation and evaluation. These processes are guided by four motivational principles, i.e. continuity, self-esteem, distinctiveness, self-efficacy.

The structure of identity includes several elements, some of which have been shown as relevant in SIT and SCT, such as group memberships and roles. However, IPT extends to the explanation of behaviour which is not immediately related to group or category context, and takes into account the temporal dimension. Moreover, age is not viewed as the only definition of identity and other non-age-oriented aspects need to be examined in the study of collective action among older people.

On the other hand, social representations (SRT) are defined by both content and processes; the content providing the social meaning and the processes (anchoring and objectification) being the means by which the generation and transformation of social representations and their relationship with behaviour is understood. In this thesis, the
fact that they define and provide interpretation of both content and value of identity is taken into account but also it is assumed that identity processes affect the individual’s willingness to accept and use social representations. The approach adopted for this is that of the dimensional structure of social representations, which embodies both temporal and situational factors.

4.8 The aims of this research
This research aimed to develop and provide a social psychological predictive model of collective action among older people. By integrating the above social psychological theories within the study of collective action, the aims of the present research were as follows, which were developed across three studies, each of them interconnected with each other, since results derived from each study enabled to further develop the following one:

- To examine which social issues older people are likely to respond to by engaging in collective action.

- To establish the types of collective action older people are likely to engage in.

- To explore how aspects of social representations and identity theories can be barriers or facilitators to participating in collective action.

The first study conducted (chapter five), examined identity in terms of organisation membership, and established the extent and the breadth of political activity in older people. Study two (chapters six, seven and eight) developed the research further by focusing on social issues older people are concerned with; what actions are perceived to be collective action by older people and barriers to action, and study three examined in more detail the relationships between each of these factors (chapters nine, ten and eleven) and in which a predictive model of collective action was presented.
Chapter Five

The study of political participation, group membership and

disability among older people

"A scientist in his laboratory is not a mere technician: he is also a child confronting
natural phenomena that impress him as though they were fairy tales."

Marie Curie (Maria Sklodowska-Curie); (1867-1934).

5.1 Introduction

The present chapter reports on the first study conducted in the presented research. For
this study, specific attention was given to political participation, group membership
and disability. The aims were:

• To establish the extent to which older people engage in different types of political
  participation.

• To establish whether there is a relationship between type of disability and the
  extent to which it can operate as a barrier to political participation.

• To examine whether there is a relationship between political participation and
  group membership.

• To determine if there is any relationship between political participation and the
  following variables: age, sex, marital status, group membership, nature of group
  memberships and multiple group memberships.

^ Part of the content of the study explained in this chapter was presented at the Annual Conference of
the British Society of Gerontology, Bristol, 1997. The presentation was entitled "Older People,
Disability and Political Participation: Breaking the Myth..."
Although participants in this study were contacted through organisations that were not social issue oriented, clearly it was possible, and indeed proved to be the case, that these did belong to such organisations (e.g. political parties, environmental organisations that lobby and aim to have their voice heard and influence political decisions). Thus, participants may as well belong to social issue oriented organisations and, in this way, this would set the context for exploring different types of political participation.

As expounded in chapter two, the study of political participation has always distinguished between different types of political participation, e.g. 'conventional' and 'unconventional' (Marsh, 1974; Barnes et al., 1979); 'democratic' and 'aggressive' (Muller, 1982); 'passive' and 'active' (Olsen, 1982); 'easy forms' and 'difficult forms' (Kelly & Kelly, 1994). Additionally, with relation to older people and political participation, it has been suggested that there is a decrease of non-voting forms of political participation among older people. For instance, Jirovec & Erich (1992) ran a cross-sectional survey among older people who were asked on several political activities in the past twenty-five years and the present and it was found there was a decrease of several activities (both more and less demanding) which included campaign activities, community groups and personalised contacts with political officials when compared with past behaviour.

Besides, existing research on political participation has often been accompanied by group membership (Trela, 1971; Marsh, 1977; Powell & Thorson, 1990; Jerrome, 1992; Jirovec & Erich, 1992; Park, 1995).

With reference to disability, the literature presented below suggests that one needs to be aware of the distinction between 'disability' and difficulties in areas such as mobility and communication, these latter ones stemming from the process of ageing (e.g. Arber & Ginn, 1991; Carabellese, Appollonio, Rozzini, Bianchetti, Frisoni, Frattola & Trabucchi, 1993). Besides, although people live longer and there are signs that the extent of serious 'disability' has fallen among older people, self-reports of
limiting long-term health problems has risen (Grundy, 1996). In addition, Bond (1993) suggests that chronic health problems in later life are characterised by comorbidity, where a combination of diseases are accompanied by physiological decline. Thus this suggests older cohorts of older people are affected by poorer health (Bond, 1993; Grundy 1996). This may restrict the number of roles older people can play, one of which could be political participation (as discussed in relation to dimensions of old age in chapter two).

Although there is little research studying disability and political participation, some reviews in that specific area have paid interest in particular to women: political action has been posited as an alternative to depression in disabled people and as a way for disabled women to attain a sense of competence, control and meaning. Thus, it is suggested that political participation among people presenting some type of disability leads to lack of depression (Saviola, 1981). Another study by Shields, Schriner & Schriner (1998) focused in the activity of voting and found out that both men and women with disabilities appeared to be more likely to vote than non-disabled.

Furthermore, it has been pointed out that disabled people are becoming increasingly engaged in political action in order to complain about the discrimination that they have to face and to demand their rights, which would have an important influence in creating conditions that encourage political participation among disabled individuals (Chappell, 1994; Schur, 1998). Each of the above might support the idea that disability is not necessarily an inevitable barrier towards engaging in political action.

Moreover, a study with older people who had been disabled during their life span, and having struggled to maintain independence throughout their lives, suggests that they had developed a greater consciousness of the problems facing older people (Zarb, 1993) and that may provide important pointers to the future empowerment of older people.
On the other hand, when reviewing the possibility of any relationship between general health and political participation it has been shown that nutritional problems negatively affect political participation (Peterson, 1989). Particular attention has also been paid to gender differences when focusing on health and political participation. Peterson & Somit's (1992b) results suggest that better health directly affects greater political participation among older women, though it has only an indirect effect on older males' political activism. They conclude that healthier women would be more likely to be active in politics. Further consequences would be the progressive number of women getting older and improving their health status, who might increase their involvement and become more politically powerful. Gender differences are explained in terms that among older males, health has a much smaller effect on enhancing level of activism, since health and activism appear to be mediated by political interest. Thus, these results seem to suggest that better health among older people may operate as a facilitator of political participation, although the above reviews on disability and political involvement point out towards disability being a facilitator of political participation.

5.2 Hypotheses

Five main hypotheses were tested:

H1. Older people participate in politics in different ways. People will use more or less demanding ways of political activity/participation.

H2. Political participation is related to age within this post-retirement sample. Older people in the sample will tend to be less politically involved than those younger in the sample for both demanding and less demanding ways of political participation.

H3. Political participation is related to the type of disability. It is expected that some particular physical areas will affect political participation more directly.

H4. Group membership is related to political involvement and disability. Those older participants who belong to at least one group, will tend to use demanding ways of political involvement (Marsh, 1977) and will have a lower chance of presenting more disabilities than those who do not belong to any.
H5. Types of political participation will vary according to the number of groups reported to belong to. It is expected that those belonging to more than one group will tend to present a higher protest potential, which may include both more and less demanding ways of political participation (Marsh, 1977).

5.3 Method

5.3.1 Design of the questionnaire

A questionnaire was designed in order to reach the aims noted above (a copy of the questionnaire is contained in Appendix 2). The first section comprised personal information questions about sex, age and marital status. The second section comprised eight dichotomous questions related to disability based on individuals' abilities to undertake activities of daily living. There were two items for each of the areas of mobility, vision, hearing and communication. They were selected from thirty-eight items measuring 'disability in the household' from the Survey of Disabilities and Health Problems of the Office of Population Censuses and Surveys (OPCS, 1989) and were representative of functional disability (Arber & Ginn, 1991). In order to obtain further information about their health, participants were also asked if they were registered as a disabled person.

The third section of the questionnaire comprised seven dichotomous questions relating to membership of different types of groups (political, environmental, voluntary, retired, hobbies and leisure, religion and other). Each of them provided space for writing the name of the particular group.

The fourth section of the questionnaire was a 5-point Likert scale. It included twelve items on political participation, selected from the orthodox participation scale which comprises seven items (Marsh, 1977) and the remaining were derived from other unconventional types of political participation which had been further suggested by Marsh (1977). For each item, respondents were required to answer how often they
had participated in each activity in the last ten years (Marsh, 1977). Marsh already anticipated criticisms for including temporal measures (e.g. ‘never’, ‘sometimes’, ‘often’) in the sense they will tend to underestimate levels of activity in some individuals (e.g. once a week might be ‘often’ to some people or ‘sometimes’ to others; someone who in a ten-year period had been quite active politically may well have taken a year or two off). Despite these problems, Marsh (1990) acknowledges that such measures have been shown to be fairly robust. He states that “those in the habit of political activities of these kinds say that they are, those that are not generally deny it. People have little reason to misrepresent their customary behaviour in such commonplace matters as these” (p. 10).

Finally respondents were informed about the possibility of holding some discussion groups as a second part of the study and they were asked if they would be willing to participate in one of these. If they agreed, they were asked to provide their name and telephone number.

5.3.2 Distribution of the questionnaire

For the present study twenty-nine contacts were made with several organisations in the Surrey County. Special care was taken when selecting the different organisations, taking into consideration the nature of the organisation in order to have a wide range of participants from different backgrounds.

However, as noted above, only organisations which were not social issue oriented were selected. Their nature was diverse: educational centres; drop-in centres; over sixties clubs; autumn clubs; sports centres, sheltered houses and religious organisations. From these, thirteen agreed to participate in the research (see summary of all of the organisations in this research in Appendix 1). A list including each of the centres, with their correspondent location, nature and number of returned questionnaires is provided in Table 5.1.
By previous appointment with the venue, participants were contacted in the meeting where information was directly provided to them. Questionnaires were individually administered and filled in during the meeting, so that it could be guaranteed that the respondents understood the questions correctly.

Table 5.1: List of centres that participated in the study, nature, location and number of participants that were surveyed in each of them.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Centre</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Nature</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>% of the total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Riverside Centre</td>
<td>Guildford</td>
<td>Drop-in centre</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>5.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stoke and District Horticultural</td>
<td>Guildford</td>
<td>Autumn club</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Red Cross</td>
<td>Send</td>
<td>Over sixties club</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>18.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Place</td>
<td>Guildford</td>
<td>Drop-in centre</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dray Court*</td>
<td>Guildford</td>
<td>Sheltered house (Category 2.5)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Millmead Court*</td>
<td>Guildford</td>
<td>Sheltered house (Category 2)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Martha’s Court*</td>
<td>Chilworth</td>
<td>Sheltered house (Category 2)</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>7.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palmer’s Lodge*</td>
<td>Guildford</td>
<td>Ordinary Council Tenance (1)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guildford Institute</td>
<td>Guildford</td>
<td>Educational centre</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>13.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of the Third Age</td>
<td>Guildford</td>
<td>Educational organisation</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>16.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bowling Greens</td>
<td>Guildford</td>
<td>Leisure club</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Peter’s Church</td>
<td>Guildford</td>
<td>Religion. Meeting point club</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>12.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Salvation Army</td>
<td>Guildford</td>
<td>Religion. The Luncheon club</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total no. of participants</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>277</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The categories corresponding to the above sheltered houses are as it follows:
- Category 1: Ordinary Council Tenance (any age, though Palmer’s Lodge is only for retired people living independently. They have an alarm system).
- Category 2: Sheltered housing with a warden to answer for emergencies (any age and people with some health problems).
- Category 2.5: Sheltered housing with extra care unit (any age and people with some health problems).

Questionnaires were distributed to 449 participants in the above listed 13 venues in the Surrey County. A total number of 277 completed questionnaires were returned directly on the same day of each meeting representing a total response rate of 61.7%. The highest response rate was from the Over Sixties Club at ‘The Red Cross’ (92.7%), followed by those centres related to education (‘University of the Third Age’, 65.7%; ‘The Guildford Institute’, 56.9%) and religion (‘St. Peter’s Church’, 81.4%; ‘The Salvation Army’, 65%). The lowest responses rates were from the day centres/drop-in centres (‘Stoke and District Horticultural’, 20%; ‘Riverside Centre’, 32%, ‘North Place’, 32%) and from a leisure club (‘Bowling Greens’, 27.5%). Such differences in response rate may be explained by the fact that in organisations with a high response
rate there was some pre-determined time available for the researcher to explain the research and help each respondent to fill in the questionnaire. Conversely, in those organisations with the lowest response rates the questionnaire sessions were not structured, as the researcher approached each member individually while they were having short breaks from their activities and it was felt that the session was interfering with the members' activities (e.g. socialising with members of the group). Besides, it was observed that most of the people contacted from day centres and drop-in centres had greater difficulty filling in the questionnaire than the rest of the respondents and this could explain why it was harder to get more responses among those type of organisations.

At the three sheltered houses the situation was different, as the warden of each centre had previously asked the residents if they wanted to participate in the study and at the meeting all of them completed the questionnaire.

### 5.3.3 Participants

The sample contained 211 females (76% of the total) and 65 males (24% of the total), with 1 missing case. Ages ranged from 59 to 92, with a mean of 73.5 years, and most participants were either married (44%) or widows/widowers (45%). The rest were either single (5%), divorced (5%), or separated (4%). When considering sex and marital status, many of the women appeared to be widows (54%), whereas most of the men were married (75%).

As pointed out in chapter two, the older population is becoming older and progressively female dominated. Looking at the 1991 Surrey Census (OPCS, 1993a), it appears that most of the people aged over 60 are women, with 92,093 men (42%) and 125,511 women (58%). A similar proportion appears in the total of people aged over 60 in Great Britain as a whole (1991 Census in OPCS, 1993b), with 4,895,036 men (42%) and 6,739,951 women (58%), which is reflected in the present sample.
When comparing the sample with the official source of the Surrey County Census (OPCS, 1993a), similar percentages emerged when taking into account sex and marital status in those who are aged 60 years old and over. Most of people over 60 are married, though the percentage is higher in males [i.e. 78% of men are married compared to 47% of women in the Surrey County Census (OPCS, 1993a)]. The high percentage of married men also appeared in the present sample (75%), though a lower percentage of women were married (35%) compared to the general population. As shown in the sample when focusing on widowhood, there appeared to be a much higher proportion of widows than widowers (14% of the men were widowed, whereas 43% of the women were in this category according to the 1991 Surrey Census (OPCS, 1993a); and in the present study 17% of the men were widowed, whereas 54% of the women were widows). Finally, a similar proportion of men and women over 60 appear to be single [6% of men and 9% of women according to the Surrey County Census (OPCS, 1993a)] and divorces represent the lowest percentage [3% in men and 4% in women according to the Surrey County Census (OPCS, 1993a)]. The low percentage of single and divorced people of both sexes was also apparent in the present study (5% of men and 6% of women were single; and 3% of men and 5% of women were divorced).

These relationships between the sample and the population of older people in Surrey were also applicable in the remaining studies of this research.

5.4 Results

5.4.1 Types of political participation

A factor analysis (principal components method; direct oblimin rotation) was conducted on the twelve items measuring political participation. This revealed two factors, i.e. active participation (which requires more effort and involvement) and passive participation (which requires less effort), which confirmed H1. These factors are displayed in Table 5.2.
According to the underlying meaning of the two factors, two scales were constructed by adding those items loading on the 'passive' items and those on the 'active' items. For 'active' participation the range scores were between 6 and 30 (mean 'active' participation= 7.35) and for 'passive' participation scores ranged between 6 and 28 (mean 'passive' participation= 14.34). Thus, most of the respondents had never participated in any kind of 'active' participation (60.6%) and although 'passive' participation was still low among the respondents, only 7% of them had never engaged in any form of 'passive' participation. Most of the participants therefore, presented low political involvement.

Table 5.2: Factor analysis of participation items.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEM</th>
<th>Factor 1 More 'passive' forms of activity</th>
<th>Factor 2 More 'active' forms of activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discussing politics with friends</td>
<td>.80</td>
<td>.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signing petitions</td>
<td>.59</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussing politics with your family</td>
<td>.80</td>
<td>.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contacting public officials or politicians</td>
<td>.54</td>
<td>.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watching party political broadcasts</td>
<td>.67</td>
<td>.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choosing to read about politics in the papers</td>
<td>.72</td>
<td>.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taking part in a boycott</td>
<td></td>
<td>.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trying to persuade friends to vote the same way as yourself</td>
<td></td>
<td>.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attending a political meeting or rally or march or demonstration</td>
<td></td>
<td>.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Picketing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helping to organise any public meeting or event</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Handing out political, union, or campaign leaflets</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Eigenvalue 4.64 1.75 Percent of Variance 38.7 14.6 Alpha reliability coefficient .81 .76

Table 5.3: Basic descriptives on the two factors on political participation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Intercorrelation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>'Passive' (F1)</td>
<td>14.34</td>
<td>4.76</td>
<td>.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'Active' (F2)</td>
<td>7.35</td>
<td>2.57</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.4.2 Disability

There were eight items designed to assess the nature and degree of participants' disability. Previous literature has suggested that there are two important dimensions of disability that can particularly affect older people. These are communication (Carabellese et al., 1993) and mobility (Arber & Ginn, 1991). On the basis of this, the two mobility items and the four communication items were added in order to construct an index of both of these measures. Mean scores for both measures were computed and used in the analysis for ease of comparability. Although the two vision items represent a dimension of sensory impairment similar to the hearing items, they are independently associated with quality of life measures (Carabellese et al., 1993). The two ‘vision’ items were therefore left separate in the following analysis.

Table 5.4: Basic descriptives on the indices of understanding/communication and mobility and the ‘vision’ items.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Understanding/Communication</td>
<td>.84</td>
<td>1.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobility</td>
<td>.40</td>
<td>.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 3*</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 4*</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>.38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Items which were analysed as independent. They correspond to ‘vision’: Item 3: “recognising a friend across the road, even if glasses or contact lenses are worn” (long distance vision); and Item 4: “reading ordinary newspaper print, even if glasses or contact lenses are worn” (short distance vision).

Regarding both scores on each of the areas of mobility and communication and in the vision items and registered disability, it appeared that the sample was mostly constituted of people who presented no disability (i.e. 74% presented no disability in the mobility area; 51% did not present any disability in the communication area, though 27% presented disability in one item of the communication area; 90% did not present any disability in “recognise a friend across the road, even if glasses or contact lenses are worn” (long distance vision) and 82% did not present any disability in “read ordinary newspaper print, even if glasses or contact lenses are worn” (short distance vision). In terms of registered disability, the majority of the participants reported that they were not registered as such (91%). These types of disability were unevenly spread across types of residence, i.e. 22% of those living in sheltered housing were registered as disabled, whereas only 8% of those not living in this environment were similarly disabled.
5.4.2.1 Disability and political participation

A series of correlations revealed significant and negative relationships between the area of mobility and both scales of active ($r=-.18$, $n=239$, $p<.01$) and passive ($r=-.20$, $n=236$, $p<.01$) participation. Thus, the more able the respondents were in terms of mobility, the more likely they were to use both active and passive ways of participation.

Furthermore, passive participation appeared to be significantly and negatively related to communication ($r=-.22$, $n=233$, $p<.001$). Table 5.5 shows the significant correlations between 'active' and 'passive' participation and communication and mobility areas of disability.

Table 5.5: Correlation Coefficients of communication, mobility and 'active' and 'passive' variables.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Communication</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>.17**</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>-.22***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(251)</td>
<td>(235)</td>
<td>(233)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Mobility</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-.18**</td>
<td>.20**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(239)</td>
<td>(236)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. 'Active' Participation</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td>.57***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(233)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. 'Passive' Participation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

In order to know whether there was a significant relationship between both scales of political participation and the 'vision' items, a correlation was carried out. A significant and negative relationship was shown between active participation and long distance vision ($r=-.12$, $n=242$, $p<.05$). Finally, passive participation appeared to be significantly and negatively related to short distance vision ($r=-.16$, $n=241$, $p<.05$). Thus, those participants presenting a low disability in the long distance vision area were more likely to be involved in active ways of political participation, and those presenting a low disability in the short distance vision area were more likely to be involved in passive participation. Thus, as expected (H3), these results showed older people using less demanding (i.e. 'passive') ways of political participation will have some particular areas affected (i.e. 'communication' and 'short distance vision').
compared to those using more demanding ways - 'active' - (i.e. 'long distance vision'). Despite this, it was shown that mobility was associated with both 'passive' and 'active' political participation.

However, the relationships noted above between the disability measures and the measures of participation need to be cautiously interpreted, as although significant, the correlations were relatively low. This confirms the importance of considering other factors when attempting to account for collective action.

5.4.3 Group membership

A section of the questionnaire asked respondents about which of the following groups they belonged to: (i) political parties; (ii) environment; (iii) voluntary; (iv) retirement; (v) leisure; (vi) religion and (vii) other groups. Most of the participants reported they belonged to at least some of these groups (60.2%). Those groups which were least frequently mentioned were those related to the environment (5.9%), followed by the political parties (22.8%) and voluntary groups (25.7%). Though still not in high percentages, the most frequently mentioned groups were related to leisure (41.6%), followed by religion (32.8%) and retirement groups (32.3%).

Regarding the participants who said they belonged to one or more groups, there are some particular groups which were more frequently mentioned than others. When considering political parties, the Conservative party appeared to be the first ranked political party (44.4%); followed by the Labour party (29.6%) and the Liberal Democrats (25.9%). The environmental group mentioned most frequently as a first option was Greenpeace (50%), followed by Friends of the Earth (21.4%).

When asking about religion or Church groups, the most frequently mentioned was The Salvation Army in 17.8% of the cases; followed by the Meeting points (15.1%). In these cases, they appear to have been mentioned as a consequence of being two of the venues for the research.
Those leisure groups which were mentioned most frequently were The University of the Third Age (14.2%); bowling (1.4%) and bridge (9.4%). When referring to ‘other’ types of groups, a wide range of groups were mentioned. Thirteen per cent of cases claimed they belonged to a Meeting point; but the rest of the participants listed a very wide range of groups, such as sports, travelling, education, housing, day centres, professional retired persons associations, family and theatre.

According to groups associated with the retired people, the University of the Third Age was the one chosen as a first option by 52% of the cases; followed by various Over Sixties Clubs (13%). The rest of the groups which were mentioned covered a wide range.

Finally, 29.2% of the respondents mentioned the Women’s Institute when asked about voluntary groups, followed by the Salvation Army (1.8%); the Red Cross (7.7%) and Friends of the Royal Surrey Hospital (7.7%).

In order to measure level of activity in terms of group membership, a total activity score from each of the seven questions was created for each respondent. Those participants not belonging to any group were distinguished from those belonging to at least one group.

When considering group membership and both scales of political activity, a t-test for independent samples revealed significant differences between the two groups on political participation. Those belonging to at least one group scored higher on both active and passive political participation, compared with those who did not belong to any group (active: $t=-4.37$, $df=205$, $p<.001$; passive: $t=-4.60$, $df=237$, $p<.001$).

With regard to group membership and disability, there were significant differences between the two groups on mobility. Those participants who showed a higher disability in the mobility area did not belong to any group, whereas those who presented a lower disability in this area belonged to at least one group ($t=3.32$, $df=175$, $p<.001$).
Finally, there was no difference between the two groups in relation to the degree of
disability in communication ($t=1.48$, df=250, ns). Similarly, no association was found
between the items related to ‘vision’ and group membership: for long distance vision
($\chi^2=4.44$, df=1, ns) and for short distance vision ($\chi^2=2.56$, df=1, ns).

Therefore, mobility was the only dimension of disability strongly associated with both
types of political activity and group membership. And contrary to H4, it was shown
that older people who belong to at least one group can be involved in either ‘active’ or
‘passive’ political participation. The second part of the hypothesis was partly
confirmed, since it was shown there were significant differences between the two
groups only on mobility.

Finally, there were no age differences between the two groups ($t=1.20$, df=261, ns).

The table below shows details for each of the t-tests performed in relation to group
membership.

Table 5.6: Results of independent samples t-test between group membership and types of political
participation (‘active’ and ‘passive’); disability (mobility and communication); and age.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Belong at least to a group</th>
<th>Not belonging to any group</th>
<th>T-test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Std. Dev.</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Active’ Part.</td>
<td>7.88</td>
<td>3.08</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Passive Part.’</td>
<td>15.45</td>
<td>4.71</td>
<td>144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobility</td>
<td>.26</td>
<td>.61</td>
<td>155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>.77</td>
<td>1.09</td>
<td>155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>72.97</td>
<td>7.29</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.4.3.1 Nature of group membership

Most of the types of group membership (political party, leisure, environment,
voluntary and social issue) had significant effects with regard to both types of political
participation: those who belonged to any of the above groups scored higher on both
active and passive political participation than those who did not belong to any (political party: \( t = -3.85, df=64, p<.001 \) in ‘active’ and \( t = -3.41, df=238, p<.001 \) in ‘passive’; leisure: \( t = -3.21, df=224, p<.01 \) in ‘active’ and \( t = -5.09, df=234, p<.001 \) in ‘passive’; environment: \( t = -2.70, df=16, p<.05 \) in ‘active’ and \( t = -3.23, df=240, p<.001 \) in ‘passive’; voluntary: \( t = -2.50, df=76, p<.01 \) in ‘active’ and \( t = -2.60, df=237, p<.01 \) in ‘passive’).

Besides these groups, membership of an association concerned with the retired people only had a significant positive effect on passive participation (\( t = -3.73; df=235; p<.001 \)) and religion membership did not significantly affect either type of political participation.

A variable was created in order to consider the possible groups mentioned by the participants that are social issue oriented. Most of the participants did not belong to that type of group (92%). However, those individuals who did belong to social issue groups scored significantly higher on active and passive participation than those who did not (\( t = -3.95; df=20; p<.01 \) in active and \( t = -4.86; df=242; p<.001 \) in passive).

Descriptive statistics of each group on both types of political participation are presented in the tables below.

Table 5.7: Results of independent samples t-test between nature of group membership and ‘active’ political participation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Membership</th>
<th>Non-membership</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Political party</td>
<td>8.78</td>
<td>6.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leisure</td>
<td>7.92</td>
<td>6.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environment*</td>
<td>9.63</td>
<td>7.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voluntary</td>
<td>8.24</td>
<td>7.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social issue*</td>
<td>10.15</td>
<td>7.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retirement</td>
<td>7.83</td>
<td>7.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion</td>
<td>7.53</td>
<td>7.28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\*results above cannot be considered to be meaningful, since \( n \) between the two groups (membership, non-membership) are unequally distributed.
Table 5.8: Results of independent samples t-test between nature of group membership and 'passive' political participation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Membership</th>
<th>Non-membership</th>
<th>T-test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Std. Dev.</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political party</td>
<td>16.35</td>
<td>5.34</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leisure</td>
<td>15.92</td>
<td>4.21</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environment*</td>
<td>18.85</td>
<td>5.24</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voluntary</td>
<td>15.58</td>
<td>4.95</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social issue*</td>
<td>18.95</td>
<td>4.38</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retirement</td>
<td>15.91</td>
<td>4.32</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion</td>
<td>14.49</td>
<td>4.93</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*results cannot be considered to be meaningful, since n between the two groups (membership, non-membership) are unequally distributed.

Therefore, three types of effect appeared when considering the nature of the groups and type of political participation:

(i) those individuals who belonged to political parties, leisure, and voluntary groups scored higher on both types of political participation than those who did not.
(ii) those individuals who belonged to retirement groups were more likely to be involved in passive political activity than those who did not.
(iii) those individuals who belonged to religious groups did not present a significant effect on either type of political participation.

5.4.3.2 Multiple group membership

When comparing the number of groups respondents claimed to belong to, most only mentioned one, as the following demonstrates: in environment 50% mentioned one group and 37.6% more than one; in religion 7.8% mentioned one and 11.2% more than one; in retirement it is the highest, with 81.4% mentioning one and 8.1% more than one; in voluntary 62.3% mentioned one and 31.8% more than one; in ‘other’ 72.5% mentioned one and 27.4% more than one; in leisure 62.2% mentioned one and 33.3% more than one.
Chapter Five

A variable was created, i.e. 'multiple membership', which summed all of the six variables reporting about number of groups mentioned for each area (i.e. environment, voluntary, retirement, leisure; religion and others). A correlation indicated there was a highly significant and positive relationship between 'multiple membership' and both scales of political participation ('active': $r = .39$, $n = 246$, $p < .001$; and 'passive': $r = .35$, $n = 244$, $p < .001$), which suggests that the more groups one belongs to, the greater the amount of 'active' and 'passive' participation. These results provided support for H5.

However, care must be taken in interpreting these results, as there are two considerations to keep in mind: one could be involved in different types of participation in the same group (i.e. both 'active' and 'passive'), and also that the groups to which participants belonged varied substantially in nature.

In order to account for disability, a correlation was conducted between the multiple group membership variable and mobility and communication indices. Results indicated a negative and significant relationship between 'multiple membership' and both disability indices ('mobility': $r = -.33$, $n = 263$, $p < .001$ and 'communication': $r = -.17$, $n = 258$, $p < .01$). For the 'vision' items a correlation revealed a negative and significant relationship in short distance vision ($r = -.18$, $n = 272$, $p < .01$) but no significant relationship was found for long distance vision ($r = .09$, $n = 271$, ns). Thus, greater disability in the mobility and communication areas and short distance vision were associated with belonging in fewer number of groups.

Finally, a correlation between multiple group membership and age revealed a highly significant and negative relationship ($r = -.28$, $n = 271$, $p < .001$) showing that the older the respondents, the less likely they were to belong to many groups.
5.4.4 Age

Age was found to be significantly related to both political participation scales of ‘passive’ \( (r = -0.20, n = 238, p < 0.01) \) and ‘active’ \( (r = -0.21, n = 240, p < 0.001) \) and to both indices of disability (‘mobility’: \( r = 0.35, n = 258, p < 0.001 \); and ‘communication’: \( r = 0.18, n = 253, p < 0.01 \)). There was also an association between long distance vision and age \( (r = 0.22, n = 265, p < 0.001) \) and short distance vision and age \( (r = 0.19, n = 266, p < 0.01) \).

The relationship between age and the ‘passive’ and ‘active’ variables was negative. This confirmed H2, since as expected, older people in the sample had lower scores in ‘active’ and ‘passive’ political participation. Moreover, the relationship was positive in the disability areas, i.e. the older the respondent, the higher the likelihood of showing a disability in the mobility, communication and vision areas.

Results from a partial correlation between age and political participation when controlling for mobility, however, showed a non significant relationship, which may suggest that mobility appears to be the variable affecting political participation.

Table 5.9: Partial correlation coefficients for age and types of political participation controlling for ‘mobility’.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Controlling for MOBILITY</th>
<th>Active</th>
<th>Passive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>-0.17</td>
<td>-0.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(218)</td>
<td>(218)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ (\text{Coefficient} / (\text{D.F.}) / 2\text{-tailed Significance}) \]

5.4.5 Sex and marital status

Previous research has revealed men are more likely to participate in political participation than women (e.g. Barnes et al., 1979; Hudson & Gonyea, 1990; Jirovec & Erich, 1992). This can be explored within the present study. However, the possibility of a confound occurs. Because most women were not married and most men were, this raises the possibility that the effects that might be attributed to gender are in fact a result of marital status. In order to check this, first a categorical variable
was created, i.e. marital status, by distinguishing between two groups (married/living alone). The differences in participation were explored in a 2 (men/women) x 2 (married/living alone) ANOVA. For passive political participation there were non significant effects both for sex (F (1, 240)= .25, ns) and the interaction between marital status and sex (F (1, 240)= .14, ns). However, there was a significant effect of marital status on passive political participation (F(1, 240)= 12.03, p<.001). When the total mean scores of passive political participation were compared on the basis of marital status, it was shown that those people who were married (mean= 15.92) presented higher scores than those who were living on their own (mean= 12.97).

Similar results were found for active political participation. There were non significant effects both for sex (F (1, 242)= .18, ns) and the interaction between marital status and sex (F (1, 242)= .01, ns). There was a significant effect of marital status on active political participation (F(1, 242)= 6.53, p<.01). When comparing the mean scores of active political participation were compared on the basis of marital status, it was revealed that those people who were married (mean= 7.97) presented higher scores than those who were living on their own (mean= 6.81).

Thus, the fact of either being married or living on their own was the variable affecting political participation rather than sex.

A $\chi^2$ test was performed for the sex and 'group membership' variables but no statistically significant association was found ($\chi^2= .18, df= 1, ns$).

Finally, a $\chi^2$ test of the association between marital status$^6$ and group membership was not statistically significant ($\chi^2= 2.49, df= 4, ns$).

$^6$ The original marital status variable was used here, i.e. distinguishing between single, married, divorced, separated and widow/widower.
5.5 Discussion

Focusing on the hypothesis previously presented and in the results obtained, different types of political participation and disability can be established.

Principal components analysis of responses to the participation items showed older people can participate either in active ways (more demanding and collective) or in passive ways (less demanding and individual). This finding corroborated the first hypothesis of the study. It is also comparable with previous research where two types of participation were established among other age cohorts (e.g. Marsh, 1974; Barnes et al., 1979; Kelly & Kelly, 1994). More specifically, although Olsen's (1982) six dimensions of political participation (as discussed in chapter two) were not brought forward within this thesis, he also distinguishes between “active” and “passive” forms of political participation. More importantly, the Olsen's assumption adopted in this thesis that they do not occur in isolation from one another was confirmed in this study, since both types of political participation were significantly correlated with each other (Table 5.5).

In relation to the second hypothesis, both active and passive activity were found to be significant in relation to age. It was shown that older participants tended to score lower in ‘active’ and ‘passive’ ways of involvement compared to those who were younger, in line with Jirovec & Erich’s (1992) work. ‘Passive’ activities in this research such as ‘discussing politics’, ‘contacting public officials or politicians’ were classified by Jirovec & Erich (1992) as ‘personalised contacts’ and others such as ‘trying to persuade friends’ or ‘attend a political meeting’ were classified as ‘Campaign activities’ by Jirovec & Erich (1992). These results confirmed heterogeneity among the social group of older people, and demonstrated that a decline of political participation cannot be generalised to a unique social group of older people, since they encompass a wide range of ages.

When taking into account the possible effects of sex on political participation, no significant differences were found. This is not in line with existing findings which
Chapter Five

report men are more involved in political participation than women (e.g. Barnes et al., 1979; Jirovec & Erich, 1992).

Results referring to marital status and political involvement revealed that active and passive participation were higher in those participants who were married compared to those participants who were living on their own. Possible explanations might be the fact of mutual encouragement to engage in several activities and potentiate discussion when living in company of a partner, but that would remain at the hypothetical level, since there is no literature to support the above results.

Data from the present study also revealed that older participants in the sample showed higher scores in the areas of disability. Similar results emerged in the 1991 Census which indicated that the prevalence of long standing illness increases with age (although conceptually different from the study here). Other sources, such as the OPCS Disability Surveys (OPCS, 1989), show a very similar strong relationship between age and health status.

From the results it can be stated that political participation is related to disability, specifically with regard to those physical aspects which involve mobility, vision and communication. Older people who did not present any mobility disabilities were more likely to use both active and passive ways of political participation. When taking into account the vision area, those participants presenting a low disability in the long distance vision area were more likely to be involved in active ways of political participation, and those presenting a low disability in the short distance vision area were more likely to be involved in passive participation. Besides this, the communication area was only reported as significant for the passive political participation index. This supports H3 in the sense that some particular areas of disability were related to a specific type of political participation. However, H3 was not supported in relation to mobility.
Moreover, it needs to be acknowledged that those older people who present some type of disability will still have a potential for political involvement. From that, it can be suggested that using active/passive ways of political participation is not necessarily a question of being more or less disabled. Therefore, a disability in a particular area might not negatively affect the fact of being involved in political participation, though previous research states that people with better health will be more likely to be active in politics (Peterson & Somit, 1992b). Once the effect of mobility was taken into account, age did not affect political participation. This would allow us to suggest that the decline in political participation in old age does not necessarily occur as a consequence of the ageing process.

Supporting the possibility of a political participation potential despite disability, it was pointed out in the introduction section of this chapter that those who are disabled become increasingly involved in collective action (Chappell, 1994). Thus, it has been suggested that the cause for their non-participation in political action is not their disability. According to Chappell (1994), the suggested barrier would be the failure of developing communality, by not establishing strong friendships between disabled members. In addition, it needs to be pointed out that older people are an heterogeneous group; self-definitions of themselves may interact, and disability might be one of them, but other aspects of the structure of their identity such as “old/citizen/member of...” would be affecting political participation. This was addressed in the two empirical studies that followed this one.

In line with Marsh’s research (1977) showing that protest (i.e. including both types of active and passive ways of participation) increased in those who belonged to organisations, results from the present study evidenced the same, as expounded in the fourth hypothesis. It was found that those who belong to at least one group/organisation were more likely to use both active/passive political participation than those not belonging to any group.
In particular, whatever the type of group membership respondents were (political party, leisure, environment, voluntary or social issue oriented groups) there were no differences between them in types of political involvement (‘active’ and ‘passive’). This leads to the suggestion that any group may result in collective action. Whether people belonging to such groups perceived their membership as a way of achieving collective action was explored in study two.

Marsh’s study (1977) also showed that there were no significant differences in protest potential when comparing party identification. Furthermore, it was found that those members who belonged to leisure groups (the study was with members of athletic clubs) revealed the highest protest potential when compared with members of the Church. Those results are similar to the present study, where no significant relationships were revealed between religion membership and levels of political participation.

Marsh also concluded that if the individual reported to belong to more organisations, shown protest would increase. In the present study it was found that multiple group membership was relevant to both types of political participation (H5). This study showed that multiple group membership appeared to be more determined by disability rather than other variables such as political participation with disability.

In addition, disability in the mobility area appeared to be the higher in those participants who did not belong to a group. Again, mobility was the only area which appeared to affect group membership. For that reason it can be stated that disability overall will not determine either type of political involvement or group membership.
In conclusion, two main points can be highlighted from this study:

- Older people in this study presented low political participation. However, it appeared that they engage more in 'passive' types of political participation. Thus, in this study older people with low levels of political participation could be identified, which enabled to proceed with the next study, in order to address and determine why these respondents do not engage in these types of collective action.

- Particular areas of disability among older people are related to political participation. Despite this, although there were some significant results, the correlations were relatively low. Hence, the following study was designed in order to account and know about the respondents' subjective interpretations (e.g. how older people perceive themselves in the context of collective action). Furthermore, when controlling for the mobility area age did not appear to directly affect political participation. As a result, this suggested that declining political participation in older people does not necessarily occur as a consequence of the ageing process. Thus, 'chronological age' may not be the most useful explanation for understanding the political behaviour of older people. We need to grasp which social psychological factors mobilise which types of political participation and to explore other types than the ones which have been tested in the presented study. This is examined in the following chapter.

These results confirmed heterogeneity among the social group of older people and the need to investigate individual differences among older people. This was addressed in the next empirical studies of this thesis.
Chapter Six

Exploratory Study of Collective Action among Older People by using focus groups: Perception of the need for social change

"But I do believe we can do a lot more in helping to change a lot of things in this country if we put our minds to it! If we are saying 'well, I had my time and I really want to look after the garden and do this, that and the other...' Then I think we are turning our back on the issues we are concerned about. If we are concerned, we should be doing something."

(Focus Group no. 3; participant no. 4; lines 357/363).

6.1 Introduction

The first study examined several forms of action, which had previously been addressed by prevailing theories in the area (e.g. Marsh, 1974; Barnes et al., 1979) using an instrumental and rationalistic approach. The results from the previous study show that older people are involved in 'passive' and 'active' participation, although with a relatively low level of involvement. However, the following questions still need to be addressed, e.g. how do older people perceive the need for social change; what are the instances of social change which older people are concerned with; what is understood and perceived to be collective action by older people; what are the options available to older people for bringing about social change; what are the types of action they may adopt; whether context is relevant for understanding collective action, in particular, whether specific instances of social change are associated with particular types of action; whether the facilitators for a particular type of action are perceived to be specific to older people or whether they are the same for other sections of the population; and what are the barriers perceived by older people to engaging in
different types of collective action.

As explained in chapter four, previous theories of collective action have implied that there are barriers operating at individual and group levels (Klandermans, 1984, 1997; Kelly & Kelly, 1994). However, the activities studied were specific and restricted to particular assumptions without paying attention to ‘subjective’ barriers (e.g., in the motivational model by Klandermans, barriers were understood solely in terms of availability of resources and were only considered to be removable by motivated people). As a consequence, the possibility of other factors intervening between motivation and barriers to action was neglected. As discussed in chapter four, barriers in this thesis were conceptualised as a powerful means by which both Identity Process Theory (Breakwell, 1986, 1988, 1992a, 1993) and Social Representations Theory (Moscovici, 1961, 1984, 1988) were integrated.

Given the exploratory nature of this study, focus groups were selected as the means of data collection. Using this means, it was possible to address the above questions within the context of examining instances of social change older people are concerned with, along with their views on the possible ways to bring about social change. In particular, the study aimed to elicit the content of social representations of older people. Furthermore, identity was considered in relation to collective action.

Thus, by exploring whether there were any possible barriers in operation to engagement in collective action, it was expected that a variety of barriers to the different types of action available would be identified by the participants. It was aimed to determine which barriers were perceived to be more influential.

6.2 Aims of the second study

Following the results obtained in study one, the second study was designed to explore the following research questions which are presented below. Both expressions of ‘active’ and ‘passive’ participation (derived from study one) were included:
• To examine what instances of social change older people are likely to respond to, and older people’s desire to bring about social change (chapter six).

• To identify the types of collective action older people are likely to take (chapter seven).

• To identify the barriers to engaging in different types of collective action perceived by older people (chapter eight).

In this chapter the choice of method is firstly addressed. Epistemological issues about the use of qualitative vs. quantitative research are discussed. Second, the design of the second study will be presented: how the focus groups were run, a description of the sample and the procedure of analysis. Finally in this chapter, results addressing the first aim described above will be presented; the second aim is addressed in chapter seven and the third in chapter eight.

6.3 Epistemological issues
A qualitative research methodology was considered to be suitable for this study, not only as a technical matter - in order to answer particular research questions within a specific context (Bryman, 1988) - but also because qualitative techniques are recognised as yielding large volumes of rich data (Walker, 1985). Both of these properties were taken into account in opting for a qualitative methodology.

But doing qualitative research also raises epistemological issues, asking wider and more fundamental questions about the nature and practice of science, and the generation and legitimisation of knowledge. This raises a debate about quantitative and qualitative research methods (Henwood & Pidgeon, 1992). The quantitative paradigm is premised on a natural sciences approach. Seeking to establish objective knowledge, it tests hypotheses against phenomena in the empirical world (experimental, hypothetico-deductive, positivist and realist). On the other hand, the
qualitative paradigm searches for meaning or understanding, rather than universal laws (naturalistic, contextual, interpretative and constructionist). Since the natural science approach has remained the dominant paradigm in psychology (Henwood & Pidgeon, 1992), qualitative methods, which are based on inductive rather than deductive reasoning (Walker, 1985), have sometimes been characterised as “unscientific”. As a result, qualitative research methods have often been restricted to exploratory and descriptive studies. However, Good & Watts (1989) have expressed the need to reject any association of qualitative methods with such empirical limitations.

The use of qualitative methods in psychological research has increased during recent years (Richardson, 1996). Indeed, Smith (1996a) argues that science should be understood as a “multifaceted activity” that is able to incorporate qualitative approaches to mainstream psychology. Qualitative and quantitative paradigms should not be taken as mutually exclusive, nor should we assume that there is a simple relationship between ‘quantity’ and ‘realism’ and ‘quality’ and ‘constructionism’ (Henwood, 1996). Hence, some researchers have opted in favour of combining quantitative and qualitative methods (see Silverman, 1985; Bryman, 1988) and have even argued that selecting a method requires judgement according to context and purpose, rather than judgements based on epistemology (Hammersley, 1996). This is the approach adopted in this thesis, in which both qualitative and quantitative methods were combined (as discussed in more detail in chapter twelve).

We should not see qualitative research as an homogeneous category. Different types of position can be adopted in qualitative research, although they all have in common the identification of participants’ subjectivities. Henwood & Pidgeon (1994) identified three approaches to the justification of qualitative research: criteria of reliability and validity (Strand I), generativity of new theory and grounding (Strand II) and focusing on the reflexive functions of language, which have material-discursive effects (Strand III). Each strand involves an epistemological position (assumptions about the bases for knowledge), methodological principles (theoretical analyses defining a research problem) and methods (research strategies). Epistemological
positions range from empiricism (Strand I) to contextualism (Strand II) and finally to constructivism (Strand III). In terms of methodological principles, Strand I aims to discover valid representations using induction; Strand II aims for the construction of intersubjective meaning, and finally Strand III involves interpretative analysis. In terms of specific methods, examples of Strand I include the data display model, content analysis and protocol analysis, Strand II encompasses grounded theory and ethogenics, and Strand III is exemplified by discourse analysis and narrative analysis. However, Henwood & Pidgeon (1994) noted that different choices should not be understood to be totally constrained within the above strands. The position adopted in this thesis is that these different types of approaches to qualitative research are complementary.

6.3.1 Criteria for evaluating qualitative research

Criteria for evaluating research in psychology have included several methodological issues such as reliability, validity, generality and objectivity. However, there is a noticeable debate about assessing the standards of qualitative research (McQueen & Knussen, 1999) and a deeper discussion of these issues is needed (Henwood & Pidgeon, 1992). Additionally, qualitative researchers have argued that the application of classical criteria to the evaluation of generative qualitative research runs the risk of undermining the benefits that qualitative methodology can provide (Marshall, 1985).

The concept of objectivity has received most criticism within the qualitative paradigm. It can be stated that there are no methodological criteria capable of guaranteeing the absolute accuracy of research. And the criteria for judging the quality of research cannot be reduced to tactics for eliminating observer bias (Jones, 1985; Henwood & Pidgeon, 1992). Some have suggested using a diary of reflections on the role of one's own values and interests and methodological decisions in order to increase researchers' reflexivity, theoretical memos, or even to exchange the results with other colleagues (Pidgeon, 1996). Similarly, Rennie (1992) pointed out the belief that the qualitative approach never can be objective, since its logic of justification entails consensus about constructed representations of reality.
In comparison, the perspective of Miles & Huberman (1994) highlights the importance of reliability and validity, noting that social phenomena exist not only in the mind but also in the ‘objective’ world and that some lawful and stable relationships are to be found among them. They state that social phenomena (e.g. language, decisions) exist objectively in the world and people construe them in common ways.

Henwood & Pidgeon (1992) noted that establishing the validity or ‘goodness’ of qualitative research is difficult. However, some theorists have referred to respondent validation: the researcher’s interpretations should be subsequently recognised, and agreed to, by participants in the study. This serves as a further source of data with which to elaborate the developing theory. In spite of this, we must not forget about the role of power relations and ideological systems in constituting the outlooks and views of both respondents and researchers.

Finally, rather than talking about the generalisation of results obtained in qualitative research, Henwood & Pidgeon (1992) have suggested talking in terms of transferability of findings. This refers to the extent to which findings from a specific piece of research can be applied in similar contexts to the one in which they were derived. The current research paid specific attention to older people; generalisation of the findings to other populations was not the main aim of the study.

6.4 Method

6.4.1 The use of focus groups

Traditionally focus groups have been used in market research and political election campaigns (Gamson, 1992). More recently, they have been proposed as appropriate for research in social psychology (Millward, 1995). Focus groups are recommended for exploratory research, and are, therefore, appropriate here, as little is known about the target group’s views on the research topic. Few studies have been reported that use focus groups with older people (Quine, 1998).
The important feature of this type of method is the group interaction in a particular social context, in which participants become more aware of their own views when confronted with active disagreement from others and are prompted to expound and analyse their views more intensely. From the same social exchange the interplay of the personal and the social can be systematically expounded, and data on social representations and identity processes can be elicited (Farr, 1995; Millward, 1995).

6.4.2 Running the focus groups

6.4.2.1 Location

To encourage participation in the research, the venue was chosen to maximise convenience and comfort, and was thus selected according to the following criteria:
- Accessibility by public transport.
- Central location.
- Familiar surroundings.

The most appropriate available venue was a room in an educational organisation (The Guildford Institute), except for the case of two focus groups which were conducted in sheltered accommodation where a number of participants were living.

6.4.2.2 Group size

The literature recommends a focus group size of between 4 and 12 participants per session, between 6 and 10 being the most common (Morgan, 1988; Krueger, 1994; Quine, 1998). Previous research with older people has suggested reducing the size to 6 or 7 participants for active sixty year olds, and to 5 or 6 participants for disabled older people and those over seventy years (Quine & Cameron, 1995).

As detailed below, six of the total thirteen groups comprised only three participants each. Only three males and three females wanted to participate from the sheltered homes, and other participants were able to attend for certain dates only. However, since the latter all showed their enthusiasm and willingness to participate, it was
decided to proceed. It was considered that a smaller group size might encourage greater interaction and ensure participants had the opportunity to contribute (Quine, 1998) thereby providing a potentially very rich source of data.

6.4.2.3 Presentation

The success of focus groups as a means of eliciting individual opinions depends on the moderator’s style and skills in managing inter-individual discussion (Millward, 1995). The best moderator is able to guide the focus group in an unobtrusive and subtle way, intervening only to maintain a productive group (Millward, 1995). The need to acknowledge ways in which the presence of the moderator can affect what is being studied leads us to the concept of reflexivity. We must consider, among other things, the ways in which questions are asked and the ways in which response alternatives are given to the participants (Reicher, 1994).

The moderator (the present author) was trained for this role by conducting three pilot focus groups of eighteen volunteers from the University of Surrey (staff and students from the Department of Psychology). An experienced external observer took notes on the performance of the moderator and feedback followed after each session, emphasising the following points: to adopt a flexible attitude and be able to change the order of the questions in the protocol guide when participants had already raised them during the discussion; to refocus the group when the discussion had gone off track or discomfort in the group due to tense discussion between some members of the group; and to allow silence within the group so that participants could think and formulate responses.

Each of the focus group participants had met the moderator previously in study one, and all wore name badges to be able to refer to one another by name, creating a more informal and friendly atmosphere. In addition, participants were asked to introduce themselves, by name. This was useful not only as an amicable way of getting started, but also for the purpose of analysis, so that voices could be placed and identified in the transcription phase.
It has been suggested that focus groups should be conducted where possible by a moderator relatively mature in age (Quine, 1998). However, here the moderator was (i) from a different nationality and (ii) in her mid twenties. Herzog & Rodgers (1992) suggested that younger interviewers might appear more novel and attractive to older individuals and hence facilitate participation. Indeed, the “difference” between the moderator and the participants seemed to break the ice at the beginning of each session, prompting some casual conversations before starting. Later, some participants noted that they were presenting their views to someone different from them, who was ready and interested to listen to them, overall stimulating their participation and discussion.

On the other hand, some aspects of the research might have had some effect on the data obtained. To start with, the accent of the moderator may have prevented some participants from engaging in conversation with her, these participants not understanding the initial question and only joining in subsequently as the rest of the group were going along. Secondly, in some of the groups, some participants were more dominant than others and this may have influenced what was said as a result of social pressures. However, these types of pressures are realistic in the sense that they are present in the real world and cannot totally be eliminated (Hedges, 1985). Moreover, the moderator was aware that some participants may have felt constrained in what they expressed in front of the others and made efforts to encourage speakers who were more reticent. Thirdly, in each group some members knew each other before the sessions, since they had been contacted from the same organisation. This, together with the name badges, may have increased self-consciousness. This may have led participants who knew each other to be more talkative in comparison to those members who did not know anyone, but at the same time may have helped to engage the group as a whole. Finally, it seemed that some of the concepts addressed in the research were more easily discussed throughout some sessions by the participants: in particular, participants showed a preference for the concept of “social issues”, bringing up this concept more often and talking at greater length. However, the sessions prompted participants to mention and discuss aspects of the focus group schedule,
such as barriers to collective action and participants’ comparisons over the life-span with regard to the need to bring about social change and the types of action perceived to be more effective. At the same time, this contributed to participants’ feelings of enrichment, since they were discussing things which interested them.

Another aspect which may have affected results obtained in the focus groups sessions was the issue which has been conceptualised as “action research” (Hedges, 1985). The fact of participants getting together to talk about social concerns may have led them to become aware that they had similar views and to perceive that collective action can be an effective way for bringing about social change. In this sense, using the focus groups technique may have changed participants in one way or another.

6.4.2.4 Participants

Thirteen focus groups were conducted with a total of 59 participants. All participants had been screened in the previous study. Volunteers were first contacted by post. A hand-written card was sent to each of them to thank them for their willingness to be involved once again and to suggest a venue and some dates for the focus groups sessions. This was followed up with a phone call to set the date and time.

The response rate was 70.2% (84 subjects had previously agreed to participate). Ages ranged from 59 to 87 years (mean age: 70.96 years). The sample comprised 38 women and 21 men.

As shown in Table 6.1, each participant was allocated to a focus group on the basis of sex and level of political participation. Males and females were separated in response to evidence suggesting that men and women interact differently in mixed-sex compared to same-sex groups (Krueger, 1994): group sessions should be homogeneous in order to reduce the ‘peacock effect’ - the possibility of inhibitions and the tendency of men to perform for the women and vice versa. Group members were separated according to their levels of political participation (active/passive) in response to the theoretical conclusions drawn from the first study. In this way, it
could be guaranteed that a range of different types of political participation was covered. On the other hand, the fact that each session was composed only by participants who were either “active” or “passive” could have methodological implications with regards to the information which was likely to be elicited: keeping levels of participation similar within each group would hopefully help to avoid either over-justification for passivity/inaction or over-estimates of participation. Table 6.1 summarises the number of participants in each focus group (excluding the moderator), their sex, their level of political activity and the venue in which each discussion took place.

Table 6.1: Group size, characteristics of participants and venue for each of the focus groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus group no.</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Level of political participation</th>
<th>Venue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>'active'</td>
<td>Guildford Institute - Guildford</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>'active'</td>
<td>Guildford Institute - Guildford</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>'active'</td>
<td>Guildford Institute - Guildford</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>'active'</td>
<td>Guildford Institute - Guildford</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>'active'</td>
<td>Guildford Institute - Guildford</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>'passive'</td>
<td>Guildford Institute - Guildford</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>'passive'</td>
<td>Guildford Institute - Guildford</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>'passive'</td>
<td>Guildford Institute - Guildford</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>'passive'</td>
<td>St. Martha's Court - Chilworth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>'passive'</td>
<td>St. Martha's Court - Chilworth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>'active'</td>
<td>Guildford Institute - Guildford</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>'passive'</td>
<td>Guildford Institute - Guildford</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>'passive'</td>
<td>Guildford Institute - Guildford</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total number of participants</strong></td>
<td><strong>59</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Care was taken to ensure the groups comprised individuals from a mixture of backgrounds (i.e. from different organisations which varied in activities, such as education, drop-in centres, and religion) in order to provide potentially richer data (Krueger, 1994).

At the end of each session, participants always acknowledged how stimulating the session had been for them, saying that they felt they had learned from each other by putting their views in common with other people. Some of them even expressed that they would like to meet again to continue the discussion further and supporting and encouraging letters were sent to the researcher. Thus, overall the focus groups proved
to be a constructive research forum for researcher and participants alike.

6.4.2.5 Design of the focus groups schedule

A protocol guide was used to direct the discussion within each group (Appendix 3), although the moderator never had to go through each of the specific and alternative questions detailed. Usually, each of the points on the schedule emerged spontaneously in each group. However, detailed questions had been prepared in case they were required to prompt further discussion of the research questions in a particular focus group.

Firstly, participants were thanked for attending and each was provided with a badge on which they were asked to write their names. It was stressed to participants that they should express freely what they wanted and discuss what they thought. It was explained that the session would last one hour and that it would be taped so that the information provided could be analysed. Participants were assured that all information would be anonymous and confidential. In addition, the nationality of the moderator was mentioned to the participants as a possible cause of misunderstandings throughout the session and they were asked to bear with her (for example, a polite way of saying something in Catalan might seem too strong in English).

Next, the research topic was explained as well as the aims of conducting the focus groups. Emphasis was given to the research question they were required to address (i.e. “...Today I would like in particular to find out more about issues - if there are any - that concern you, that have anything to do with your lives or society in general, and I would like to hear about the different ways that you would consider for bringing about any changes or changing anything in society or in your life”).

The focus group schedule followed a ‘funnelling approach’ (Hedges, 1985; Cinnirella & Loewenthal, 1999). First, general questions were asked about issues participants were concerned with, allowing them to discuss and provide detailed views on these issues before moving on to the specific research questions. In this way, collective
action and related themes were expected to be mentioned spontaneously by participants before direct questions were asked. An example of a general question was “...we could start by you telling me some of the issues that you are concerned with that you either feel strongly about or you think that there are things that if you could you would do something to change...”. This question was followed by others such as “For all these sort of things you are telling me, do you think you could do something to change the situation?”; “For what you say, some of you refer to bringing about change individually and others collectively (...) Have you ever considered joining any sort of group in order to change the situation?”; “Do you find any difficulties when considering to bring about change?”; “Do you think these difficulties are new in your life experience? Or do you think they have always been like this?”. However, due to the nature of focus groups, the guide was used in a flexible way. Key issues were addressed differently in each of the focus groups according to the dynamics evolving in them.

At the end of the session participants were again thanked for their collaboration and a summary of what had been discussed was provided by the moderator. Participants were asked to add anything they thought was relevant or felt had been missed in the session. In this way, a last chance was given to those participants who did not agree with any statements and further opinions could be expressed.

Notes were also taken after each session, since a considerable amount of time is required to transcribe such data and the focus groups were conducted over a short period of time (one month and a half). This ensured that the moderator was able to recognise similar or novel opinions emerging in subsequent sessions.

Following completion, each session was transcribed verbatim, ensuring that no data were lost. Each participant was allocated a number (see Appendix 4 in which two transcriptions are included). The seating positions of the group were also recorded along with additional notes, to help the researcher to identify voices during transcription. This also allowed the researcher to make herself more aware of the
different interactions operating between the participants of each focus group. In this way, it was possible to know whether a specific focus group was dominated by a few people or whether each participant was contributing. Hence, it could be checked whether each focus group was balanced. However, it should be added that this latter aspect could in itself be relevant for another study on group dynamics (e.g. paying specific attention to what a given person says at different points of the focus group and the influence of dominant opinions along the focus group) but here this was treated only as part of the process of conducting the focus groups.

6.4.3 Analysis

The analysis focused on three central issues: (i) the instances of social change with which participants were concerned (reported in this chapter), (ii) participants’ views of options available to them for bringing about change (reported in chapter seven), and (iii) participants’ accounts of barriers preventing them from engaging in action to bring about social change (reported in chapter eight). The procedure used was as follows:

First, the transcripts from the thirteen focus groups were read. Immersion in the content of each transcript separately was followed by comparison between transcripts. Based on this, it was decided to identify themes and patterns across the focus groups paying specific attention to both re-occurrence within transcripts and co-occurrence across transcripts. Consequently, each transcript was examined sequentially and several themes were derived from the text. Having identified these themes, subcategories were established on the basis of particular excerpts under each thematic heading. The original research questions underlying the study were also an important resource for this process of categorisation (Dey, 1993). Note that categories were not regarded as mutually exclusive in the analysis: a single quotation or category might be relevant to more than one theme.

The coding procedure combined elements of ‘grounded theory’ (where a priori hypotheses about the data should not influence coding, see Glaser & Strauss, 1967)
and ‘structured content analysis’ (Krippendorff, 1980). For another example of the combined use of grounded theory and structured content analysis, see Cinnirella & Loewenthal (1999). Thus, as argued earlier, advantages of these two different methods were both taken into account in the analysis. The Winmax software programme was used to manage the analysis of the data.

Two procedures helping with the data analysis were the writing of memos and definitions of the emerging categories. These are useful practices originating in the grounded theory approach (e.g. Turner, 1981; Charmaz, 1995; Pidgeon & Henwood, 1996). Definitions were written of each coded category, stating its qualities explicitly. This ensured that each category would fit the data well and forced the analysis from a descriptive to a more analytical level. In parallel, memos were written. These were an intermediate step between coding and the first version of the completed analysis (Charmaz, 1995), contributing to the development of explanations of the emerging concepts, the discernment of some of the interrelations between them (Pidgeon & Henwood, 1996), the clarification of distinctions between major and minor categories and the definition of patterns (Charmaz, 1995).

Results were validated by a second researcher who analysed two of the focus groups, producing similar conclusions. However, this process of validation was not conceived as a way of getting to an absolute truth, but as a means of providing a fuller understanding of the situation (Smith, 1996a). As noted above, there are no methodological criteria capable of guaranteeing the absolute accuracy of research.

A final issue to note is that this form of analysis was time consuming, as with most qualitative methods where research is intimately tied to the phenomena it addresses, but at the same time the analysis of the data yielded a rich and varied picture.

6.4.4 Reporting the results

Concepts emerging from the data are reported below using adjectival quantitative phrases, such as “the majority” or “most of the participants”, following the practice of
many qualitative researchers (see e.g. Morton-Williams, 1985). This decision is based on the fact that there are no pre-defined criteria for determining the frequency with which a theme must recur before it can achieve sufficient significance to merit citation. Krueger (1994) argues for the exclusion of quantitative indices when reporting the results from qualitative data. In his words:

"Numbers and percentages ought to be used with caution in the focus group report. Numbers sometimes convey the impression that results can be projected to a population, and this is not within the capabilities of qualitative research procedures. Instead, the researcher might consider the use of qualifiers such as: 'the prevalent feeling was that...' or 'several participants strongly felt that...' or even 'most participants agreed that...'." (pp. 154-155).

More specifically, Marshall (1985) has made these suggestions concrete with regards to the method of content analysis.

The aim in this study was to understand collective action by systematically identifying and describing themes rather than to indicate how many individuals mentioned or conceptualised a particular theme. Emerging themes and concepts relating to the research questions above are presented in this and the next two chapters.

Results are structured according to the aims of this research. Each research question has been addressed by presenting the themes and concepts which emerged. This reflects the methodological position that it is necessary to have a theoretical framework within which the analysis is conducted rather than a tabula rasa approach (e.g. Jones, 1985; Strauss & Corbin, 1990; Pidgeon, Turner & Blockley, 1991).
6.5 Results

The rest of this chapter addresses the first research question outlined earlier. The aim of this part of the analysis was to identify instances of social change which older people are concerned about, and to determine the extent to which participants desired to bring about social change. The analysis of the data revealed several themes.

6.5.1 Social issues of concern to older people

Participants perceived a need for social change in eleven different areas. The issues raised were as follows: health, family, standard of living, law and order, rights and values, older people, international issues, Government, European Union, media and environment. Most importantly, these issues were not uniquely age oriented, and the expressed desirability of social change was extended to a general feeling within the whole society:

"I think on the positive side there is an immense awareness in the nation of the problems we've been discussing. I think at all levels there is an immense awareness that something needs to be done about it." (F3; pt2; 828/832).

In particular, instances of social change suggested by the respondents were perceived as linked together:

"It's all linked together, isn't it, really when you think about it?" (F5; pt1; 109/110).

Table 6.2 provides a summary of the social issues mentioned and the specific problems associated with them. In this table each issue has been illustrated with a single quotation for brevity reasons.

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7 A summary of results of the study explained in this chapter and chapters seven and eight was presented as a poster at the Scandinavian Symposium organised by the Marie Curie Fellowship Association (European Commission), Stockholm, 1998. The poster was entitled "Grey Power: Older People and Collective Action."

8 Order is as follows: Focus group no. (F); participant no. (pt); lines from the original text.
Table 6.2: Social issues identified by the participants and associated problems.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ISSUES and associated problems</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1: Health</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Inefficiency in paying for the National Health Service</td>
<td>“We can use the money, take the national health service as an example. I mean, the bureaucracy in the national service has rocketed. The money that’s been spent on then could be used to keep the hospital beds open and to employ more nurses!” (F3; p11; 702/705).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Privatisation of Health Services</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Drawbacks in hospitals</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2: Family</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Breakdown in traditional structure -lack of family life</td>
<td>“Following on from that, I think that the system we’ve got now, the way it’s drifted since about the 60s has been pretty drastic. The home life has gone to pieces and with transport as it is anyway it means that most of the families are not together, anyway. The parents or the grandparents are miles away from the children and therefore they don’t have very much influence on the children. The parents, as it’s gone recently, where they’re not married and they just co-habit and produce children is part of the system that we’ve got.” (F5; p13; 53/61).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3: Standard of living</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Lowering of standards</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Media</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Education</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Unemployment/Insecurity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Economy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Society</td>
<td>“What worries me is even more basic than that. It’s a sort of selfish materialism these days (common agreement(^9)) where people think, you know, something goes wrong it’s always somebody else’s fault (common agreement). They can sue somebody and they can get what they want and they can’t be bothered to bring their children up. They’d rather go out to work and earn some more money (common agreement).” (F12; p4; 203/209).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^9\)When consensus on a particular opinion was shown among the participants in the respective focus group, the note “common agreement” was added in the transcription.
4: Law and order

- Code and rules
- Liberty and justice
- Wrong law for children
- Violence

"I think fundamentally people are as honest or as good as they ever were but I think the code or rules have changed and people now push the thing to the limit." (F8; pt4; 457/460).

5: Rights and values

- Lack of discipline and respect
- Younger generation
- Lack of morality

"I think there is a great feeling now that we've all got rights, everybody knows their rights. That's why again they go to law because they've got their rights. But they don't know enough about their duties. And if you've got a right, you've got a duty (common agreement). And you've got to balance the one against the other. (F1; 2; 270/275).

6: Older people

- Homogeneity
- Health
- Loneliness
- Losing one's home
- Poverty
- Pensions' reduction
- Discrimination

"As you grow older. And as you now grow... If you're coming to the real end of the age group your major considerations are your standard of living and your health (common agreement). Most other things are not important and this is where we've started to slip badly because there are a lot of old people today who are really in a bad way financially. And the conditions for their health are gradually slipping. They are now having to wait longer or they can't afford to do the operation for one reason or another." (F5; pt3; 320/328).

7: International issues

- Overpopulation
- Religion and wars
- Poverty

"I think world population is the big issue. There are far too many people in this world. " (F4; pt4; 41/42).

"The gap between the rich and poor in this country has increased tremendously. Not only that, in a sense it is increasing on a world's scale. So, the poor nations are becoming poorer and the richer are becoming richer to some extent at their expense..." (F3; pt3; 203/209).
8: Need for changes in the Government

- Need to change the present situation of politicians in the government.

“...But there you put your finger on it. Earning respect. Now, I don’t know about you... I’m not very cynical, I hope, but I can count on fewer than the fingers of one hand the people in our great and good, so-called, who I respect at all! Most politicians I wouldn’t cross the street if they asked me to.” (F2; pt3; 80/84).

9: European Union

- Distinctiveness
- Increased cost of living
- Media influence
- Lack of information
- Lack of a channelling system from local to national problems within Europe

“I think there’s a number of us who would go along with that. The thing is that we’ve not been informed sufficiently, whether they have the information either I don’t know, but we haven’t been informed sufficiently in the past to have an opinion and we all thought because we were told it was the way to think that we would be better off in with Europe. I think we would be happy to go in as a free trade area and other advantages... None of us had a Federal Europe in mind at the time and it’s sort of creeping forward and how far forward will it go forward if we just go in with the rest. I still think whatever happens we’re going to always be the odd one out because of our situation and because of the closeness of France and Germany now and Italy. They are... In the end I think it will always be a sort of ganging up on Great Britain whoever is in Parliament over here.” (F13; pt3; 51/65).

10: Media

- Diffusion of false and wrong news
- Morbidity
- Sex/violence
- Encouraging discrimination
- Bad influence on younger people
- Instilling negative stereotypes of younger people
- People’s lack of privacy
- Waste of time

“Yes I think the media it has a great influence on what people do or say. If they see it on television in particular they seem to think it’s right. Or if they read it in the paper it’s Gospel truth. The biggest liars on the earth are the papers. You’ve only got to know a particular subject and then read it in the paper and you know very well that they’re talking a lot of made up rubbish.” (F13; pt1; 252/258).
11: Environment

- Car abuse
- Pollution/noise
- Treatment of animals

"Well I'm very concerned on the state of the environment particularly as regards to transport..." (F5; pt1; 25/26).

"The thing I'm concerned with at the moment is the treatment of animals." (F7; pt1; 30/34).

6.5.2 Emerging themes

Three main themes emerged within participants' discussions of these issues: locus of responsibility; age identification; and a temporal dimension. The following sections show the importance of each of these themes.

6.5.2.1 Locus of responsibility

The first theme, locus of responsibility, included a distinction between (1) perceived responsibility for causes ("who has responsibility for the problem") and (2) perceived potential for contribution ("who should take some responsibility"). In the former sub-category, participants would identify who was causing the problems associated with each social issue. In the latter sub-category, some of the participants identified with the category 'older people' and referred to their potential contribution to solve the identified problems derived from different issues (see Appendix 5 for details of each instance of social change).

In most of the instances, mainly with the exception of those directly addressing political issues (Government and European Union), the two distinctions were characterised by different elements for each instance of social change. For example, within the instance of social change of the family, parents were perceived as responsible for the present situation:

"People have got to accept responsibility once they marry, haven't they? And they've got even more when they have children (...) I mean even if your love goes out the window, you could live in a harmonious way for your own sakes and for the sake of the children who are growing up. But most people aren't mature enough to do that." (F12; pt1; 195/202).
However, participants seemed to show perceived potential for contribution to causes of the problem by identifying with the group of ‘older people’ and enhancing their role as grandparents:

"...how we brought up our children our generation we’ve gone down a little bit on our standards and now we’ve gone down a little bit more." (F5; pt1; 222/224).

"Gradually, what is happening is that the older generation are becoming the greater percentage of the population. And in fact we are not doing enough at this stage to make it better for young people coming through. I was listening to a program the other day and I was thinking about the role of grandparents and elders in our societies. For example, in Africa it’s the elders who bring up the young children. And it’s they who, because they are with them all day, that they are developing the moral basis and the moral fibre of the young people in the tribe. This also happens in certain European countries. I think to an extent it does happen in Spain... And I think that we need to do more. I think what is happening is that we have said ‘look, we are now retired; we are comfortable with what we’ve got; I don’t want to get involved anymore.’ But I think we should be involved. If we really are concerned about these issues we should do something about it." (F3; pt4; 283/298).

This latter distinction introduced one of the main findings within this particular research question: participants very often identified themselves with the group of older people when perceived potential for contribution to causes or maintenance of the problem was mentioned for a specific instance of social change. The two principles of identity which seemed to be strongly operating in tandem are distinctiveness and efficacy on a collective level, that is, participants, by identifying with the group of ‘older people’, differentiated themselves from others (e.g. younger people) and showed feelings of competence and control for bringing about social change, including positive evaluations of their membership with ‘older people’. In this sense, both collective distinctiveness and collective efficacy operated as facilitators of social change. This was the case with the instances which referred to health, older people, law and order, rights and values, environment, media, international issues and family (as the quotations above show). Note how participants were answering the question “is there anything you think you could do in order to change the situation with this particular problem-s you have already identified”? At no point did the moderator
address this question to the participants by implying “you as older people”, thus, identification with the group of older people was not prompted by the moderator.

Further examples of perceived efficacy and distinctiveness are as follows:

“I think we could put pressure on the media, because I don’t feel that violence probably has increased only in proportion to the population... (common agreement). (...) But I do think that our age group could put pressure on the media and try to do something to stop them exaggerating. I mean, you said the police say that statistically there isn’t more violence but we read it all the time (common agreement).” (F2; pt6; 115/122).

“Well, I’m very concerned on the state of the environment particularly as regards to transport and I think old people can do quite a lot... Or older people -I’d better be careful -can do a lot in that way because normally speaking older people have a little more time than younger ones.” (F5; pt1; 25/29).

At the same time an awareness was expressed for the need to consider the participants’ interaction with younger people. Participants evaluated some younger persons positively. More specifically, they described them as ‘caring’, which was perceived to establish enriched intergroup relationships:

“...an awful lot of good young people too that we don’t hear so much about, but they are very good worthwhile young people.” (F7; pt1; 344/346).

“...they learn many things from you and you probably learn many things from them.” (F2; pt2; 639/640).

“I think we should have more opportunity to give our opinions and to even advise (common agreement). I mean people of our age. We’re in a better position to be able to give a certain amount of advice.” (F5; pt1; 616/617).

Finally, when the different instances of social change were compared in relation to perceived responsibility for causes, it appeared that the Government was considered responsible on more instances of social change (i.e. instances of social change of health; law and order; older people; need of changes in the Government; European Union; environment); followed by media (i.e. standard of living; law and order; rights and values; European Union; media) and parents (i.e. family; standard of living; rights and values).
6.5.2.2 Age identification

6.5.2.2.1 Age identification as a salient characteristic of participants' identity structure

It was anticipated that age identification was a salient component for the participants among different instances of social change (with a smaller presence of those social issues related to standard of living, Government and the European Union). Three main aspects are derived from this theme:

- age identification as a contributory factor of the identified social issues;
- age identification can facilitate change (see locus of responsibility);
- age identification is perceived to affect instances of social change in similar ways to other age groups.

Thus, the main distinction between the above classification is firstly that age is perceived to be a contributory cause when dealing with the specific identified instances of social change and in some cases particular emphasis is given to special responsibility for dealing with several social issues. Secondly, with specific instances of social change, participants felt that different issues are important for the older age group or are similar across age groups [e.g. the issue of health: although it was perceived to be very important for older people (identification such as “patient/sufferer”), it is also acknowledged that other age groups are affected with similar problems]. Hence, it was shown that the centrality of age identification varied in its salience across different issues. Most of the quotations reflected aspects of age as a relevant group membership, i.e. “older people”. However, other references to age pointed out age as a personal self-definition, i.e. “I am getting older”, “my old age”.

The quotations below are examples of those issues regarded as more important for affecting “old age” and those perceived as relevant for other age groups.
Age identification was highly salient in relation to ‘health’ (especially regarding hospital care) and ‘older people’, e.g.:

“As I say there should be more places about for old people because it’s an awful job to get in here. I was one of the lucky ones, I got in very quickly. My doctor got me in but... Otherwise I should still be waiting.” (F9; pt2; 645/648).

“I think one of the issues I’m very concerned about is having been a paid up member of the National Health and having paid taxes for a considerable period, but with the run down of the National Health Service... the pressure that’s been put on people of our age, to lay out money for insurance to cover the gap.” (F8; pt2; 38/43).

Other concerns of older people in which age identification appeared to be salient were those related to homogenisation (loss of individual distinctiveness), poverty, other people’s attitudes, loneliness and incapacity:

“Well one of the ones I mentioned already is ageism. Restrictions on a blanket... people over 60 as if they were all one mass of people who... What do you say... A homogenous mass of people from the same... If you had a group of people over 60 in a room you could find people from dozens of different backgrounds and society in general seems to think that anybody over 60... You know, they are all treated the same. If you go into an old people’s home where some of them are perhaps only just over 60, they are all lumped round the room and more or less written off (common agreement) and some of these will have been professional people. Others will perhaps have been farmers or agricultural people. We all come from different backgrounds and therefore it’s wrong to lump everybody in their third age together// (F6; pt1; 28/41).

“But some people are imprisoned by poverty (common agreement) and I think Barbara Castle and Jack Jones are doing a good thing saying to the Labour party conference and to everybody else if you get back into power you must do something about poverty in old age.” (F1; pt3; 585/589).

“I feel totally different. I’m much more concerned with human beings (common agreement) and feel that in general it’s a lack of respect for the older generation and the fact that we’re written off when we feel... I feel, that we can still contribute a great deal to society.” (F7; pt2; 36/40).

“Send in Surrey isn’t too bad at keeping our old people, are they? (...) But I think it’s awfully important to watch out for people who are incapacitated and live by themselves and possibly have no relatives living nearby. But I do think it’s important because I know... I live alone and
somebody just popping in is the most enormous joy. It really is." (F2; pt7; 744/750).

Health care was an overlapping aspect of both instances of social change of health and older people. Note that here age was mentioned as a characteristic of the person rather than involving group membership:

"But there was also another issue that when you got a bit older, I think it was 80 was the figure that was given, may be something different. That say one of us had a heart attack they wouldn't treat it (common agreement). You'd be left to die." (F8; pt2; 65/69).

Instances of social change related to family, rights and values, media, and law and order were perceived by the participants to be particularly relevant to younger people.

Some examples are provided below:

"Well it's better to be... It's worse to be ignored than sometimes to have a slap or something, you know. I mean so many children are ignored when the parents aren't getting on. The parents are battling and so the children are getting nothing from either of them." (FI2; pt1; 174/178).

"I think the problem is, I think these values are not taught to our children either. My concern is the way young people grow up in this country. And my belief is that education is more than just teaching subjects and skills... I know that the family should provide the moral fibre and the moral values, but I think a lot more needs to be done in schools and I think a lot more needs to be done in getting young people to understand how to set goals and ambitions. Because the other problem I see with young people is that they do, so many of them do not believe that they have a future... A future life which is worthwhile." (F3; pt4; 72/82).

"They would have thought 'My goodness what's happened?' But we've been gradually conditioned to it and I think that conditioning has made children -teenagers- behave the way that they behave in the media. The way they see it on the television, the way they see it on the screen and the way it happens in the school. Everybody sort of wants to be important with their peers and if they're pretty dim the only way they can be important is physically (common agreement)." (F13; pt3; 230/234).

Examples of age identification as a contributory factor to the identified instances of social change could be mostly found in the instances of social change regarding health, family, older people, rights and values, environment and law and order, in which both individual and collective distinctiveness seemed to operate
 interchangeably, e.g.:

"I think the health is very worrying. Because you think to yourself 'well things are going downhill fast' and then you're getting older and you expected to be looked after more or less in your old age, didn't you?' Because we have worked all your life (common agreement)" (F11; pt2; 144/148).

Here intergroup bias and social comparisons were evident among the several quotations, in which there appeared to be a reinforcement of collective aspects of participants' identity:

"It's age, it's age discrimination as well as regards the health care that we do get." (F8; pt3; 47/48).

"A lot of over 60s are probably far healthier than a lot of young people." (F6; pt1; 45/46).

Finally specific instances of social change illustrated how age identification was perceived to equally affect the identified instances of social change to other age groups. This was the case with the instances of health, standard of living, law and order, rights and values and environment, e.g.:

"I mean there's children up there... I've seen little tots, two and three year olds that need treatment. They can't get treatment because there's no units for them..." (F9; pt3; 64/66).

"That's right. It's not just for yourself! (common agreement). You know, if my grandson or granddaughter is out and they are a little bit late you worry. So it's not just solely for yourself." (F2; pt2; 32/35).

"There's no respect for anyone. Children are molested, old people are molested, blind people are robbed. Nothing is respected." (F2; pt5; 69/71).

"And pavements for example, but I mean that's an issue that I don't think is specific to older people. I think, you know, it's over all the generations and some people would always put their animals before human beings and speak up for them. I just don't have that feeling myself." (F7; pt2; 127/130).
6.5.2.2.2 Perception of older people as a homogeneous group

Participants’ accounts provided evidence of lack of homogeneity among the group of older people when group age identification appeared to be salient. In contrast, heterogeneity of older people considered as a social group was expressed and claimed by the participants. This was very evident in the instance of social change regarding older people, in which loss of distinctiveness was reported in relation to the dominant group’s who put all people together that are ‘old’:

“If you had a group of people over 60 in a room you could find people from dozens of different backgrounds and society in general seems to think that anybody over 60... You know, they are all treated the same.” (F6; pt1; 31/35).

“We all come from different backgrounds and therefore it’s wrong to lump everybody in their third age together.” (F6; pt1; 39/41).

On the contrary, several factors and characteristics were provided. For example, several concerns were expressed regarding poverty in old age:

“And I know a lot of people who would enjoy these things and benefit by these things if they were not imprisoned by their poverty. And I think that I am not asking the -you know- any political power to make pensioners overnight as rich as these fat cats you hear about but just to have enough to enjoy life! When you have the time...” (F1; pt3; 617/623).

“...there’s a lot of old people today who are really in a bad way financially.” (F5; pt3; 324/325).

Participants also expressed various concerns regarding health (expectancies for care) and the loss of one’s home (characterised by class differences and unfairness of the nursing system):

“What are they going to do if they have to go in a home and lose the house which they worked extremely hard to buy...” (F4; pt4; 141/143).

“That is a concern of the people who have built their own homes. I am not middle class, I am working class.” (F4; pt5; 153/154).

The fact that participants referred to ‘other’ older people in some of the above quotations could be interpreted as a way to distance themselves from other older members and therefore a lack of identification with the category ‘older people’. More
specifically, it has been suggested by previous literature that downward social comparisons with other older people growing old would be involved in the psychological management of life goals and levels of aspiration during old age, in which selfhood could be maintained (Taylor & Lobel, 1989; Wood, 1989). However, it would be misleading to assume such, since by contextualising the above quotations, participants referred to these differences to stress heterogeneity among older people and point out issues that people ought to be aware needed to change and hence think of possible ways to change that situation.

6.5.2.2.3 “Multiple identities”: salience of several properties/roles depending on the context

Sometimes other aspects of older people’s identity were salient and in some cases interacted with age, depending on the specific instance of social change which was being addressed by the participants. Examples of the salience of other aspects and the combination of age with others, are provided below, e.g. global issues like religion:

“The tragic thing is - and I speak as one who would call myself a practising Christian—... The tragic thing is that if you look at the world at large, religion has a lot to answer for... (common agreement). Look at Northern Ireland, and the Catholics and the Protestants. And the most terrifying thing of all this business at the moment to me, anyway, apart from Israel and the Jews and the Palestinians... is this Afghanistan, you know the Talibans and this fundamental Islamic stuff which is terrifying. I feel terribly strong about the poor women in Afghanistan who are now going to be taken back to middle ages or even further back, medieval towns... They are all going to have to go about in - you know- big cloaks and just look out through little visors and be confined to home... (F1; pt3; 462/474).

In addition, European issues were discussed in terms of social change, e.g. the European Union. When age was salient, positive evaluations about the European Union would be provided; whereas negative evaluations were associated with a salience of British nationality:

“We should join the Common Market and we should all be equal because the simple reason now - we are the poorest paid pensioners in Europe (common agreement). If we were in the Common Market proper under the social charter we would be getting the same as everybody else. The
Belgians are getting literally double what we’re getting. The French, the Germans...” (FI10; pt2; 141/147).

“One of my major concerns currently is the loss of sovereignty of Great Britain to Europe. I think that the European Commission -Parliament- call it what you will, is tending to rule our lives a great deal more than I would particularly like them to. I don’t like the way they adopt this very dominating attitude to what we can and what we can’t do.” (FI13; pt2; 28/36).

As Table 6.3 shows, aspects of identity varied in terms of properties (e.g. nationality, profession, gender) and roles (e.g. parents, grandparents, patients). Citizenship is understood to be a contractual relation of the individual with the state. It was considered a large superordinate category (Brewer, 1999). These, together with age ‘identification’, were most frequently mentioned among the different instances of social change (i.e. in eight out of eleven instances of social change). This was followed by ‘generation’ and ‘British’ ‘identification’ (six out of eleven). This would be in line with Stryker’s (1987) suggestion that attributes such as age and ethnicity serve as master statuses and influence the definition of “other identities”. The least salient aspects were those referred to some type of role (i.e. parents, profession and religion, appearing only in one instance of social change). Besides, it was shown that those instances of social change that included more roles/properties were those referred to the family and standard of living (with seven out of fifteen) and older people (with eight out of eleven). However, it needs to be acknowledged that these latter instances of social change were often mentioned by the participants and therefore this may have affected the chance of presenting more roles/properties of older people’s identity structure.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instance / Identity</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Generation</th>
<th>Father/ Mother</th>
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As a final point, gender was more salient in female focus groups than in male focus groups. For example, the issues of the emancipation of women and the right to vote were raised in most of all female focus groups:

"I don't know about other people but it seems to me that whilst there are hundreds, thousands of women across the world who still have no vote (common agreement), who still are treated like chattels, even if we think 'well it is not going to make any difference if I vote', on behalf of those other women who can't (common agreement) I think if we don't bother to vote then..." (F2; pt5; 782/788).

6.5.2.3 Temporal dimension

Most of the social issues identified by the participants included a temporal dimension. Participants made past references and comparisons, referring to a lack of continuity with the past. This was tied to the concept of reminiscence, in which participants by identifying specific instances of social change would re-examine past experiences, from making the past unique to revealing negative aspects of it.

6.5.2.3.1 Positive aspects from the past

This was the case with the instances of social change in health, family, standard of living, law and order, rights and values, government and media. The following examples reflect care philosophy in hospitals:

"And so the care is not the same as it used to be when I was in hospital before (...) But the care is not quite the same you know?" (F10; pt1; 127/130).

Family life was recalled as stable:

"But most of us I'm sure were brought up by a mother, a father, in a stable home life." (F4; pt4; 253/254).

A belief that law and order used to be respected:

"...that never happened years ago, you could leave your doors open. We didn't have the problems that we've got today." (F3; pt4; 146/148).

Both code and rules and liberty and justice were mentioned in relation with Government. In the former, description of the situation of the present political system
led to general statements, in which past was mostly perceived to be better:

“*It’s very important that party politicians of whatever stripe are never, ever allowed to be in power for too long. My mother told me that when I was a boy and my grandfather did too, and I’ve never forgotten it and I think they were totally right.*” (F8; pt4; 110/114).

“I wish we got the respect that our fathers got. I mean, that’s the only thing that’s missing.” (F13; pt3; 819/820).

### 6.5.2.3.2 Negative aspects from the past

Negative reminiscences were made when participants mentioned lack of morals in the instance of social change of rights and values and some aspects of standards of living (e.g. belief that nowadays there are more resources available such as receiving education, technology in domestic life and advancements in health research):

“Our generation has been so lucky to have, for example, the opportunities to stay on at school longer (common agreement). (...) In my mother’s generation, although she was bright and keen she didn’t have the opportunity. She felt there was nothing she could do away from the home and the domesticity.” (F7; pt2; 274/279).

“I think that in my own view, life today is much better than it ever was in the past. I remember many years ago struggling hard with public transport; now I have a motor car. I can get around. Struggling hard, my mother cleaning grates with black lead and goodness knows what... My wife doesn’t have to do that. My father had to do things which I don’t have to do. Life is much better.” (F3; pt5; 96/102).

“When I said how good they were, I was thinking, in my mother’s day, if I’d been there, I’d have been in a wheelchair without a new hip; I’d have been blind without cataract operations and when you think back to what things were, now it is absolutely magnificent...” (F1; pt2; 77/81).

### 6.6 Discussion

Addressing the first aim of the second study of this research showed that participants perceived the need for social change in relation to a wide variety of social issues. One important finding which emerged is that the identified instances of social change are not uniquely age oriented. This was consistent with previous literature (Walker & Naegele, 1999). In addition, many of the instances of social change identified by the
participants showed that they had a high interest in politics and their concerns with the community, in which participants’ citizenship was enhanced. This was supported by findings from the Eurobarometer survey in 1992 (discussed in chapter two).

Importance of locus of responsibility appeared as a relevant dimension in several instances of social change identified by the participants, in which a distinction was made between (i) perceived responsibility for causes, in which participants would identify who was causing the resultant problems with the specific instances of social change addressed (e.g. Health as being managed by the Government, Family as being managed by the parents); and (ii) potential for contribution to causes or maintenance of the problem, in which in some of the participants identified with the category ‘older people’ and expressed their potential contribution to solve the identified problems from the different issues of health, family, law and order, rights and values, older people, environment and international issues (see summary in Appendix 5). Deaux (1992) distinguishes between personal and collective aspects of identity. Here it was shown that the collective element of identity was particularly salient. In particular, two principles of identity, i.e. collective distinctiveness and collective efficacy seemed to operate in tandem as facilitators for social change.

Moreover, it might be argued that when participants referred to the need to care for the younger generations that this corresponds to the identified stage of “generativity” by Erikson (1982). This stage is conceived as a configuration of psychosocial features constellated around the goal of providing for the next generation (see chapter two), leading to a successful ageing.

Secondly, although age identification was not prompted throughout the focus groups it did emerge as a salient characteristic for the participants. It was seen as relevant to bringing about and facilitating social change in several areas (i.e. health, family, older people, law and order, rights and values, environment, media and international issues). Within several of these issues (e.g. health, older people), the need to preserve individual distinctiveness was enhanced by some of the participants in parallel to the above mentioned collective distinctiveness operating as a facilitator of social change.
In addition, it was shown that other age groups were also perceived to be affected by some of the social issues (i.e. health, standard of living, law and order, rights and values, environment). Similarly, Minichiello et al. (2000) found that older people identified social issues which involved discriminatory treatment of their experiences which are not unique to older people. In this study participants showed many concerns in relation to how the identified instances of social change were affecting young people (especially with media, rights and values, law and order).

Age as a relevant group membership was also manifested in participants’ view that older people are not an homogeneous group. In line with results obtained in recent research (Minichiello et al., 2000), participants manifested the need to consider several aspects affecting each individual in different ways (such as poverty, housing, health and loneliness). These findings also relate to the literature which emphasises the need to consider differences rather than homogeneity among older people (e.g. Baltes et al. 1992; Ng et al., 1997).

Finally, other roles/properties of older people were also salient and interacted with ‘old age’. This “multiplicity of identities” (Deaux, 1992; Brewer, 1999) suggests the need to reject age as uniquely defining the structure of participants’ identity. In sociology, identity theorists such as McCall & Simmons (1996) and Stryker (1987) refer to identity hierarchies in which people’s “multiple identities” might be organised. According to Stryker (1987), when an “identity” is prominent the individual will be more likely to attend to information relevant to that “identity”.

Some of the examples show that other roles/properties were salient without interacting with age salience (e.g. issues concerning religion). It appeared that particular aspects are related to particular instances of social change. Hence, this highlights the importance of context in favouring the expression of a particular identity.

Another interesting theme to mention was that when participants raised those issues related to older people, intergroup bias (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) could be observed (‘us’ the older people and ‘them’, the younger people). Younger people were
frequently mentioned during participants’ discussions. This enhanced greater identification with the category ‘older people’ among the participants, age being particularly relevant for group membership. A striking element which emerged was the participants’ concern for the younger generations, and in particular, the future which needs to be constructed for them. In addition, participants referred to other older people which in this context was interpreted as a way to claim heterogeneity among older people.

Lastly, a low political trust was expressed among the participants. This was particularly noticeable when referring to those issues related to the Government and taken further to rights and values, media and standard of living. As will be presented and discussed later, this did not seem to affect participants’ high level of political interest and orientations.

Finally, the emergence of reminiscence was highlighted, in which participants recalled past experiences when referring to some of the instances of social change. As previous research shows (Andrews, 1991), re-examination of past experiences was very common among participants. Cohen & Taylor (1998) stress the distinction between private and social reminiscence, where the former consists of private internal thinking and the latter of external communication in a social context. Thus, within the focus groups conducted in this study, reference was made to the concept of "social reminiscence", which was mainly evoked in response to current problems. This issue is particularly addressed in IPT with the concept of ‘social time’ (as discussed in chapter four).

Results of this study are in line with Revere & Tobin’s (1980) research, who found that the past becomes unique, and reminiscence is understood in terms of social myth (called “mythicizing” by the authors). Similarly, Wong & Watt (1991) identify six types of reminiscence, one of which is called “escapist reminiscence” (allowing the reminiscer to escape from present difficulties into a happier past). Participants, at the same time, by recalling past experiences and events, would maintain their sense of identity (Coleman, 1993c).
Revere & Tobin (1980) suggest that reminiscence serves as an adaptive function and that adaptation occurs by making the past unique. Some of the participants to this study were self-critical about reminiscences, e.g.:

"I think when you're older you tend to always think that things were better when you were younger." (F6; pt1; 54/55).

The fact that participants in the current research portrayed negative reminiscence was also found by Revere & Tobin (1980) and Wong & Watt (1991). This may account for the tendency of older people to put their memories into perspective rather than to become vividly engrossed with them. This was the case for example with the issue of rights and values and some aspects of standards of living.

Moreover, for some of the participants, by integrating reminiscence and instances of social change, they seemed to create a distance between older people and others. It could be argued that this confirmed their sense of identity with the category 'old'/elderly', as well as place them within the ingroup or outgroup. This was observed in the instance of social change about older people:

"You get... I find with elderly people... All I seem to get from them is a lot of complaints about their health; a lot of complaints that life isn't what it used to be, and life never was what it used to be and that becomes rather boring!" (F3; pt5; 521/524).

To sum, participants, by recalling previous generations of older people (including both positive and negative evaluations of the past) appeared to reconstruct the past, maintain or alter the meaning of the existing content of identity or transform its value.

Finally, it needs to be acknowledged that the fact reminiscence was identified under the temporal dimension theme within this study, should not lead to misleading conclusions about uniquely identifying reminiscence among older people. Previous research has highlighted the importance of reminiscence in other age groups. For example, Merriam & Cross (1982) and Hyland & Ackerman (1988) show that older and younger adults reminisce more than the middle-aged. Besides, it has been commonly and wrongly believed that older people tend to reminisce more often about their early lives rather than focusing on recent events and experiences. Cohen &
Taylor (1998) argue that there is a much more complex relationship between age and reminiscence. Inconsistent findings in this area reflect varying definitions of the term “reminiscence” and methodological pitfalls (see also Kovach, 1990).

The way in which reminiscence was manifest within this study challenges the stereotype which characterises older people as disempowered and no longer interested and involved in current issues.

This chapter suggested that expressed desirability of social change is a factor to be taken into account when participating in collective action. The following chapter explores whether we need to consider other social psychological factors when studying participation in collective action.
Chapter Seven

Towards the development of a model of collective action: identification of types of collective action

"L'imagination prend le pouvoir."
("Imagination takes power.")
(Slogan written during May 68 on the walls of the Sorbonne - France).

7.1 Introduction

This chapter addresses the second research question within the second study of this thesis, that is the identification of the types of collective action older people are likely to take. In particular, it will focus on older people's understanding of the actions they take or would consider taking in order to address some of the issues identified in the previous chapter. The following analyses therefore focus on:

1. Types of actions taken: How do people talk about these actions?:
   a) Do they distinguish between individual and collective action?
   b) What meaning do they attach to different types of collective action?

2. Older people's accounts of their involvement and non-involvement in collective action:
   a) How is the concept of responsibility for bringing about change invoked and constructed?
   b) What group memberships do they invoke in accounting for their involvement and non-involvement?
Several themes emerged in relation to the above research questions and each of them will be presented in this chapter. An operational definition of collective action will follow at the end of this chapter. This led to the model of collective action adopted in this thesis and used in the final study of this research.

7.2 Results

The results will be presented in relation to the following themes: types of actions in the study of collective action; legitimisation for action and inaction; and social representations of older people. Each of these areas contribute to an understanding of the processes involved in the generation of collective action.

7.2.1 Types of actions in the study of collective action

The way participants understood collective action included the distinction between individual and group action. Previous research has mainly alluded to group action when referring to collective action (e.g. Muller & Opp, 1986; Kelly & Kelly, 1994). Within this thesis, individual action was conceptualised as collective action, even if a specific type of individual action was identified only by one individual: individual action is collective action to the extent to which an individual perceives it to be a mean for achieving social change. In other words, to their subjective interpretation of collective action.

Firstly, a wide range of actions were identified by the participants and perceived to be examples of effective collective action, which led to a main distinction between type of action (individual-group) and type of goal (collective change-collective expression) dimensions. This distinction proved to be rather more substantial than previous research has suggested. Existing theoretical models would not have been able to fully account for the findings of this study.

Secondly, involvement and non-involvement in collective action was explored within this section and possible factors that would influence willingness to take collective
action were identified. Group membership was a relevant element when referring to types of actions and proved to be an important facilitator for bringing about social change.

Finally, the data suggest that particular instances of social change were associated with specific types of action. In addition, perceived effectiveness of collective action and previous experience were found two useful themes which exemplify the distinction between types of collective action. Each of the sub-themes comprised within types of collective action are presented below.

7.2.1.1 Perceived effectiveness of collective action

Perception of collective action as an effective way of producing social change constituted a major theme within types of actions. This included both an individual and group dimension. Some examples for each are presented below:

-Individual dimension-

"And as you say individually we can do a lot by writing to... I think eventually if they get enough letters they take notice. So that is one way where it can work individually by writing to MPs and ministry departments and so on." (F5; pt1; 199/203).

"You can do that more on a one to one basis than in a group." (common agreement) (F6; pt1; 343/344).

-Group dimension-

"I said and a number of us said we didn't feel we could alter things individually or we could make much effect individually." (F2; pt5; 250/252).

"I think collective action is always much stronger (common agreement). But collective action has to be collective. In other words, it's no use just presenting a petition." (F3; pt5; 793/795).

"It's much easier if you're within a group. I think there are a lot of people who wouldn't feel that on their own they could achieve very much." (F7; pt2; 239/241).
"I think it's fairly definite if you didn't join a group or something similar, nothing would be done (common agreement)." (F8; pt2; 142/144).

A main distinction emerged when participants referred to engaging in effective action: i.e. (i) structural level and (ii) personal level. The structural level includes those justifications within an organisational/group context (e.g. need to address specific issues in a group; local groups; join well known organisations and some participants highlighted empowerment, although there was not consensus with this latter aspect). In comparison, the personal level is related to aspects of self in relation to others (need to be accepted and to respect one's own ideas; some participants giving importance to personal experience and others stressing the need to adopt a right attitude rather than having previous experience).

In addition, some differences were found between those participants using 'active' ways of political participation and those using 'passive' ways of political activities. Within the structural level, 'proper leadership' was revealed as the common factor for both 'active' and 'passive' participants. The category 'well known' organisations was distinctive of those participants using passive participation whereas 'addressing particular aspects of a problem and effectiveness of local groups' was uniquely identified by those participants using active ways of political participation. Finally, reasons included at the personal level were merely identified by participants using passive ways. The following quotations are examples of the structural and personal levels.

(i) Structural level

Need of a case and a good reason:

"But it's not easy to do. You've got to be able to pull together and, you know, stick up for it. And you've got to have a case. You know, it's got to be a reasonable case (common agreement). You can't just put anything on." (F5; pt3; 747/751).
Focusing on particular aspects of a problem and effectiveness of local groups:

"I mean I think you’ve got to say we’re a group that wants to look at some particular aspect of the environment like recycling or like energy conservation or something and then you can start getting your facts together and your arguments sorted out but I think if you try and cover a very wide area then you never really get a proper force created." (F5; pt2; 465/471).

"I have come to the conclusion that it’s better to work in a small way and work with your own local organisations and even the local council and the borough council and then, I mean, because if we can’t sort out our own little areas we haven’t got much chance further afield. (F5; pt1; 644/648).

Empowerment:
"I think the only way we could change things would be to get into the position of power ourselves and then do what we want." (F13; pt4; 886/890).

Well-known organisations:
"But you see, you’ve got Consumer Council. You’ve got Age Concern. You’ve got Citizens Advice and these are very helpful people when you get in touch about things." (F11; pt1; 231/233).

"Well at least they were doing something. It’s better to do it in an organisation which is actually known than on your own. The more like minded people get together then you get some results easier." (F12; pt3; 230/233).

Leadership:
"If we had good leadership, people would follow, I’m sure." (F4; pt5; 684).

"The real key is that you’ve got to have somebody who’s going to lead otherwise it never gets off the..." (F5; pt3; 463/464).

"If you get someone good at the top (common agreement) the group is good." (F6; pt2; 256/257).

(ii) Personal level

Self and others:
"Yes. Once I was in I would love it. Yes (common agreement). But it’s getting in. Being accepted and knowing that the people are there to listen to you as well." (F6; pt2; 399/402).
Personal experience vs. attitude:

"1: ...you've got to have quite a bit of experience to do it because you've got to know what you're doing really, haven't you?
5: You get trained (common agreement). You haven't got to have experience when you go there you've just got to have the right attitude (common agreement)." (F13; pt1-5; 372/377).

Previous experience was revealed as an important factor among those focus groups in which perceived effectiveness of the actions had been shown. This sub-theme is presented below.

7.2.1.1.1 Previous experience

Previous experience mostly accounted for actions taken in the past and still being taken by the participants in the present. Within this theme, various actions were identified by the participants, which were always related to type of social issue. They varied between (1) individual action with collective expressive goal (i.e. self-commitment); (2) individual action with collective change goal (i.e. write to the MP; write to the local media); (3) group action with collective expression goal (i.e. voluntary and charity organisations) and (4) group action with collective change goal (i.e. lobbying; petitions; voting and marching; the latter perceived as ineffective). Examples of each of these classifications are provided below. It can be noted that both political and non-political ways were regarded as valid for the participants in order to bring about social change:

(1) Individual action with collective expressive goal (addressing social issue of the environment):

"No, it's not that bad but I have walked miles with buckets full of frog's spawn to actually put in the pond to bring the frogs back. (common agreement). But that's only my own little..." (F12; pt6; 259/262).

(2) Individual action with collective change goal (addressing 'British' issues):

"I got interested in art and so I get very annoyed when they send British art treasures abroad and so then I write to the MP and I make a fuss about things like that that bother me (...) I do get quite a bit of response." (F12; pt7; 731/736).
(3) Group action with collective expression goal (addressing health):

"It's much easier if you're within a group. I think there are a lot of people who wouldn't feel that on their own they could achieve very much. Or else just apathetic. I mean it is an effort to go out even to join groups on occasions. I just like to have a bit of structure in my life and welcome it. Certainly there are appeals from time to time, you know, whether it's a Marie Curie Cancer campaign. I know I've got interested in that because of my brother dying of a brain tumour and spending the last fortnight of his life in a hospice. That made me very much more aware of the wonderful work that is done there. So baking cakes and so on arise from my experience and channelled through someone who takes a class and that is her great interest in that particular charity. So we have stood in the High Street with our daffodils on occasions." (F7; pt2; 239/251).

(4) Group action with collective change goal (addressing environment, older people, health service):

"We kept lobbying and I am very glad to say at the end we got a 30 mile per hour speed limit imposed on this road and what is more important, the police are now enforcing it." (F3; pt5; 728/731).

I mean we've written several letters and signed petitions. Wisley (...) and now the burning plant and I mean you go to Wisley and sign a petition there. You object but I don't think I could go forward and lobby." (F6; pt3; 713/717).

"Because people said 'we can't go through this again, we can't come back after the War and have another depression, we've got to have a national health service and we've got to look after people'. And I think people were then very idealistic at the end of the War, and most of us who came out of the forces did vote, probably for the first time in many cases, left wing because we hoped that things would change." (F4; pt4; 906/912).

The following quotation is an example of involvement in the past (in this case 'marching') and lack of involvement at the present with a particular type of action (i.e. 'marching'):

"Yes, I didn't join any political party as such but I know that I joined in something that I felt very strongly about thinking all the time. 'Oh what am I doing?' You know, joining in a march and things like that. I wouldn't do it now." (F11; pt1; 538/542).
Moreover, it was shown how some of the participants were strongly influenced by their past experience of not being involved in social issue groups/organisations and linked this to the fact they did not belong to this type of organisations/groups in the present. Participants explained that if they found particular issues which needed to be altered in their lives, the strategy which they followed was to adapt to rather than to change different situations, e.g.:

"I think to a certain extent whether you like it or not, as you pass through life because circumstances change and the society in which you live probably changes, to a certain extent whilst you may not change deep inside yourself you have to adapt a bit otherwise you can't really cope.” (F2; pt5; 515/520).

Reasons given for non-involvement included having had a busy life with aspects such as the family and work; not having had any information available about possible groups; and issues of personal efficacy:

"I never saw any group to join. Then I don't think I would have joined such a group. I was too busy being educated, and fighting wars, and starting my job, and then bringing up my family..." (F3; pt2; 898/900).

"Very few people went out to work and so the women were more interested in the home and family and they weren't expected to take up aggressive positions in groups (common agreement)." - "Yes. I think like that now. I look back on my life and I think 'Well, what have I done? I haven't done anything except have children'." (F6; pt1-2; 414/420).

"Looking back I might have been able to if there was a suitable group (common agreement)." (F6; pt3; 390/391).

"I think I've always had difficulty in joining a group (common agreement)." (F6; pt1; 369/370).

However, remembering not being involved in collective action in the past was also associated with regret:

"I know, and I'm proud of that but for myself I haven't done anything with my brain or sort of... you know. Which I would have liked to have done." (F6; pt2; 432/434).

When participants reported belonging to a group, they explained that the aims of these were not specifically to bring about social change:
"Yes, Lions was active. But again, a little bit more like Rotary. The thing was that we didn’t -when we joined Round Table-we didn’t have a chequebook. I mean, not that we could offer to other people. We worked damn hard but we got an enormous amount of benefit from it. And the other thing about it was it wasn’t just for the men, it was for our family.” (F3; pt4; 925/930).

In parallel, and mostly among participants who used passive ways of political participation, the fact that they belonged to groups not oriented towards social issues (e.g. leisure, education, social welfare, older people groups oriented in business and professional) was emphasised. Participants reported that, instead, they were provided with the opportunity to share and exchange experiences, which appeared to enrich their personal life, with no apparent need to bring about social change:

“I’ve ever had the feeling that I want to go and change things. I was looking after myself selfishly. I mean I joined U3A which is a lot and a lot of interest I get.” (F3; pt1; 862/864).

“I’m a member [of Greenpeace] and that’s about all. I don’t actually go out and sail their boats and get shot at or anything like that.” (F12; pt3; 643/644).

“Guildford is twinned with Frieburg in Germany which is to promote friendship between the countries. (...) that is another interest but I’m still not protesting but it’s just a hand out of friendship.” (F6; pt3; 613/618).

“Vera and I belong to twinning associations. These are things we are interested in. They’re not things to try and change attitudes.” (F13; pt5; 752/754).

“That’s it because I’ve only just belonged... I joined that. But you U3A, again, it is sharing of skills.” (F7; pt2; 202/203).

With the examples of types of action presented above, the action of voting (identified by the participants to have a group and collective change dimension) was perceived to be a very powerful one, especially for addressing problems in which the Government is involved (e.g. the Health Service):

“perhaps individually is very difficult to do something but I think collectively we will do something by choosing a political system that would address these problems. We would help and then if it doesn’t, you vote them out again.” (F1; pt3; 133/136).
Voting was believed to be a necessary activity for registering a complaint. Thus, this particular activity would be perceived by participants entitling them to complain about the present system; voting therefore become a pre-requisite and even compulsory. Moreover, this action was more frequently mentioned by those participants using passive ways of political participation, i.e. focus groups no. 6,7, 8,9,10, 12 and 13; see chapter five):

"...anybody who doesn't use their vote has absolutely no leg to stand on by complaining." (F1; pt4; 683/684).

"And also there should be compulsive vote. Everybody should vote. There should be a law passed." (F10; pt2; 164/165).

"If everybody was compelled to vote. Then the country would be run on the fact what the people require, not what a certain group requires." (F10; pt2; 359/362).

"it's your duty to vote." (F12; pt4; 534).

"Oh yes. If you're going to abstain from voting you've got to have a very good reason for doing it. The majority of people don't have a good reason." (F13; pt4; 936/938).

Independently of the fact that participants identified voting as compulsory and an effective type of collective action, a low political trust was shown among the respondents:

"The only other voice you have is your vote, but I think we're all so disillusioned and cynical about all parties, all politicians at the moment." (F4; pt4; 557/559).

"None of us understand the monetary side of things... The politicians don't and certainly we don't (common agreement)." (F13; pt5; 164/166).

"I think one of the bad things is this extremes of so called political correctness -you can't do this and you mustn't do that because it isn't politically correct to do it." (F13; pt5; 1014/1016).

In participants' view, political trust seemed to decrease as one got older:

"one tended to believe politicians at one time but the older you get the less you believe them." (F13; pt2; 687/701).
Besides, when comparing the above observation made by the participants with existing research in which several age groups were investigated in relation to political trust (Curtice & Jowell, 1995), it has been found that there are no age differences. These authors showed that there was a decline in political trust among all age groups. However, the latter research needs to be compared cautiously with the above finding, since it was based on a cross-sectional sample. In addition, it may be that these findings are the result of using retrospective accounts in the present study. Further research would be required in order to address this issue (e.g. a longitudinal study or a survey conducted with older people’s views about political trust in relation to a temporal dimension).

7.2.1.2 Age identification

In the same way as the section of instances of social change in the previous chapter, age identification emerged as a salient category among the participants when referring to types of collective action as a relevant group membership. Two main aspects characterised participants’ identification with the group of older people:

- age identification influencing choice/preference for type of action and
- particular social issues involving type of action with age identification.

7.2.1.2.1 Age identification influencing choice/preference for type of action

Willingness to consider collective action by identifying oneself as a member of the category ‘older people’ was shown among the participants. An essential point emerging from this was the fact that ‘age’ operated as a facilitator for action rather than as an inhibitor even for instances of social change related to the general community. As discussed in the previous chapter, both collective distinctiveness and collective efficacy are evident, e.g.:

“I am concerned about the issues and I think we should be doing a lot more. We older people should be doing a lot more about helping society, probably change.” (F3; p4; 345/347).
“But really pensioners there are millions of us. If we only got together somehow, we must have some effect on the Government. We must, there are too many of us.” (F4; pt4; 348/351).

“We’re not really doing anything within the wider community, are we? For the benefit of the community. I have a feeling that when you retire, you’re as it were, thrown on the scrap heap. It’s a dreadful mistake. We really need to be mobilised, there needs to be a workforce of over 60s willing to give their time, possibly expenses paid, but we could...” (F7; pt3; 218/223).

“You can by setting an example but it’s far better in a group and frankly, I mean, looking at ourselves here we are the people who are really the silent majority. Gradually, what is happening is that the older generation are becoming the greater percentage of the population. And in fact we are not doing enough at this stage to make it better for young people coming through.” (F11; pt4; 281/286).

Exceptionally, the action of marching was perceived as ineffective when there appeared to be group age identification among the participants. However, as presented above, this action was also perceived as ineffective by the participants independently of age related references:

“Well, marching -obviously when you get older you can’t march. You can’t walk far (common agreement). So therefore, it’s got to be done by discussion groups literally.” (F10; pt2; 393/395).

“Well, of course there’s a march of over 60s every year, isn’t there? You know, you get this great column going through London. You see it on the news every year. But it’s a gesture. It does nothing. It just keeps them in the public eye.” (F12; pt1; 464/467).

Similarly, participants who lived in a sheltered house (focus groups no. 9 and 10) and used ‘passive’ types of political participation, perceived lobbying among older people as ineffective:

“That’s what you normally find and of course they do form these pension committees but I don’t honestly think they get anywhere with it because I’ve been a pensioner, a widowed pensioner for seventeen years, and I’ve had the same pension as I’ve had... I’ve only had a couple of bits of interest. All this lobbying is not making a pension any better.” (F9; pt3; 200/205).
"Well the pensioners have lobbied for more pay. They’ve had marches up in London but nothing has ever been done about it. They just ignored it (…) If you go up to parliament and lobby it makes no difference. They just take you in a herd and you just sit in the Strangers Gallery… You can’t do anything about it.” (F10; pt2; 181/188).

Moreover, a lot of importance was given to individual action when participants belonged to a particular and small community, i.e. sheltered house (focus groups no. 9 and 10). In the quotation below, participants referred to issues they wanted to change in their small community when the researcher asked them on ways of bringing about social change:

"Oh, yes, your voice is heard in here because you’ve got a person you can go to, and you can state your case and that person will get hold of whatever it is that you’re upset about and sort it out, therefore it’s on a one to one basis." (F9; pt3; 303/308).

7.2.1.2.2 Particular social issues involving type of action with age identification

Older people’s power to influence social change through their families was manifested with instances concerning the environment, family and rights and values. It is important to note that when a comparison was made between those issues participants perceived to be particularly important to younger people (i.e. family, rights and values, media, law and order) with those perceived to be much more important for the participants (i.e. health, older people, environment, law and order and family) did not affect participants’ willingness to participate in collective action. Conversely, it was shown that participants expressed willingness to take action for issues such as rights and values:

"I think we can influence again through our families (…) if you think in terms of collecting recyclable material like beer cans and so on… old people will religiously collect newspapers and cans and bottles and separate them all (…) It is a lack of social responsibility and even social guidance I think, which is… I think is different to our generation and I hope, individually I have influenced my children and that they will influence their children.” (F3; pt2; 204/216).

"It is a big problem with standards of behaviour (…) But I think that the important thing is old people should conduct themselves well so they become a role model in a sense and hope that will influence their children and maybe out of it some good will come." (F5; pt2; 36/49).
The above included their role as grandparents, i.e. participants perceived a collective change goal could be achieved:

"But you can have a go now and again, even if it's only with your own children and the ones that you know intimately, and say 'Do you really think that's the right way to behave, etc.?'." (F7; pt3; 163/166).

"And you would say that the influence of the grandparents on the children are instilling standards that perhaps have slipped a bit in these modern days (common agreement)." (F11; pt1; 845/852).

Another option identified by the participants was that of joining a group of different ages. Participants expressed a belief that a new strategy could start to develop in order to address lowering of standards of behaviour among younger people (characterised by a misuse of rights and values). This seemed to be an important point: mixed age groups can potentially bring societal change, which would allow older people to transmit values to the younger generations. But it may also be that the younger groups had something to offer to older age groups. This may lead participants to reject the social world to be categorised in terms of age and that they do not want to be seen as a group. The question why should one distinguish and separate age groups was raised:

"But if you join a photographic society or video society, or a drama group, you are going to have all age ranges. And in that way you can somehow infiltrate your ideas and listen to theirs and there's a general communing. I'm a little averse now at this stage of seeing elderly people on one side doing their own thing and they're out of the mainstream. Think of an interest and go in there, join that interest and that's the only way we can somehow influence if we wish to." (F7; pt3; 451/458).

"We can influence them if we get in with them, can't we? We can't if we go to one side and have our little groups all of elderly people over sixty." (F7; pt3; 379/381).

Both actions included positive comparisons with the group of younger people and a new dimension was introduced by the participants when referring to younger people, i.e. role as grandparents and mixing with younger people. In terms of Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1986), the above actions could be interpreted as social creativity strategy: group members alter or redefine the elements of the comparative situation (the before mentioned existing distance and gap between young people and older people), e.g. the belief that younger people do not accept any criticisms was
changed by the participants. They enhanced the existing potential for co-operating together and learning from each other. Hence, this would be a means for participants to achieve a positive social identity, by identifying with the social category “older people”.

Finally, age-oriented organisations were mentioned by participants as an option to address issues directly affecting older people (i.e. charities; professional meetings; lobbying):

“Yes, you could go to Age Concern and say ‘Look, this isn’t fair. What can I do about it?’ And they’ll put you in touch with…” (F11; pt1; 220/222).

“I mean I go to pensioner meetings of my old company to support those people who are putting a lot of time and effort into trying to protect and improve my pension. I support them merely by going to a meeting once or twice a year sort of thing to show I’m behind them.” (F13; pt5; 649/653).

Within the identified age-oriented organisations among the participants, an educational organisation of older people such as the University of the Third Age (U3A) was perceived to have some potential for collective change:

“there are members in the U3A who feel it shouldn’t be a pressure group (...) but if we get much bigger then we have got something there which could be used to put points to politicians.” (F13; pt4; 619/626).

7.2.1.2.3 Other roles/properties of older people’s identity structure

Additionally, some of the mentioned actions included neither an identification with the social category ‘older people’ nor characteristics related to age. As an example, the actions presented below were related to the participants’ personality and British nationality:

“Our own concern is our own country and we should do something about that first… There again, we have a responsibility abroad because of the way we have acted abroad in the past and the British, the French, the Spanish, they’ve all been as bad in their ways. In different times. And so I think we are responsible for conditions in some of the underdeveloped parts of the world so we should support people like Oxfam, Cafod and so on but I think we should be very, very concerned about our own country because of the mess we are getting into.” (F5; pt1; 263/273).
Chapter Seven

It also appeared that for particular instances of social change, different types of action were proposed, which included other aspects rather than age (e.g. gender, nationality) or participants' citizenship. Again, a distinction could be made between individual-group dimension (type of action) and collective expression-collective change (type of goal). A list of examples of the different identified actions and their corresponding instances of social change being addressed are presented in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of action / Type of goal</th>
<th>ACTIONS (instances of social change)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual / Expression</td>
<td>• Self-commitment (media; environment; European Union). E.g.:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;1: You know with the television, I mean it's all/</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2: I think that's what's wrong with a lot of the young children. They see too much.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1: But do you do anything? I don't do anything, I just/</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2: I just turn it off.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3: Yes, I suppose/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2: I turn over to the other side. I just don't watch it.&quot;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(F11; pt 1-2-3; 305/311).</td>
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<td></td>
<td>&quot;you can certainly operate at a personal level, and as you say not run a car if you can feel that strongly about it or whatever else....&quot; (F3; pt 2; 179/181).</td>
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<td></td>
<td>&quot;I mean when we went into the Common Market we had to go around all the orchards in Kent and put... Just literally saw down good apple trees. Bramley apple trees and; I went out and bought one and planted it in the garden as a protest.&quot; (F12; pt 6; 573/576).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Individual / Change</td>
<td>• Write to MP (Environment; British issues). E.g.:</td>
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<td></td>
<td>&quot;2: And getting into power, but we don't hear them talking in any sensible way about either a short or a long term policy for the environment (...)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1: &quot;So that is one way where it can work individually by writing to MP's and ministry departments and so on.&quot; (F3; pt 1; 192/203).</td>
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<td>&quot;I got interested in art and so I get very annoyed when they send British art treasures abroad and so then I write to the MP and I make a fuss about things like that that bother me (...) I do get quite a bit of response.&quot; (F12; pt 7; 731/736).</td>
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• Write to the local media (Environment). E.g.:
"2: I wrote to the Telegraph and sent them a long letter explaining that they should have an underground station at every point where a main road enters the orbital road from outside - like the M1 or whatever - and the enormous car park so that people could come that far, could park their cars, get on the underground and go into town. That everyone should have one. So I wrote this letter to the Telegraph and it never got published.
1: (...) did you write to the national press?
2: It was the Daily Telegraph, yes.
1: Yes, well the Telegraph is a waste of time.
2: Is it? I agree with you (People laughing).
1: I think where you can get letters published is with the local press. You know, the Surrey Advertiser, for instance in this area. I know you get through to fewer people but it's better than not getting through to anyone." (F3; p.t4; 560/578).

• Educate (crisis of values). E.g.:
"We should be doing more than we are at the moment. I must admit I'm looking for more opportunities but I am looking for more opportunities in the area of education. I believe that I can help people, not by something, some magic formula that I have, but by helping people to understand more about themselves. And then setting some goals. Because what I see today - and I see this even with so-called successful people-they really don't know what they want out of life! And they don't seem to be setting goals and working towards achieving those goals. So yes, I think we ought to do more and I am looking for ways and means of doing more. Because I feel that I have a contribution to make." (F3; p.t4; 584/595).

• Group / Expression

• Join a charity / voluntary organisation. E.g.:
"But quite a lot of the interest groups are trying to change people's attitudes. I'm an osteoporosis sufferer and the osteoporosis group isn't just helping those of us that have but trying to change attitudes. And I think that as a group you can." (F2; p.t4; 325/328).

• Join a family oriented organisation (family; rights and values). E.g.:
"Because we were concerned for others. Our concern of being involved was fellowship. And the way you get fellowship is by doing projects together. And the big thing about Round Table is although you have a chairman, it's only for one year and it's rotated. So, people do rotate and I found Round Table excellent when I was twenty-seven, twenty-eight... And I think it was also an education coming through Round Table. I joined Rotary and I didn't like it; I joined Lions and I didn't like it and then I decided that I wouldn't join
any more clubs... But Round Table was absolutely ideal." (F3; pt4; 908/917).

Group / Change

- Voting (Women’s voice; health; education; social services). E.g.:
  “I don’t know about other people but it seems to me that whilst there are hundreds, thousands of women across the world who still have no vote, (common agreement) who still are treated like chattels, even if we think ‘Well it is not going to make any difference if I vote’, on behalf of those other women who can’t (common agreement).” (F2; pt5; 782/786).

- Join an organisation (Government, professional, older people, environment, law and order). E.g.:
  “I have to confess I’m a member of the parish council. So I’m in at the bottom tier of local government...” (F5; pt2; 655/657).
  “I’m perhaps more of a group person possibly. I mean there were particular reasons that I did join a Trade Union at one stage (common agreement); a management Trade Union at one stage and get in... And I got involved in the sort of writing things and doing all sorts of things. I mean I joined Rotary 20 old years ago.” (F13; pt5; 605/612).

The instance of social change of the environment included most of the types of individual action identified by the participants (self commitment, write to MP’s, write to the local media) and group action in a change dimension. Furthermore, both the ‘self-commitment’ and ‘join a social change organisation’ options appeared to be the activities which included a wider range of instances of social change among the individuals (change in the media, environment and European Union for self-commitment and government, professional, older people, environment, law and order for join a social change organisation).

7.2.2 Legitimisation

In parallel, legitimisation of both action and inaction was present among participants’ discourse when referring to general actions and specific ones. Legitimisation has already been described as one of the main social functions of ideologies (Van Dijk, 1998). It is “related to the speech act of defending oneself, in that one of its appropriateness conditions is often that the speaker is providing good reasons, grounds or acceptable motivations for past or present action that has been or could be criticised.
by others” (p. 255).

Regarding participants’ accounts, legitimisation was observed in relation to past, present and future actions and it was very much noticeable when the “older people” identification was salient. This process of legitimisation included arguments used to justify “action” and “inaction”, in which choosing one type of action over another were considered by the participants.

7.2.2.1 Action

Age as a relevant group membership was present among most of the arguments provided by the participants when legitimising action. Two main aspects of this identification were (i) legitimisation for action with both age oriented and broader identifications; and (ii) social comparison with the younger generation (bringing about changes for them but at the same time legitimating doing so with them, co-operating together).

7.2.2.1.1 Age as a relevant group membership

Legitimisation for action with both age oriented issues and broader identifications

This encompassed a series of sub-themes, in which participants enhanced four main characteristics of older people as a group, i.e. effectiveness, high number of older people, time available and wisdom. Note that in none of the quotations participants referred in terms of “this action because we are old” as a way of legitimising action. Conversely, they emphasised positive characteristics of older people in order to legitimise their potential contribution for bringing about social change, in which, again, collective distinctiveness and collective efficacy were reflected in each of the quotations. All of these aspects would correspond to what has already been called “sageism” (Minichiello et al., 2000), which refers to a positive form of ageism, assuming that older people are wise, and hence, support the older person’s self image and ability to engage in the social world. These aspects are listed below and a quotation is included as an example for each of them:
"We are effective":

"But I do think that our age group could put pressure on the media and try and do something to stop them exaggerating. I mean, you said that the police say that statistically there isn't more violence but we read it all the time." (F2; pt6; 118/122).

"We are many":

"But really pensioners there are millions of us. If we only got together somehow, we must have some effect on the Government. We must, there are too many of us." (F4; pt4; 348/351).

"We have the time":

"Well, I'm very concerned on the state of the environment particularly as regards to transport and I think old people can do quite a lot(...) because normally speaking older people have a little more time than younger ones and I think the move towards public transport should start probably with older people, and I think is essential that we do have a good transport system." (F5; pt1; 25/32).

"We have the wisdom":

"I think we should have more opportunity to give our opinions and to even advise (common agreement); I mean people of our age, we're in a better position to be able to give a certain amount of advice and I think we need to think ourselves out a lot before we start." (F5; pt1; 613/617).

On the other hand, individual action was also legitimised, but age identification was not as salient as the group dimension. Participants' role as citizens was frequently mentioned:

"The gap between the rich and poor in this country has increased tremendously. Not only that, in a sense it is increasing on a world scale. So, the poor nations are becoming poorer and the rich are becoming richer to some extent at their expense... So, you know, we can't accept that leave it to private enterprise and so on and everything will be okay because that is not the way it happens. And sadly, from my point of view, - let me say first of all I have many friends in America (delightful people and so on), but I think the American ethos is taking over in this country and I think we are going to be a lot worse for that and I think we have to take upon ourselves as individuals; in our role as citizens, through our children and through education as you variously say. In all sort of ways we've tried to try to remedy a situation which I think is in the last twenty years generally, sadly deteriorated." (F3; pt3; 203/214).
As presented throughout this chapter, actions such as self-commitment and writing to the MP’s were preferred by the participants:

“Well they are beginning to I think at last but they’ve been forced into it. But of course that’s where these groups are doing a good job (common agreement). They’re putting the pressure on. And as you say individually we can do a lot by writing to... I think eventually if they get enough letters they take notice. So that is one way where it can work individually by writing to MPs and ministry departments and so on.” (F5; pt1; 196/203).

“Because I can’t believe anything that’s in them [papers] (common agreement). And I think if everybody started...[to boycott papers]. If everybody did that, and that, then they’d print the truth in the end. Because if the photographers take these pictures, stick them in the newspapers and the newspapers print it with all their words. And I feel that that’s one way of protesting. It’s by not buying a paper. And I’m only one in millions but I think if they all tried it, it would be better.” (F9; pt3; 607/614).

Finally, it was shown that the same participant could move from the individual to the group dimension (and vice versa) and from the collective expression to the collective change goal (and vice versa). The following quotation is a good example of legitimisation of both individual and group action, and shows how the same participant legitimised both actions and used them for different issues:

“Well, I was going to say, I know that you can because I have lobbied two of our MP’s... Personally as an individual and then from the Parish Council point of view. On different subjects: one in which I was terribly interested as an individual and the other was a subject which the local Parish Council were interested in. And we got the local MP support in the case of the Parish Council. I could not get a local MP support in respect to what I wanted individually.” (F3; pt5; 712/719).

Social comparisons with the younger generation

Participants made a series of social comparisons with younger people. It was expressed they felt responsible for younger people and that changes needed to be made in order to provide them with a better life and future (from economical aspects to social values):

“But very often is the young people who’ll say that. They say ‘look at the world we’re in. It’s such a mess... I’m not going to vote.’ And I’ve heard that said and I think that is terrible! But it is a lack of instilling into them again their duties.” (F1; pt2; 685/689).
"You can by setting an example but it’s far better in a group and frankly I mean, looking at ourselves here we are the people who are really the silent majority. Gradually, what is happening is that the older generation are becoming the greater percentage of the population. And in fact we are not doing enough at this stage to make it better for young people coming through." (F3; pt4; 281/286).

Indeed, getting involved with other age groups when engaging in collective action was perceived as a very important element for legitimising action and ultimately diminished any possible threats to participants’ identification with the social category “older people”:

"Essential. In fact that’s what keeps you young and going." (F12; pt4; 766).

"Because they’re so enthusiastic, aren’t they? They’re just as you were when you were younger." (F12; pt1; 770/771).

Thus, the above quotations suggested that comparisons with others was not only a strategy for action, but also at the same time, it could function as a way of “remaining young” (Furstenberg, 1989), in order to continue to see oneself as being “not old”. In addition, Trela’s (1971) study of a senior centre and other old age group memberships had already suggested that by belonging to mixed generational voluntary organisations, the development of attitudes legitimating political behaviour based upon age would be mitigated.

The following are quotations indicating participants’ desire to get involved with people of different ages and thus emphasising positive interactions:

“I think, don’t you, it’s a mistake to isolate yourself from other age groups? (common agreement). I’m not a great believer in retired people mixing with other retired people. Or teenagers only being with teenagers. There’s a great deal to be learned and a great deal of value.” (F2; pt5; 606/611).

“I think it’s a challenge if you’re involved with young people, but it’s an exciting challenge." (F3; pt4; 509/510).

“I think it would be a good thing to mix the ages, you know. I think in a group, a group should be of various ages. Not of the same age. I think that is a big mistake (common agreement).” (F5; pt1; 277/280).
“It’s good for the young people to hear what the old people say and vice versa (common agreement) rather than the old people saying ‘well, in my day I did so and so’ (common agreement).” (F6; pt3; 303/306).

7.2.2.2 Inaction

Legitimisation of involvement in collective action within the group of older people did not apply to all participants. There was also evidence of inaction from the focus groups. Reasons provided by these participants were that (i) older people are not that homogeneous so that change could be brought; (ii) actions which were perceived to be ineffective (as mentioned before); and (iii) prevalence of moral order. This latter reason included institutional restrictions, defined by law, regulations, law and order, which presupposed moral or legal grounds. According to Van DijK (1998), the act of legitimisation would entail that an institutional actor believes or claims to respect official norms, and hence to remain with the prevalent moral order. Finally, it was also found that these participants had previously been classified as using “passive” ways of political participation:

“How big is the group in the over 65s that could effectively bring pressure on any executive? I put it to you gentlemen it’s not big enough. There’s too disparate a group.” (F8; pt4; 252/254).

“Well of course there’s a march of over 60’s every year, isn’t there? You know, you get this great column going through London. You see it on the news every year. But it’s a gesture. It does nothing. It just keeps them in the public eye.” (F12; pt1; 464/467).

“4: I think the only way we could change things would be to get into the position of power ourselves and then do what we want. 2: But then you do not change things, do you? You create a new set of rules which everybody else dislikes (common agreement) and really it’s a vicious circle. I don’t think you would ever do it because if you go right the way back, whoever is the guy on there, he’s the one who dictates what happens and we all conform to a greater or lesser degree, don’t we?.” (F13; pt2-4; 886/890).

The latter quotation would also reflect Held’s (1984) continuum of obedience or compliance, which was intended to address legitimacy in Great Britain in the eighties. This includes a whole range of explanations why people obey those who claim authority over them, from “following orders or coercion” (i.e. there is no choice in the
matter) to "normative agreement" (i.e. belief that it is right as individuals and members of a collectivity) and "ideal normative agreement" (i.e. belief it is what in ideal circumstances - with for instance all the knowledge - we would have agreed to do).

Finally, religion emerged as another theme accounting for inaction in participants' discourses. Religion was not prompted throughout the focus groups and emerged naturally from the participants in a few of the groups, and it was mostly discussed in those groups constituted by women (i.e. focus groups 1 and 12). In line with previous research, it has been demonstrated that women are on average more religious than men (cf. Beit-Hallahmi & Argyle, 1997; Bergan & Tahmeseb McConatha, 2000). Possible explanations for this have been further explored, suggesting personality differences between men and women (e.g. women having stronger guilt feelings and assuming more responsibility for relationship maintenance and social support) and other cultural characteristics (e.g. women are better "socialised" and "socialisers" than men, conforming much more to social norms and also in transmitting cultural norms and traditions, in which religion is included) (cf. Beit-Hallahmi & Argyle, 1997).

Some of the participants referred ultimately to religion as a personal option which allowed them to be more aware of their personal life and even becoming a way of living. Thus, participants acknowledged that there is a spiritual dimension to life that has been neglected and the need to bring God back into life. People whose religion is salient have shown to be more likely to apply to their own lives religion's interpretative schemes to understand their lives and shown to have a strong positive effect on attributions of meaning and purpose in life, i.e. the extent to which individuals perceive that they lead a worthwhile and goal-oriented existence (Petersen & Roy, 1985). Besides, this was in line with previous literature which has emphasised that religious beliefs, together with the older person's intergenerational identification with family, nation and culture become important elements of a sense of self in later life (Sherman, 1993):
"I became a Christian very suddenly... My whole life has changed. Completely changed. I'm fulfilled, I'm content. All the things that I've never been. But that doesn't mean to say I'm not interested in anything else. In fact it probably makes you more aware of things happening." (F12; pt1; 657; 662).

"Now some countries are quite strong in their following of one church or the other and one wonders if that is a good thing and helps to maintain the balance of the country and the family." (F13; pt1; 954/957).

"2: I bring God back into life... Not in any stereotyped way in particular but we all have this sort of search; something beyond ourselves and we're shutting the door and becoming less and less aware of it..."
6: Whether we might be Hindus or Islamic/
2: Exactly... We all know there is something/
6: It gives you a higher thing to look to, and getting back to law and order, it stems from that.
(....)
3: The ethics, the ethics of society... The ethics. And there is a spiritual dimension to life as well as physical. There is a spiritual dimension that has been neglected or.../
(F1; pt2,6,3, 800/811).

"I think you are going to have to accept how other people live. You don't always agree with it. But I think by your own way of living you can show other people that perhaps it might be a little better than their own way. That sounds a bit pompous perhaps but, no... I think that is really the Christian teaching, that you do it by love and sharing and example. And then perhaps all the nasty things that other people encompass in their lives or.../
(F1; pt5; 872/880).

Moreover, some of the existing literature on religion has underlined that religiosity increases with age (e.g. Ainlay & Smith, 1984; Hunsberger, 1985; McFadden, 1995; Baker & Nussbaum, 1997). In particular, when two dimensions of religion were studied (i.e. levels of religious affiliation and private religious devotion) it was indicated that adults have a tendency to increase both levels of religious affiliation and private religious devotion across the life-span (Bergan & Tahmeseb McConatha, 2000). However, these results should be interpreted carefully, since (i) some other authors have claimed for stability of religiosity among older people when measuring religious attendance, self-rated religiosity and practice of private prayer (e.g. Markides, Levin & Ray, 1987), the latter aspect slightly declining among the very old; (ii) most of the present older people within this study and previous research were
Chapter Seven

raised in a more religious era and results obtained in the coming years with new cohorts of older people may not lead to the same results.

Additionally, when reviewing literature which has incorporated religious beliefs in the study of collective action, it has been found that strong religious feelings appeared to inhibit both conventional and unconventional political participation (Barnes et al., 1979). The authors suggested that church attendance and participation in the spiritual life of the community is in some way an alternative activity for older people when compared with political participation. Hence, Barnes et al.'s (1979) findings, together with the above references found in existing literature linking religious beliefs and older people, might help explain non willingness to engage in collective action in some of the participants of this study.

Finally, it needs to be acknowledged that these quotations may at the same time reflect some kind of 'fatalism' (i.e. the belief that individuals cannot have any type of control over social power and thus being a way of accepting reality as it is) or 'meritocratic individualism' (i.e. belief that individual control is possible over power and social order). This latter representation will fulfil a function of legitimisation and naturalisation of social inequalities, which will be strongly associated to religious identity (personal virtue is enhanced) (Vala, 1990).

Furthermore, the fact some of the participants brought religion when referring to willingness to engage in collective action, could also be part of participants’ ideology, which might tell them what social issues they should fight for or legitimising what social issues are worth fighting for. However, this was not elaborated much by the participants, since ‘religion’ was neither prompted throughout the focus groups nor it was a research question initially addressed. Thus, the above observations were merely conjectural, and future research might need to address them.
7.2.3 Social Representations of older people

Another aspect which appeared to be important in influencing engagement in collective action was the social representations of older people shared by the participants.

The content of social representations of older people held by the participants included several elements, listed in table 7.2. Two main themes appeared to shape these social representations, i.e. re-definition of the boundaries of the group and definition of the 'other'/ 'outgroup'/ 'oppositional' group. The former included aspects about how participants defined themselves in terms of the group of older people and the latter was about how participants distinguished between their group and the oppositional group, which in this particular context was 'younger people'.

Within the re-definition of the boundaries of the group, a temporal dimension was included. Past comparisons helped participants to re-define the group of older people by enhancing the fact nowadays older people are “younger” and “more active”. In other words, that might have been a way to reject the negative stereotype of older people which would conceptualise older people as fragile, inactive and with a lack of interest for societal issues.

Furthermore, the re-definition could be interpreted as a way for the participants to dissociate themselves from the category ‘old’ and judge themselves as younger than their chronological age, conceptualised by Bultena & Powers (1978) and Puglisi & Jackson (1978) as ‘denial of ageing’. However, context of each of the quotations referring to the above confirmed “young” identification was used by the participants in order to legitimise their potential for bringing about social change. Participants even pointed out at their age as an important factor of their choice for bringing about social change.

Secondly, and linked to the above, participants emphasised their desire to keep intellectually stimulated and how important it was for them to feel active. They
stressed the fact that older people have a lot of interests and that they have the possibilities of sharing skills and experiences in various activities. Old age was perceived to be a period of self-expansion, self-awareness and personal development. It was expressed that participants' priorities had changed, mainly in relation to the family. Now participants reported they had more time available for discovering an 'outside' world full of interests and opportunities for them to engage in. This 'world' was characterised by 'free choice', in which one can join various groups/activities. These aspects were also identified and classified within the principle of "conceding and accommodating to age" found in Furstenberg's (1994) research on "rules" for ageing (principles responding to age-related changes; see chapter two), which corresponds to rules depicting attractive features of the acceptance of age.

Finally, participants emphasised heterogeneity among the group of older people by distinguishing between "them" (older people who complain about their health; believe that past used to be better and who do not accept they are old) and "me" (older people who believe there are issues that need to be addressed and thus bring about change, who identify with the social category "old person" and believe that they are active and with many interests and hence engage in collective action). Similar results were shown in Cai et al.'s (1998) research on intragenerational communication among a sample of older people which examined how older people perceived their interactions with younger and older adults. It was revealed that participants perceived 'other' older adults to be non-accommodating (e.g. who always complain, closed-minded), even more than the younger groups. This links with previous research (see chapter two) which found that older people reserve the negative stereotypes for other older people rather than to themselves (e.g. Luszcz & Fitzgerald, 1986).

Additionally, individual differences were underlined by the participants. In particular, self-continuity was considered to be a facilitator of collective action in some of the participants, stressing that they were the same as before they retired (i.e. interest in social issues; social conscience). This is in line with Furstenberg's (1989) ethnographic research with older women, in which continuity was shown among the
participants when referring to involvement in social activities and participation.

Thus, the re-definition of the boundaries of the group included a rejection and denial of the stereotype of the old person, which would comprise a way of defining older people as a collective of people who occupy a devalued place in society (e.g. fragile, dependent, engaged in meaningless activity, lack of social awareness, complaining about the present and living in the past) and of de-personalisation (e.g. belief that older people are all the same).

Finally, the definition of the 'other'/'outgroup'/'oppositional' group uniquely included social comparisons with younger people, both positive and negative. Positive evaluations enhanced relations with younger people, which were perceived to influence participants' choice of collective action. Although participants acknowledged generational gaps existed, it was stressed that they could communicate with each other if an effort was made. Positive descriptions of younger people such as "enthusiastic" and "caring" were included by the participants. Moreover, participants justified the fact that young people tend to form groups with people of similar ages by reminiscing their youth experiences. SIT (Tajfel & Turner, 1986) would argue that the salience of a group identity leads to the search for favourable social comparisons with other groups, with the resulting ingroup bias and outgroup derogation. Contrary to this prediction, positive evaluations of younger people shared by the participants proved that outgroup derogation is not always the case in social comparison processes and this may be because individuals had previously belonged to the "outgroup".

However, as some of the quotations already anticipated, there appeared to be a number of negative evaluations of younger people. These included acknowledging some young people who lack respect towards older people and who underestimate the wisdom older people have.
Table 7.2: Different aspects configuring the social representations of older people.

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<tr>
<th>Aspects</th>
<th>Social Representations of Older people</th>
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**RE-DEFINITION OF THE BOUNDARIES OF THE GROUP**

(1) Comparisons with the past: ‘More active’ and ‘younger’:

"I think that’s one of the wonderful things about retirement now. I can think back to when my grandparents were the same age as I am and they seemed dreadfully old! (common agreement).
They didn’t do anything or go anywhere! It was just accepted that once you finished work you sat there in front of the fire knitting or doing a bit of gardening. That was your sphere of life! I think the wonderful thing is now that pensioners are able to do so many things and I think that pensioners now—maybe because I get older—but I don’t think they seem old! I’m constantly amazed that how/" (F1; pt4; 552/561).

"Now we are younger... Definitely younger..." (F1; pt6; 562).

"Like my grandmother. She was an old lady... (common agreement)." (F1; pt6; 583).

(2) Keeping intellectually stimulated: the need to be ‘active’:

"Not it’s just I feel that encourages those of us who’ve reached a certain age to feel that we can still discuss and feel positive and share views and if you like just get out of the house. I’m just glad now I’m retired to have certain times during the day when I’m going to go to a lecture. Admittedly because I’ve taught for so many years. I would hate just to sit at home with nothing specific to do and I didn’t... Although I did have a part time job initially when I retired, I don’t work any more but it is comforting to find that people of our age do share these views." (F7; pt2; 187/196).

"That’s it because I’ve only just belonged... I joined that. But U3A, again, it is sharing of skills -Are you aware of this Judith? Oh yes, of course you came along, didn’t you? Now I hadn’t heard of it until I retired, to my shame, but it is really stimulating to feel that those who have been in professions, interesting jobs, will tell contemporaries of their work or just have a specific interest which they are happy to talk about and invite discussion and it allows you to let off steam, for example, current events, where you certainly get differences of opinion... But it’s just stimulating, just to prove that our brains haven’t gone to seed." (F7; pt2; 202/213).

"I read of this scheme in the local paper -the play project at prison and so I thought ‘Well that sounds interesting’ and I agreed to go. But I had to go and obviously you go and see if you want to do it. Well yes, but I mean, also from my point of view, I’m getting claustrophobic in my old age and I wasn’t sure I wanted to be behind locked doors you see (People Laughing).” (F11; pt3; 954/958).

"You can get books for free; we have got wonderful libraries, we’ve got mostly thank goodness got radios, televisions... There’s an awful lot we can stimulate ourselves... (common agreement). (F1; pt2; 611/614).

"And the wonderful thing about retirement is that then the world is your oyster in some ways. I couldn’t maybe have the money to do certain things, but.../
-So you feel more free or more able to change things?
(common agreement).
2: And so much more to keep us in touch with everything, I think. " (F1; pt2-4; 575/580).
Free choice:
"It's changed since one retired because you're not in the same contacts as you were then and it means you’ve got more time to do... Well what you wanted to do if you want to do it. Like U3A is one thing. You can do various courses now in U3A just to please yourself and, you know, if you were working you couldn’t do it. You hadn’t got time to do that but now you've got a free choice on that and I think you can join various clubs which are around." (F5; pt3; 391/398).

Personal development:
"I think you feel that, don’t you? You’ve got more time to think. You’ve got peace and quiet. (common agreement). And you can go in directions that you want. It’s a development of your whole personality.” (F12; pt7; 719/722).

Gain in awareness:
"...we are aware of those things whereas in our younger days, we would not be." (F8; pt3; 582/583).

"Well I think... I think if you haven't been aware of things it makes you more aware of what’s wrong what’s right and how to try to” (F12; pt1; 667/669).

Decrease in family responsibilities:
"I think that’s the strong thing, that when you get older you don’t have the responsibilities of caring for them but you can go and give a hand (common agreement) and then come and rest.” (F11; pt1; 586/589).

“Yes, because your priorities have changed. Your priority is to your family until they’ve left home. Well they still are now but they are independent of course.” (F12; pt4; 726/728).

(3) Heterogeneity:
'Me as young' vs. 'them as old':
"I find with elderly people... All I seem to get from them is a lot of complaints about their health; a lot of complaints that life isn’t what it used to be, and life never was what it used to be and that becomes rather boring.” (F3; pt3; 521/524).

"And what finally finished it was, they had a dinner dance, and all these old people come along - I’m talking about old now, they were sort of... if they were on two legs and could walk ... And they were all if you like trying to go for eternal youth almost and this I thought was horrible.” (F8; pt3; 816/822).

Continuity of individual differences:
"2: No. I’ve always been assertive. I’m the eldest//
-So it’s nothing to do with your age now? It’s that you’ve always been the same?
2: Your character and your//
3: Yes. You don’t perhaps change after sixty. ( ) You are what you are.” (F7; pt2-3; 557/562).

"No, I’ve always had a big social conscience.” (F12; pt1; 357).
DEFINITION OF THE ‘OTHER’ / ‘OUTGROUP’ / ‘OPPOSITIONAL’ GROUP

(1) Young people. Positive evaluation:
"But I’m on the same wavelength as my 25 year old completely. My eldest daughter says we’re clones. I say ‘What?’ and she says ‘Yes’. You know, we know what we’re thinking and I’m sure there are many mothers and children like that. I think we’ve always had a generation gap, haven’t we? (common agreement)." (F2; pt1; 594/598).

"It is no good saying we’ve got that old lot over there, you know, silly old devils. And us saying that young lot there, all they can do is play their pop music all day. You know, we’ve got to get over these sort of barriers because that’s what we feel I’m sure." (F8; pt3; 832/836).

"Because they’re so enthusiastic, aren’t they? They’re just as you were when you were young."
(F12; pt1; 770/771).

"I don’t think there’s anything new. I think we all went through these things. Certainly when I was young, well most of us I suppose, round the war, we formed groups within our own peer groups, didn’t we? You know, we were all the same age. We didn’t tend to associate - we always looked upon the older people as the outsiders and now we look at it the other way round and say the young ones are the outsiders and don’t conform. But I don’t think it’s a new phenomena. I think it’s been there most of the time." (F13; pt2; 809/817).

(2) Young people. Negative evaluation:
"Children are not brought up to respect older people these days."
(F1; pt1; 268/269).

"We’ve been put to one side. Here are these people going on living in the middle and early years and we’re on the side. Why should they come to us? They don’t really value what we’ve got to say." (F7; pt3; 333/336).

Additionally, social representations of older people seemed to differ between the ‘active’ and ‘passive’ groups. Among those participants who belonged to an “active” group, older people were represented as “active and empowered”, whereas in those “passive” groups it often included a “resigned and weak” representation. This in turn, was related to the nature of age identification, affecting the content and definition of participants’ identification with the group of ‘older people’. However, these conclusions should be read carefully, since the differences among the focus groups were not always systematic. Examples of this in the “active” groups are presented below, followed by a few more examples in those groups constituted by “passive” participants:
“Active”:

“... But I do think that our age group could put pressure on the media and try and do something to stop them exaggerating. I mean, you said the police say that statistically there isn’t more violence but we read it all the time (common agreement). (F2; pt6; 118/122).

“You can by setting an example but it’s far better in a group and frankly I mean, looking at ourselves here we are the people who are really the silent majority. Gradually, what is happening is that the older generation are becoming the greater percentage of the population.” (F3; pt4; 281/285).

“I think we should have more opportunity to give our opinions and to even advise (common agreement). I mean people of our age, we’re in a better position to be able to give a certain amount of advice and I think we need to think ourselves out a lot before we start.” (F5; pt1; 613/617).

“Passive.”

“Well my oldest son-in-law he always says to me ‘Well mother you can talk when you want to, you know. You shouldn’t put yourself outside. You should come and join in because you’ve got interesting things to say’. But I think ‘Oh they don’t want to know’.” (F6; pt2; 392/396).

“... I mean, I live in the retirement bungalows now. Well it makes it all that much further for retired people to walk, particularly the people that are at the local doctors (common agreement) and we all feel very strongly about it but not enough to make a petition of it.” (F6; pt3; 786/791).

“It’s difficult because we’re out of the mainstream, aren’t we? (common agreement). We’ve been put to one side. Here are these people going on living in the middle and early years and we’re on the side. Why should they come to us? They don’t really value what we’ve got to say.” (F7; pt3; 332/336).

“5: I think when you are younger you perhaps see ideals in a simpler way and think ‘If I throw myself into this I can get things done.’ By the time you reach our age you’ve tried it all and/
2: ...It doesn’t work.” (F13; pt1-5; 586/590).
7.3 Discussion

Various actions were perceived by the participants to be collective action and were identified as possible options influencing participants’ willingness to bring about social change. They varied in terms of type of action (individual/group) and type of goal (collective expression/collective change) and were not uniquely age-oriented. Furthermore, it was revealed that particular instances of social change were associated to specific types of action (e.g. with the social issue of the Government, joining an organisation at the collective change dimension; and with problems derived from the European Union, individual action of self-commitment at the collective expression dimension).

Despite its individualistic nature, voting was identified as a type of collective action and perceived as a more effective and powerful way to bring about social change. Previous research has already found that voting remains the most common form of political participation among older people (e.g. Barnes et al., 1979; Jirovec & Erich, 1992). Moreover, it was believed to be a citizen’s duty, and thus taken for granted by the participants. However, it appeared to be much more frequent among those participants not using active ways of political activities. Thus, it was shown that participants presented what has been called “democratic ideology” (Van Dijk, 1998), which would provide the basis for judgements about the legitimacy of democratic action. In addition, these results corresponded to some specific social representations of power and democracy found in previous research (Vala, 1990; Echebarria & González, 1993). In Vala’s (1990) study of the social representations of power, egalitarianism emerged as the social representation specific to a positive attitude towards democracy, characterised by loyalty towards institutional power. More specifically, the social representation would include elements such as voting in elections as appropriate ways of political control and change; in which the functions of the elections would be of promoting political change and improving standards of living; encompassing a positive image of democracy (Echebarria & González, 1993).
In contrast, the majority of the participants showed a low political trust, which did not seem to affect participants’ option for the activity of voting. A study on politics and ageing reporting group discussions held with older people in England revealed the same results: participants showed negative attitudes to politicians, expressing that politicians did not understand and care about them. However, this did not seem to prevent them from voting (Tester, 1988). On the contrary, this type of activity was legitimised by participants. Additionally, these results are in line with previous literature (see chapter three), which found that people from several ages were moved to social action when they exhibited political efficacy but they showed a low political trust, with political efficacy being more strongly related to action (Gamson, 1968, Curtice & Jowell, 1995). This contradicted literature which revealed that conventional political activism was better predicted by presenting a high political trust (Craig, 1979; Pollock, 1983; Finkel, 1985; Zimmerman & Rappaport, 1988; Parry et al., 1992).

In addition, individual action was perceived to be a way to bring about change. The fact that individual actions were very often mentioned by the participants as effective options for bringing about social change, has already been explained in terms of individualism by Kelly & Breinlinger (1996). These authors have argued that non-involvement of the majority in group action needs to be understood within a cultural context in which individualism prevails. According to these authors, this may lead people to hold negative views about groups and group membership. In particular, four types of activities were commonly identified in the present research as individual: self-commitment, writing to the MP’s; writing to the local media and educate. Moreover, the instance of social change of the environment included three of these types of individual action.

Both options of self-commitment (individual/expression dimension) and join a social change organisation (Group/change dimension) were the activities which included a wider range of instances of social change among the participants (change in the media, environment and European Union for self-commitment and government, professional, older people, environment, law and order for join a social change organisation).
Four main themes emerged as important factors to consider when predicting willingness to engage in collective action, and some of the quotations suggested that different types of actions are likely to be predicted by different factors and that they were not uniquely perceived by the participants to be specific to the population of older people. They were perceived effectiveness of collective action (e.g. Marsh, 1977, 1990; Wolfsfeld, 1986a; Kelly & Breinlinger, 1996), age identification as relevant to group membership (e.g. Kelly & Kelly, 1994); legitimisation for action and inaction, and social representations of older people. When perceived effectiveness was expressed by the participants, some aspects were considered, which could be classified at two levels, i.e. (i) structural and (ii) personal. The former level included justifications within an organisational/group context and the latter was about aspects of the self in relation to others. Although some of the aspects were common to all of the participants (e.g. proper leadership at the structural level), it was also observed how they differed according to the types of political involvement participants had (e.g. reasons at the personal level were only identified by participants using passive ways).

Other names have been given to the concept of perceived effectiveness of collective action, i.e. “mobilization and institutional efficacy” when studied in relation to several action types of individuals (e.g. inactives, conformists) (Wolfsfeld, 1986a; 1986b) and “perceived tactical efficacy” (Nemiroff & McKenzie-Mohr, 1992) when studied on both peace and environmental contexts (activists vs. non-activists).

Still within perceived effectiveness of collective action, types of action identified by the participants, which were related to type of social issue, seemed to emphasise the importance of previous experience (e.g. actions of writing to the local media; lobbying; marching; joining organisations). This latter aspect has already been identified within different approaches studying collective action and shown to be an important factor in the study of political participation (e.g. Muller, 1982; Jirovec & Erich, 1995). Lack of membership in social issue groups in the past was also emphasised by the participants and the reasons given for that were family and work duties, adaptation to external changes, lack of knowledge, personal efficacy and
continuity. When lack of membership was pointed out by the participants, it was shown that retirement had provided them a challenge for engaging in groups, but again, being “not social issue oriented”. In other words, they reported belonging to groups such as leisure and education.

Regarding salience of identification with the group of older people, it was found that (i) age as a relevant group membership influenced choice/preference for type of action and (ii) particular social issues involved type of action with group membership salience. This theme proved to differ according to specific types of action. The only actions which were not perceived to be effective with group membership salience were marching (which had been previously shown to be perceived as ineffective when there was a lack of age salience among the participants) and lobbying (participants who lived in a sheltered house). Besides, social issues of environment, family and rights and values were associated with several actions in which participants’ identification with the category ‘older people’ was salient. Both collective distinctiveness and efficacy emerged as two important principles operating in participants’ identity and motivating collective action. Participants expressed their concerns with younger people. In particular, it was suggested to influence younger people through their role as grandparents and to join groups/activities in which there were people from mixed ages. This latter aspect might at the same time demonstrate that older people do not want age to be a way of classifying people in society. And again, as discussed in chapter six, the stage of “generativity” appeared to be present among older people. This contradicts Erikson’s (1982) theory, which emphasises the presence and importance of “generativity” in middle age but not among older people.

Although the issues of rights and values and media were perceived by the participants to be more relevant for the younger population, participants still showed their willingness to engage in collective action in order to bring about change with those identified issues. In this way, participants showed their concern for the younger generation.
Additionally, other roles/properties interacted with salience of age identification for different types of action (e.g., gender and British nationality) and participants' citizenship was also present. Overall, the fact that older people are not a homogeneous group was stressed and was often defined in a way which excluded self from it.

Legitimisation included several arguments to justify “action” and “inaction”. With regards to action, the ‘older people’ identification was salient among most of the arguments originated from the participants. Among these, action was either related to age oriented issues or others (e.g., media, environment) and social comparisons were made with the younger generation (perceived need to bring changes for them and at the same time need to co-operate together with them). The fact that participants emphasised the need to get involved in collective action with other age groups suggested two possible interpretations: (i) being a strategy for action and as a way of “remaining young” (Furstenberg, 1989) but also (ii) a rejection of “age” as a category in society (see comments above). Moreover, this study supported that strength of identification can encourage greater awareness of the intergroup context and hence the importance of intergroup comparisons for promoting collective action was confirmed (Smith, Spears & Hamstra, 1999).

Besides, when age identifications were not present among participants’ discourses, individual action appeared to be a feasible option among the participants (the most mentioned ones were self-commitment and writing to the MP). Finally it was shown how the same participant can move from the individual to the group dimension and vice versa and to the collective change-collective expression dimension and vice versa.

When inaction was legitimated by the participants, three main themes were identified: (i) older people are not homogeneous (ii) prevalence of moral order (Held, 1984; Van Dijk, 1998) and (iii) religious beliefs. Level of political participation (active/passive) seemed again to influence participants’ justifications for inaction. In particular, it was
found that when participants referred to heterogeneity among older people and prevalence of moral order in order to give grounds for inaction, participants were classified as using “passive” ways of political participation.

Regarding social representations of older people, these appeared to facilitate collective action among the participants. Thus, they proved to be linked to the above mentioned salience of ‘older people’ identification. The definition and identification of the group of older people resulted to imply shared social representations, in which several collective actions were included.

Social representations of older people comprised two main themes, i.e. re-definition of the boundaries of the group and the definition of the oppositional group. The former was referred to as how participants defined themselves in terms of the group of older people and the latter was about how participants distinguished between their group (as older people) and the oppositional group (in this context it was younger people). The group of older people was redefined with aspects such as ‘being younger’; ‘more active’; and ‘keeping intellectually stimulated’, which underlined the process of anchoring in the social representations of older people. In this way, participants incorporated novel concepts associated with “older people” (e.g. older people as active; younger) into existing ways of thinking (e.g. older people as inactive and senile). In turn, this seemed to operate as a way of rejecting the stereotype of older people portraying them as inactive and fragile. Thus, these results supported Oswald’s (1991) refutation of the notion that older people assimilate the negative societal images of being old. Also, the fact of stating for instance “we are not old, we are young”, may respond to what has already been noted by Oyserman & Markus (1998): when the social representation of the group conflicts with social representations of personhood in larger society and then these individuals need to define what they are and what they are not.

Additionally, heterogeneity of older people was again claimed by the participants and for this (i) they distinguished between “us”/”me” (active and with social awareness)
and "them" (inactive and lacking social awareness), and (ii) individual differences were pointed out by the participants (in which self-continuity in terms of personality and social awareness was mentioned by participants).

The definition of the oppositional group included both positive and negative social comparisons with only a specific group, i.e. younger people. Examples of positive evaluations were good relations between them and younger people, and how well they could communicate with each other if an effort was made by both parts. Examples of negative evaluations were lack of respect towards older people and lack of attention to the wisdom older people have. Thus, an evaluative dimension was proved to operate and shape the social representations of older people, mainly comprised of positive evaluations and resulting in a positive view of ageing. In addition, negative evaluations may result in a negative view of ageing or in the case of these focus groups, participants may re-interpret and negotiate new images of ageing in order to change the situation in which they find themselves. It needs to be acknowledged that although social representations of older people seemed to be operating as important facilitators for action, this does not exclude other social representations of personhood could also be relevant in another specific context. Thus, Oyserman & Markus (1998) have already referred to multiple social representations of personhood (e.g. gender, ethnicity, religion, social class) in industrialised heterogeneous societies, who live in multiple contexts simultaneously. These may also overlap with each other. Moreover, these results confirmed the importance and influence of the interactions with younger people in the representations of older people (Cai et al., 1998).

To conclude, these results supported the notion of interactive ageism. In particular, most of the interactions reported by the participants were shown to be positive (most of them with younger people). It seemed that the strategies followed by the participants in order to manage ageism were mainly to negotiate new images of ageing (Minichiello et al., 2000), in which they appeared to challenge the groundless assumptions of older people and the process of ageing. Accordingly, their own ageing was portrayed as positive, e.g. free choice, intellectual stimulation, acting and thinking.
“young”, with social awareness, which at the same time might reflect the belief that one can control age, through keeping oneself mentally, physically and socially active - described as “counteracting age” and “conceding and accommodating to age” by Furstenberg (1994).

7.4 Theoretical development of collective action

Data obtained in this study allow for the re-definition of the concept of collective action and the construction of an alternative model of collective action. First, the concept of action emerged within this study will be expounded, followed by a section accounting for willingness to engage in collective action, in which the theoretical development followed in this research is included.

7.4.1 Individual-group and collective change-collective expression dimensions

Derived from results in this second study, the concept of collective action was considered in relation to the quadrant below including all possible interactions between both individual-group and collective change-collective expression dimensions. Here, the individual-group dimension would refer to type of action whereas collective change-collective expression would make reference to type of goal:
The need to take into account the individual level of analysis for the study of collective action has already been pointed out (e.g., Klandermans, 1997). It has been argued that it is only at this level that we can explain why some people participate and some do not; why someone may be willing to participate in one type of action and not in another; why an individual will leave a particular action while others do not. However, the group is also seen as important:

"And as you say individually we can do a lot by writing to... I think eventually if they get enough letters they take notice. So that is one way where it can work individually by writing to MPs and ministry departments and so on." (F5; pt1; 199/203).

"It's much easier if you're within a group. I think there are a lot of people who wouldn't feel that on their own they could achieve very much." (F7; pt2; 239/241).

Though both collective change and collective expression can bring about social change, a distinction needs to be made between them.
In particular, collective change applies to the level - mainly political - which has been considered by most of the existing literature in collective action (e.g. Marsh, 1974; Barnes et al., 1979; Muller, 1982; Wolfsfeld, 1986a; Parry et al., 1992). Examples of collective change found within this research would be writing to the MP; signing a petition; marching; voting; joining an organisation.

Collective change would also include group behaviour, in which power would be an important goal to achieve. The power of a minority to bring about social change would depend on its power to use propaganda or rhetoric to influence the attitudes, beliefs and actions of the outgroups or other individuals.

It has also been argued that minorities will have to confront to group membership (Abrams & Hogg, 1990). Hence, if a minority is perceived to be as an outgroup (the majority will not want to be associated with the minority because of the negative implications for the social identity), social influence will be negated:

"It's difficult because we're out of the mainstream, aren't we? (common agreement). We've been put to one side. Here are these people going on living in the middle and early years and we're on the side. Why should they come to us? They don't really value what we've got to say." (F7; pt3; 332/336).

Within this study, it was shown how participants re-defined their position from being part of a minority with its attendant problems to being members of a majority (albeit with qualifications). This could be seen as an example of a social creativity strategy from a SIT perspective designed to affect social change. They changed their perception as a minority for the one of a "silent majority" by enhancing their numerical importance, i.e. older people representing a high percentage of the population. This would allow older people to achieve the power to bring about social change:

"You can by setting an example but it's far better in a group and frankly I mean, looking at ourselves here we are the people who are really the silent majority. Gradually, what is happening is that the older generation are becoming the greater percentage of the population." (F3; pt4; 281/285).
Secondly, the **collective expression** would refer to the attitude/representational level. This cognitive area can be referred to the following goals:

- Social and informational networks (aimed to transmit facts efficiently to the benefit of their members).
- Raising consciousness (aimed to change the members’ understanding of facts that they may have; it is a powerful mean of changing attitudes).
- Self-help groups (aimed to provide direct support and services, mostly related to health, though they may also work as consciousness-raising).

*(Breakwell, 1986)*

For instance, according to the participants in this study, having pensioner meetings with the company where they used to work, would correspond to the social and informational networks. Old colleagues meeting would provide an adequate frame to fight isolation, in which at the same time information and support can be supplied to members. In this way, members will be in control of the same organisation, far from any bureaucratic or ideological constraint:

"I mean I go to pensioner meetings of my old company to support those people who are putting a lot of time and effort into trying to protect and improve my pension. I support them merely by going to a meeting once or twice a year sort of thing to show I'm behind them." *(F13; pt5; 649/653).*

Participants within this study referring to volunteering in a cancer campaign or being a member of the osteoporosis society would be good examples of consciousness-raising groups. These groups would not only allow their members to change their understanding of issues they already know and share and externalise similar feelings so that their threatening position can be re-conceptualised; but also to change people’s attitudes:

"...but quite a lot of the interest groups are trying to change people's attitudes. I'm an osteoporosis sufferer and the osteoporosis group isn't just helping those of us that have but trying to change attitudes." *(F2; pt4; 325/328).*
Finally, organisations such as Age Concern or Citizens Advice Bureau identified by the participants in this study would correspond to the self-help groups mentioned above. The exchange of services and support would characterise these type of organisations, in which consciousness might also be raised. As Breakwell (1986) has pointed out, support groups “sit on the border between efforts to induce personal change in the threatened and social change in their society” (p. 135):

“But you see, you’ve got Consumer Council. You’ve got Age Concern. You’ve got Citizens Advice and these are very helpful people when you get in touch about things.” (F11; pt1; 231/233).

It must be considered that from a same type of action, different goals can be pursued at different times and that an individual will move from individual action to group action by aiming at a different goal or changing it. An illustration of this has already been shown in this chapter:

“Well, I was going to say. I know that you can because I have lobbied two of our MP’s... Personally as an individual and then from the Parish Council point of view. On different subjects: one in which I was terribly interested as an individual and the other was a subject which the local Parish Council were interested in. And we got the local MP support in the case of the Parish Council. I could not get a local MP support in respect to what I wanted individually.” (F3; pt5; 712/719).

The way collective action was theorised in this thesis included the concept of political participation (or some use the term “political action”). Theorists of political participation have not always provided a formal definition and as mentioned in the section above, it has been often delimited by reference to a list of activities (Bennett & Bennett, 1986). For instance, one of the most common classifications being the one comparing conventional (e.g. voting) with non-conventional (e.g. demonstrations, boycotts) political participation (Barnes et al., 1979), which involves some notion of actions taken by citizens in order to influence governmental decisions. This term of political participation has been addressed by previous literature either on its own (e.g. Marsh, 1977; Wolfsfeld, 1986a, 1986b; Sabucedo & Arce, 1991; Parry et al., 1992; Kam et al., 1999) or conceptualised as collective action (e.g. Muller & Opp, 1986; Kelly & Kelly, 1994). The latter though, has been advocated by a number of theorists writing from very different perspectives. It can also be argued that political
participation as such was treated as an antecedent within this thesis, since it was borrowed from existing theories of political participation and used in the first study (each of the activities presented to the respondents were merely addressing channels considered by most of the existing literature on collective action). However, throughout the thesis the concept of collective action matured (following results from this qualitative study) and was shown to include other types of actions, in addition to the ones offered by existing literature. Despite this, it needs to be clarified that within this thesis the position adopted is that any type of collective action is a political statement and therefore can be defined and labelled as 'political'. However, the difference with some new actions emerged in this study highlights that older people do not necessarily opt for the formal channels considered by most of the existing literature on collective action.

7.4.2 Willingness to engage in collective action

An element that needs particular attention is the fact that willingness is a motivational aspect, which refers to that which initiates, causes or induces a specific thought, movement or action (Hogg & Abrams, 1993). Thus, willingness does not correspond to actual behaviour. As Ajzen (1988) has already remarked, positive attitudes towards collective action are not necessarily equal to participating in it. Even when attitudinal and behavioural measures are compatible, there may not be a perfect relationship; the individual may not have a complete control over behaviour. However, it seemed that participants in this study used the concept of willingness very much in relation with past experience (actual behaviours) and used these past behaviours as a comparison for when referring to willingness and effectiveness of a particular collective action.

7.4.3 Theoretical development

Data from this study suggested the need to have a more sophisticated and sensitive way of conceptualising collective action. Firstly, it seems that older people make a distinction between types of collective actions, which would refer to the phenomenology of collective action. One of the existing lacunae identified when
reviewing existing literature of the concept of collective action is that it has often been
defined in relation to types of actions (Bennett & Bennett, 1986). Within the current
research, collective action will be defined by types of action in relation to specific
social psychological determinants, since data suggested that different social
psychological factors will predict people's willingness to take different types of
collective action.

Secondly, within the process of explaining the generation of collective action, some
aspects from previous theoretical grounds were necessary to be taken into account
within this thesis. From a social psychological perspective, the starting point was
relative deprivation theory (Davis, 1959; Gurr, 1970; Crosby, 1976), which would
account for the desirability of social change (as shown in chapter six). But it was
already expected that the sense of deprivation would not be sufficient for predicting
willingness to engage in collective action (Muller, 1972; Marsh, 1974; Martin et al.,
1984). Additionally, it was expected that other social psychological aspects such as
group identification (Kelly & Kelly, 1994 within the SIT framework) and collective
efficacy (e.g. Muller & Opp, 1986; Reykowski, 1998) would have an important role in
the study of collective action (as discussed in chapter three).

In addition, the model of collective action developed in this thesis is motivational,
addressing both involvement and non-involvement in collective action. The
motivational model of Klandermans (1984) has already been presented as a social
psychological model of collective action. In his model collective action is perceived
as a function of perceived costs and benefits combined with value-expectancy theory
(Feather & Norman, 1982), in which motivating an individual to participate in
collective action requires providing both selective and collective incentives (Olson,
1965). However, (i) this approach does not account for why individuals still
participate when they do not have selective incentives and (ii) does not integrate group
identification in the study of collective action. Moreover, Klandermans' model does
not seem to take into account that different types of actions could be predicted by
different factors. Thus, data from this study suggested the need to have a model of
collective action which distinguishes between those factors that are related to all types of action but also those which are more relevant to a specific action.

Results obtained in this study support the benefits of integrating Identity Process Theory (IPT) and Social Representations Theory (SRT) in order to develop a social psychological model of collective action.

Identity Process Theory
When considering identity as a variable predicting collective action, previous models on identity have focused on strength of identification (e.g. Kelly & Kelly, 1994). However, it seems that by only including strength of identification one will not be able to account for the dynamic interaction of different aspects of the whole structure of identity. Identity Process Theory (IPT) (Breakwell, 1986, 1988, 1992a, 1993) was found to be an useful framework in which this aspects could be accounted.

Additionally, results so far support the assumption of heterogeneity among older people claimed at the beginning of this thesis (see chapter two). This suggested that age is only one aspect of identity; and for some people this might be more important than for others.

Also, data showed that both content and processes of people’s identity are important and it was suggested they might influence whether to opt for one type of action or another for a particular social context. For instance, it was found that when age-related definitions of identity were not salient among the participants, individual action appeared to be an option (e.g. self-commitment; writing to the MP) for an issue such as the environment.

The role of “responsibility for bringing about social change” emerged as an important aspect of the structure of participants’ identity when age was salient, in which positive values were attached to it. In parallel, it was shown how two of the four identity principles of identity (i.e. distinctiveness and efficacy) were operating - in particular at
the collective level:

"I think we could put pressure on the media, because I don't feel that violence probably has increased only in proportion to the population... (common agreement). (...) But I do think that our age group could put pressure on the media and try to do something to stop them exaggerating. I mean, you said the police say that statistically there isn't more violence but we read it all the time (common agreement)." (F2; pt6; 115/122).

However, results also suggested that age in older people's identity does not imply that it is the most important aspect when they engage in collective action. Other characteristics of the structure of participants' identity which were not directly linked with aspects of age also emerged as important elements to take into account in explaining the generation of collective action, e.g. citizenship; religion; gender; nationality; belonging to an organisation. Besides, it was also suggested that age relates to other categories to determine or influence willingness to participate in collective action (e.g. perceived effectiveness of collective action; previous experience). The need to account for the possible interactions between these categories would be strongly supported by IPT.

The temporal dimension of participants' identity could also be explained by IPT. Within the context of collective action, participants would maintain and/or re-define both the meaning of the existing content of identity and even transform its value:

"I think to a certain extent whether you like it or not, as you pass through life because circumstances change and the society in which you live probably changes, to a certain extent whilst you may not change deep inside yourself you have to adapt a bit otherwise you can't really cope." (F2; pt5; 515/520).

Social Representations Theory (SRT)

Data showed the importance of the structure and processes of social representations in the study of collective action, in which both content (i.e. re-definition of the boundaries of the group of older people; definition of the oppositional group -which in this context it was “younger people”) and an evaluative dimension was highlighted (incorporation of novel aspects defining “older people” with positive evaluations attached to them; positive and negative evaluations of the oppositional group).
Chapter Seven

The definition and identification of the group of older people implied that there were shared social representations, in which several collective actions were included. In particular, the process of anchoring seemed to operate in the social representations of older people held by the participants in the context of collective action. Participants incorporated and negotiated novel concepts of “older people” (e.g. active and young) into existing ways of thinking (e.g. older people as fragile and passive in our society), sometimes with explicit references to the past (here the presence of a temporal dimension):

"I think that’s one of the wonderful things about retirement now. I can think back to when my grandparents were the same age as I am and they seemed dreadfully old! (common agreement). They didn’t do anything or go anywhere! It was just accepted that once you finished work you sat there in front of the fire knitting or doing a bit of gardening. That was your sphere of life! I think the wonderful thing is now that pensioners are able to do so many things and I think that pensioners now—maybe because I get older— but I don’t think they seem old! I’m constantly amazed that how!"

(F1; p14; 552/561).

In this study, it was shown how social representations provide the meaning of being an old person, together with interpretation of both content and value of identity. For instance, the novel concepts of “older people” described above seemed to allow participants to distinguish between “them” (older people who complain about their health; believe that past used to be better and who do not accept they are old) and “me” (older people who believe there are issues that need to be addressed and hence bring about social change; who accept they are old, but “active old” people):

"I find with elderly people... All I seem to get from them is a lot of complaints about their health; a lot of complaints that life isn’t what it used to be, and life never was what it used to be and that becomes rather boring.” (F3; p15; 521/524).

Additionally, some social comparisons with the younger generation would seem to facilitate collective action by people of different age groups, these comparisons included positive evaluations (e.g. existing good relations, how well older people and younger people could communicate with each other):

“But I’m on the same wavelength as my 25 year old completely. My eldest daughter says we’re clones. I say ‘What?’ and she says ‘Yes’. You know, we know what we’re thinking and I’m sure there are many mothers and..."
children like that. I think we’ve always had a generation gap, haven’t we? (common agreement).” (F2; pt1; 594/598).

However, some of the social comparisons with younger people appeared to include negative evaluations (e.g. lack of respect towards older people; lack of attention to wisdom older people have), which were perceived by the participants to hinder willingness to engage in collective action. These enabled to refer to the concept of barriers:

“We’ve been put to one side. Here are these people going on living in the middle and early years and we’re on the side. Why should they come to us? They don’t really value what we’ve got to say.” (F7; pt3; 333/336).

It was expected perceived barriers to collective action would set the context for the theoretical integration (as discussed in chapter four). Identification of barriers operating among older people in the context of collective action will be presented in the next chapter, in which it will be shown how they are not just referred to material resources or physical elements, but more importantly related to the way they give meaning to older people’s identity and societal representations.
Chapter Eight

Theoretical integration: Perceived barriers to collective action

"When I get older losing my hair,
Many years from now.
Will you still be sending me a Valentine
Birthday greetings, bottle of wine.
If I'd been out till quarter to three
Would you lock the door,
Will you still need me, will you still feed me,
When I'm sixty-four."

The Beatles (1966); When I'm Sixty-Four.

8.1 Introduction

This chapter examines the last research question in the second study of this thesis, i.e. to identify the barriers perceived by older people to engaging in different types of collective action. In the previous chapter it was suggested that both identity and social representations may operate as barriers. These barriers have been conceptualised at differing levels ranging from the intraindividual level to the group/societal level. This chapter will report on each of the levels of barriers identified in the qualitative study.

This chapter will finish by integrating the results obtained for each of the research questions addressed in the two previous chapters and this one. Finally, a discussion of limitations of the study will be presented.
8.2 Results

Possible barriers to engaging in collective action were explored. A classification of barriers at several social psychological levels and its correspondent categories will be presented; age identification will also be discussed as it relates to each level and category.

8.2.1 Intraindividual level

Participants described barriers at the personal level for engaging in collective action but for most of them, "age" was not mentioned at this level. Four main aspects were identified, i.e. self-efficacy; self-esteem; lack of concern and motivation; low collectivist orientation and lack of knowledge (see Table 8.1).

Previous literature on ageing has shown that both self-esteem and self-efficacy decrease with age (e.g. Rodin & Langer, 1980; Hunter et al., 1982; Lachman, 1986; Cai et al., 1998). However, participants who showed low levels of self-esteem and self-efficacy did not relate them to being old and therefore it cannot be assumed that both principles of identity operated as barriers as a consequence of age-related aspects of older people's identity structure.

Quotations classified under the barrier of "low collective orientation" can reflect that a particular tension in identity is created in individualist cultures between maintaining a sense of personal uniqueness on the one hand and seeing oneself as a member of social groups on the other (e.g. Brewer, 1991). For example, the following quotation entered in the table would be related to personal uniqueness, in which at the same time, the principle of continuity operates:

"So far as I'm concerned I was never a group person." (F13; pt4; 595).

However, the same participant also saw himself as a member of a social group in which even collective action could potentially be achieved:

"We haven't up to now. There are members in the U3A who feel it shouldn't be a pressure group because when we did try something at a local theatre here I had at least one letter of complaint saying that it
shouldn't be - it's an educational leisure group - not a pressure group. I think if we get much bigger, and I'm talking nationally now, not just in Guildford, if we get much bigger then we have got something there which could be used to put points to politicians." (FI3; pt4; 619/626).

"I think the only way we could change things would be to get into the position of power ourselves and then do what we want." (FI3; pt4; 886/887).

According to Kelly & Breinlinger (1996) there is ambivalence in attitudes to group membership with a person stating that she/he is not a group person but at the same time recognising that collective action is an effective way to bring about social change and that it is a very normal thing to want to join groups.

With reference to knowledge, when the participants directly showed a lack of information on how to get involved in collective action, some specific quotations referred to the search of a group/organisation. At the same time the quotations reflected some kind of willingness to know more about the ways change could be brought. However, some of the participants were aware that there is a lot of information available. As an example, libraries were mentioned as a useful resource:

"Whatever information you want, these days you can go over there to the library (common agreement) (...) There is a mass of information without actually going into the Internet." (FI3; pt5; 1026/1030).
### Table 8.1: Barriers operating at the intraindividual level.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barriers</th>
<th>Intraindividual level</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Self-efficacy</strong></td>
<td>“I’m not sure I have the capability of changing anything.” (F8; pt1; 872/873).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Self-esteem**                 | “No. I’m very nervous... I always think I’m going to say the wrong things or something like that.” (F6; pt2; 186/187).  
   “I haven’t got the courage. I mean I grumble about it but I haven’t got the courage to go forward.” (F6; pt3; 722/724).  
   “I don’t consider that I’m significant enough to make any impression. That’s just how I am (...) I can’t join in and give my opinion and things like that.” (F6; pt2; 772/778). |
| **Lack of concern and motivation** | “I haven’t been affected by any of it.” (F2; pt3; 398).  
   “Well I suppose I shan’t do anything about it at the moment because it doesn’t affect me.” (F11; pt3; 126/127).  
   “...And as an excuse that might also be it, because you don’t want to get involved. It might be that, I don’t know. I think that’s the way I feel about it.” (F11; pt1; 533/536).  
   “Perhaps I do not feel strongly enough to commit myself.” (F12; pt7; 325). |
| **Low collective orientation**  | “But there are people who have since their childhood grown up, not as loners aggravated or loners attacking but they have grown up as individuals through their course of life. They are essentially, can be disturbing in a group that understands itself very well. (...) I think there are many like this and I feel that there should be just a little thought for these people who...” (F4; pt2; 1028/1036).  
   “I grumble enough but not enough to join a group.” (F6; pt1; 620/622).  
   “So far as I’m concerned I was never a group person.” (F13; pt4; 595).  
   “I think one thing that I would say is that I worked for myself as an individual for a great many years (...). I will create a situation which is favourable to me and will get me the job I want. People who work in large organisations tend to have much more of a group orientation. They are collective, they belong to Trade Unions, house associations, whatever.” (F13; pt2; 587/591). |
| **Knowledge**                   | + Lack of information:  
   “But how do you find out? I mean, nobody actually told me or I’ve never seen it in the local press or anything that my MP is having a surgery... How do you find out about them? And if it is an MEP and then EP, the situation becomes more bazaar.” (F3; pt2; 763/766).  
   “And I think that as a group you can do it and especially as you start discovering that there are very young people with osteoporosis. But as an individual a) I didn’t have the knowledge, b) I didn’t have the leaflets and things.” (F2; pt4; 328/332).  
   + Group references:  
     “That’s it. You’ve got to find them, haven’t you? (common agreement).” (F6; pt2; 239/239).  
     “Yes, but I don’t know if there’s any other groups like that. Are there any other community groups in Guildford?” (F6; pt3; 258/259).  
     “Well, I haven’t seen any sort of group about that sort of thing!” (F11; pt2; 256/257).  
     “Where are they situated? Are they anywhere particular?” (F11; pt2; 812).  
     “I don’t really know about ARP. Is it basically just a pressure group?” (F11; pt3; 799/800). |
8.2.1.1 Age identification

At the personal level, participants also made references to their age identification and showed how it could operate as a barrier to action. Direct references to age as a barrier to action were mainly made by those participants who used passive ways of political participation. In particular, comments displaying the principle of continuity mainly focused on the following four aspects, which are illustrated by the examples below:

- they always had the same personality:
  
  "I don't think you really change. Your basic personality doesn't change at all." (F12; pt1; 634/635).

- in the past they had not felt strongly about some particular social issues and thus they were not motivated now to bring about social change and/or not having been active and member of a particular group. It is significant to note that many participants conceptualised continuity in terms of their personal life-span. This point could be suggested to mitigate against an identification with the social group of older people:

  "if you've been active and a member of various societies then you tend to continue them, even developing them further when you are retired. But some people have not developed those interests when they were younger." (F3; pt1; 978/982).

  "I'm willing to accept a challenge but... you're born to where you are now, you are what you've seen and what you've experienced and how life has treated you." (F8; pt3; 498/500).

  "...but if I analyse my life pattern, then apart from playing cricket (...) then I guess I am not a joiner based on the record. But I do not regard myself as apathetic... I make great effort to keep myself informed and as long as I'm informed, then I regard myself as doing my duty." (F8; pt4; 883/888).

  "I don't think I've ever felt strongly enough about anything. I don't think to have done anything like that even when I was younger." (F11; pt3; 564/566).

  "I wouldn't say I did any more or less now than I did 20 years ago." (F12; pt6; 365/366).
• Others perceived that their attitudes and way of seeing things had changed throughout their life-span, and “present age” was compared with “past age”, reflecting individual subjective discontinuity. However, this latter consideration encompassed age but it was not perceived as being the only barrier.

    “not now...I mean it is too late now.” (F6; pt3; 387).

    “I think when you are younger you perhaps see ideals in a simpler way and think ‘if I throw myself into this I can get things done’. By the time you reach our age you’ve tried it and..” (F13; pt5; 586/589).

• participants were not willing to engage in collective action anymore because of age:

    “And basically what has stopped you from doing that is that you say the younger generation...? - My age.” (F8; pt2; 950/952).

    “...as you get older, you don’t want to get involved, there is too much paperwork and too much time wasted, isn’t it?” (F9; pt3; 135/137).

    “Well, I would say I was too old to start with. I mean you can’t concentrate as much as you used to really, can you? Your concentration goes, doesn’t it really?” (F9; pt1; 213/215).

8.2.1.1.1 Physical impairment as a result of old age

Physical impairment was mentioned by both “active” and “passive” participants, in which those aspects related to mobility, hearing and general health were particularly perceived as barriers to engaging in organisations, and specifically taking part in activities such as demonstrations and marching:

    “...health would be difficult because the thing is if you take on a job that which is... you can be called on at any time, and there’s certain days that you don’t feel like that.” (F9; pt3; 150/152).

    “Because your health is not 100%, you get up in the morning and you concentrate on doing another day, because your health isn’t right and you hope you’re going to get through that day without having to call the doctor or something like that. So organisations really doesn’t come into our life.”(F9; pt3; 320/325).

    “I mean when you get to our age group. We are physically not as strong as we used to be. So really, with Greenpeace for instance, I am paying them money so that the young people can go out and do what has to be done. And when I see pictures of them in those little rubber boats I think ‘Go for
Chapter Eight

it’. But I couldn’t do it. I know I couldn’t. I’m not strong enough.” (F2; pt3; 733/739).

“I think one is slightly slower as one gets older.” (F12; pt4; 369).

“I’m hopeless in a group with my hearing” (F6; pt3; 345/346).

“You wouldn’t be able to hear everyone from all directions, that’s the thing.” (F6; pt3; 354/355).

8.2.2 Interpersonal level

Participants also described barriers at the level of the individual in relationship with others. Several aspects emerged within this level: difficulty in approaching other people versus no right to impose or intrude on other people’s beliefs and ideas; threats of meeting manipulative people; difficulty to achieve consensus when other people are involved and to communicate with others; and previous experience. The latter showed a feeling of burnout among the participants, which included high personal effort in (i) getting people motivated and (ii) overcoming people who are self-interested. Some examples of quotations are provided below. Besides, barriers identified at this level by the participants did not include identification with the social category ‘older people’ and no references to the process of ageing were shown.

Table 8.2: Barriers operating at the interpersonal level.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barriers</th>
<th>Interpersonal level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Approaching other people</td>
<td>“It’s very difficult to change other people’s ideas.” (F1; pt4; 814).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No right to intrude/impose</td>
<td>“I don’t think we should impose on other people our own ideas, even if you don’t agree with them.” (F1; pt4; 869/870).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manipulative people</td>
<td>“Some people are naturally more aggressive in getting what they want.” (F6; pt1; 279/280).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Achieving consensus</td>
<td>“We’re easily dismissed if we don’t agree with what the general opinion is.” (F7; pt3; 169/170).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“...people are becoming fixed in a narrow way.” (F7; pt2; 142/143).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficult to communicate with others</td>
<td>“1: I think I’ve always had difficulty in joining a group (common agreement). It’s not my personality// -Why do you think it was always difficult for you? 2: For me, I find it very hard to start into something... to start a conversation. I love talking. I love to talk to people - I mean travelling on a plane or a train... I nearly always try to talk to someone and once you start it’s lovely you can discuss all sorts of things. (common agreement) // 1: Yes, on a 1:1 basis// 2: But on a 1:1 basis//”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Previous experience

1: I hate these parties where you walk round with a glass in your hand and you’re supposed to circulate and make conversations. I can never think of anything to say (common agreement).” (F6; p11-2; 369/382).

♦ Get people motivated:
“| think in fact, there is quite a problem to get people join... Now, I was a Parish Councillor in East Horsley for fifteen years and one of the biggest problems I found was to get people interested in their own affairs in the Parish. They would complain if something was wrong... If you wanted them to give you support to get something done ‘oh well, I'm terribly sorry but I've got something else to do’... It went on like this. And it was always a problem to get a number of people together to come and make a petition or do something. You could in the end but my goodness it's jolly hard work! I became eventually Chairman of the Parish Council and I found this very, very aggravating in not only the parishioners, the ordinary villagers but some of the councillors were exactly the same! If you gave them a job to do and say 'look, we want this done. Can you get on and do it? ’ There were great excuses given as to why it was impossible because they’ve got something else to do. And this is the great problem to get people motivated. This way...” (F3; p15; 388/404).

♦ Self-interests:
“We had a meeting... I'm a member of the Christian Socialist movement... And we had a meeting recently specifically designed to try to rally support for people who -as you say, they are supposed to be members. But when it comes to contributing, they don’t! Our chairman wrote to all the membership in the area. I think probably a hundred or more. As it turned out, the appeal was reasonably successful. We got about forty there, which is pretty good. But to keep this people attending...Well, I think it’s to some extent what I’m saying -you know- people are interested in their own selves. Not so much interested in what they can do for the community. And from my point of view, one of the sad things that’s happening nowadays is that local government is being undermined! Terribly undermined! I mean, education has been!” (F3; pt1; 418/429).

8.2.3 Intragroup level

8.2.3.1 Age identification
The emerging theme regarding age identification at the intragroup level were the characteristics ascribed to the group “old”. Participants provided self-descriptions with reference to their identification with the group of older people. The main categories derived from this are provided in the table below with its correspondent categories. A notable aspect was the focus upon deficits or “lacks”, which corresponded to several aspects which were perceived to be absent among older people. These included persistence, motivation, local interests, homogeneity and knowledge. This was followed by comparisons with the past and transferring their responsibility for bringing about social change by using “age” as an excuse (see table
Table 8.3: Aspects configuring self-ascribed characteristics of older people.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspects</th>
<th>Self-ascribed characteristics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lack of...</td>
<td>Persistence:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;That's my whole problem. You need tenacity and that's the thing that few of us have enough of I think.&quot; (F5; pt1; 390/391).</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Motivation:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;...somebody should be doing something about it! And I am saying to myself 'well, frankly shouldn't we?' We have the opportunity as much as we've got the time. I think our problem is apathy.&quot; (F3; pt4; 553/556).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;I don't get as much done as I would like to do (common agreement) and I've got no real excuse because I mean I've had to organise myself before and I should be doing it now but I'm not doing it enough. And I think that is the danger that we can get too sort of lazy I suppose.&quot; (F5; pt1; 425/430).</td>
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<td></td>
<td>&quot;You have to have a little bit of fire in your belly.&quot; (F5; pt3; 593/594).</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Local Interests:</td>
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<td></td>
<td>&quot;He was at the head of it, they still go and stand in front of Parliament but it just went down and down and down in Guildford and no one was interested. And even still I asked her last Sunday, I said 'do you still have the same connections with, -it's not called Age Concern, it's something Pensions, Voice or something'. And she said 'I still get all the literature from that'. She said. But of course, it's gone; Guildford is not interested.&quot; (F4; pt5; 358/365).</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Homogeneity:</td>
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<td></td>
<td>&quot;How big is the group in the over 65s that could effectively bring pressure on any executive? I put it to you gentlemen it's not big enough. There's too disparate a group.&quot; (F8; pt4; 252/254).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Knowledge:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;3: I haven't had that since I left work. It's one of the things I miss. 1: You want to be in the over 60s group. 4: I think we should know more. You say about osteoporosis. I mean I knew nothing about it until it suddenly burst on the news and we should know, shouldn't we? I think we should have that sort of information spreading.&quot; (F2; pt3-1-4; 897/903).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;Is there anything? Is there any group that would listen to our age?&quot; (F6; pt3; 240/241).</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Past conformity influence:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;and it might be too that the time we were born sort of thing, you know. People didn't do that sort of thing.&quot; (F11; pt2; 208/209).</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Loss of ideals:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;you get a little bit more conservative, I think. You're not probably quite so idealistic as you were when you were young.&quot; (F4; pt4; 927/929).</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Loss of contacts:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;It's changed since once retired because you're not in the same contacts as you were then.&quot; (F5; pt3; 391/392).</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Transfer of responsibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;but you see, we are not in a block all going forward. We are leaving it to others to do it.&quot; (F4; pt5; 734/735).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;That, getting older, and you've got your aches and pains and you've got all those things (common agreement) and you think 'Well, let some of the others do it'.&quot; (F11; pt1; 169/171).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
8.2.3.2 Other properties of older people’s identity structure

Both participants’ nationality and gender characteristics appeared to be salient in relation to perceived barriers to collective action. Again, as in the previous sections of instances of social change and types of collective action, it was shown that “age” was not the only aspect among the participants to be salient when referring to collective action and more importantly, that other aspects rather than age (here “nationality” and “gender”) were inhibiting collective action.

With regards to gender, in two of the focus groups (no. 9 was female-only and no.13 male-only) each of the members mentioned the opposite sex had more reasons for engaging in collective action than their own gender. In the female-only focus group the participants argued that since in their generation most women had always stayed busy at home and men had been working outside, men found a big gap between working and retirement. Consequently, it was believed by the participants that men had a higher need to engage in several activities, including collective action:

“You don’t find women starting one of these things up because they’ve always got things to do at home (common agreement).” (F9; pt3; 187/189).

“Men when they get older, they’re left with nothing because they have worked all their lives, unless they’ve got a permanent hobby, they don’t. So they’re the type that get together to form these committees to lobby about these things.” (F9; pt3; 179/182).

Conversely, participants in the male-only group attributed their lack of participation to the fact that women were better organised and successful for bringing about social change than them:

“They seem better organised in national groups than any of the men are (...) They are very, very well organised. Extremely. And they have political pressure groups.” (F13; pt2; 746/750).

Each of the above quotations also show how gender was a way to transfer responsibility for bringing about social change. It was left to members of the opposite gender to deal with collective action.
Furthermore, participants' nationality appeared to be salient when considering barriers to action, which included aspects such as lack of group orientation, and character differences when compared with other countries (being law abiding and lack of reaction):

"I mean we as a country are inclined to not bother until we get to a certain pitch." (F6; pt3; 281/282).

"But the British are not so group orientated." (F13; pt2; 502/503).

"Yes, I think it's a different personality. Their personality is different. The French and the Spanish and the Italians are much more voluble and they will react. We sort of say 'Oh sod it' sort of business and we'll just sit down and moan but they react violently, outwardly." (F13; pt1; 438/442).

"3: And then you've got the British character which is important, isn't it? The British character is causing some of it.
-What would you say about the British character?
3: We're law abiding basically. I think more... I've bought property too abroad and what is done openly by agents and solicitors is quite appalling. In this country I couldn't believe it (common agreement). But it's accepted out there." (F13; pt3; 474/481).

8.2.4 Intergroup level

Most of the evidence at this level represented younger people as the outgroup. The following quotations refer to those barriers which could prevent participants in taking action together with younger people (e.g. action of mixing with them) or even interfering in perceived efficacy of action brought uniquely by older people (e.g. pensioners' social movements):

"It's more difficult for the older people to keep in touch with what the younger people are thinking, as well as doing." (F3; pt2; 547/549).

"You mean general behaviour. Well you see if we protest, they get rid of us easily, they say 'oh, you're old' (common agreement)." (F7; pt3; 154/156).

"You couldn't get in with a lot of young people and just tell them what to do because they'll turn round and say 'Oh well you always say that. You're old' (common agreement)." (F9; pt3; 406/409).

"Well they turn around and say 'well, you're the minority'." (F11; pt2; 223).
It was also expressed that this may have also occurred with participants’ previous
generations:

“I wonder whether this happens in every generation. Whether our parents
were as frustrated by the young. I think they probably were, because we
were quite different to them.” (F7; pt1; 270/272).

Because of participants’ expressed desire to mix with younger people in order to bring
about change, some of the barriers could be regarded as more permeable and even
motivating participants’ willingness to engage in action:

“I think we must accept that we have to bear some responsibility for what
has gone on. And it’s probably too late for us to do a great deal about it
but we shouldn’t blame perhaps the younger generation.” (F3; pt6;
305/308).

“I find about committees the people use this as an opportunity to impose
their own views. And I think one of the things that we need to do at this, in
our period of life is to listen to others. I don’t think we listen enough to
what others are actually saying... I mean, I can listen to my children as
much as I should. I’m learning too because in actual fact what I found is
that my reactions to certain things don’t give me any satisfaction because
it appears that we are not on the same wave length.” (F3; pt4; 560/568).

“Well my oldest son-in-law he always says to me ‘well mother you can talk
when you want to, you know. You shouldn’t put yourself outside. You
should come and join in because you’ve got interesting things to say’. But
I think ‘oh, they don’t want to know that’.” (F6; pt2; 392/396).

“2: Sometimes it’s more difficult to have a group of elderly and young
because the young are a little bit contemptuous of us. I don’t know... that’s
too strong a word/
1: Well, not all of them.
3: Don’t you think they should be mixed though... that I mean/
2: Well it would be better.
3: It’s good for the young people to hear what the old people say and vice
versa (common agreement) rather than the old people saying ‘well in my
day I did so and so.’ (common agreement).
1: The trouble is we only hear about the bad things young people do. We
don’t hear about the hundreds and thousands of young people who do very
wonderful things (common agreement).” (F7; pt1-2-3; 296/309).
8.2.5 Group/Societal level

At this level, barriers were especially in terms of lack of perceived responsibility. These seemed to be quite powerful when compared to others, in that they were identified by most of the participants in the focus groups. Government was mentioned by the majority of participants, who referred to the need to have effective local government and MPs; alternative instigation (claims for an alternative group which would work in order to keep participants and society informed about how politicians in power run the Government, so that veracity could be guaranteed) and need to prioritise proper policies (e.g. fairness in society with equal conditions and opportunities for everybody, Health Service and care provision for older people).

Some examples of this latter aspect are as follows:

"5: But you see, we are not in a block all going forward. We are leaving it to others to do it. You see... (...)"

4: Yes, that's education. And that's why I say that priorities of the thing and the next Government, whichever Government we get, has got to put the things first that matter, education, discipline in schools, caning doesn't matter! Teachers to teach, and then the old people, because we fought the blasted War. I think they deserve to be looked after in old age, and they were promised they were going to be looked after in old age, they've got to do that as well. And then put the things in the right order, but God knows which Government's going to do it." (F4; pt4-5; 734/756).

"5: That needs to be changed, doesn't it?"

4: I think we need a political party that's going to prioritise things that really matter. And the first thing is a greater fairness in society. Look at the wages that some of these company directors are getting. Look at the MP's with a 26% increase in salary and nothing for pensioners, and even the new Labour isn't going to be like that!" (F4; pt4-5; 262/269).

The Church was identified as a powerful and authoritative institution which was perceived to have had a negative effect on society and particularly on family life.

International comparisons were also made by the participants, who stressed how difficult it is to find a single country which is run smoothly. Finally, law and order included the importance to follow the rules and laws; and the fact that social problems change in due course.
Other aspects which were identified by the participants as barriers to action at this level were attitudinal (i.e. British people's attitudes); abstractions (with references to representational and non precise aspects); lack of civic responsibility and awareness (no sense of commitment to the community); and selfishness. The organisational dimension was mentioned by the participants; they pointed out the importance of profits or financial concerns/money, as well as the loss of direction and detail when people are involved within a group. Kelly & Breinlinger (1996) also found respondents referred critically to aspects of group process in their study of non-activism in a gender context (e.g. feeling that groups were not radical or political enough for the respondents and showed their preference for more direct forms of action).

The last aspect, i.e. power, included references to the control authorities such the police have in social movements (demonstrations and violent actions were particularly mentioned by the participants) and manipulation by the media when good actions are accomplished and how this acts as a barrier. Additionally, participants appeared to identify with the group of "older people" and made explicit references to older people not being socially accepted for bringing about change in society. This included concerns about the way in which older people were treated by multinational companies.

Table 8.4: Barriers operating at the group/societal level.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barriers</th>
<th>Group/Societal level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>British people's attitudes</td>
<td>&quot;there are great weaknesses in our country attitudes to some of these things, which can't be changed!&quot; (F3; pt3: 686/687).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abstraction</td>
<td>&quot;I'm not convinced that even if we all banded together we could make much difference (...) Because it comes from deeper sources.&quot; (F2; pt3: 252/253).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;But the whole thing has been undone to such a degree that I don't feel that we're ever going to get it back again.&quot; (F2; pt3: 103/106).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of perceived responsibility</td>
<td>Government:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;So I feel very, very desperate about change unless the body politic feels that it really is, for whatever reason, the time to change. (...) I feel the same way about this particular government as I felt about the other side in the late 70s. Not pragmatic, not sensible, driven by ideology and I think that's the problem.&quot; (F8; pt4: 209/216).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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Lack of civic responsibility/awareness

- Alternative instigation:
  "2: Why not have a group to make them tell the truth for a change, to give us the information to get into the group to change." (F4; pt2; 850/855).

- Prioritise proper policy:
  "I mean where it's got to be firstly government policy to create the sort of changes that need to happen." (F5; pt1; 183/185).

Church, Education and family:

"They have set a bad example, people in the Church. And that has blown the Church out of the window very much. And therefore, the people have nobody to look to within the family to set a proper example. And the people who are in the family, the same people as the people who are in the schools doing the teaching! So they don't set a good example..." (F3; pt2; 236/241).

International:

"And we do complain about our political system but you look round the world and can you find a better one?" (F1; pt2; 744/745).

"But is there any country in the world where they have found an answer to it? Is there any country where they have done something about it and things are different and where people are happier? I can't think of any." (F13; pt3; 924/927).

Law and order

- Legitimisation:
  "if you've got laws, and laws have been made, you've got to obey them." (F1; pt2; 884/885).

  "Because you've got to go to the top for that... And I don't think at the moment those at the top are prepared to listen." (F1; pt5; 402/403).

- Natural cycles:
  "And I think things really can't get much worse (common agreement) so it's bound to come back again." (F7; pt1; 757/758).

  "I think it will change itself in due course." (F1; pt5; 337).

"there is a certain lack of civic responsibility and people don't want to involve themselves any more." (F3; pt3; 446/447).

"...a lack of social awareness and participation." (F5; pt2; 687).

"You know, and this traffic problem... The vast majority of people who live in the village, they come home at night, they drive the car in the garage, they go in the house, start the television and that's it (common agreement). I mean they don't know what goes on in the village. They don't even care. As long as it doesn't touch them. Now if you put the rates up-wow. That's terrible." (F5; pt2; 762/769).

Selfishness

"...although there is a will to change, when it actually comes to the point everybody is looking out for themselves." (F1; pt4; 161/162).

"Do you think, I mean personally I think, it's a nation of greed (common agreement)." (F4; pt3; 758/760).

Groups

Particular vs. general:

"The particular will get lost in the general plan." (F4; pt2; 448/449).

"...because you see things get lost in groups, in well intentioned groups, they always get lost." (F4; pt2; 681/683).

Money profit:

"1: That is the awful thing, isn't it? Everything is expected to make a profit (common agreement). They can't see things in the way that (...). By
Power

Authorities:

"It is so easy for people in authority to put you off; isn't it? I mean they've got it... you can't get past them." (F6; pt2; 224/225).

Media:

"I: You've got to remember that some of the people that are heads of these printing papers are also MP's... And they are after the money, aren't they?
5: I think you're going back to it; people just want money... (common agreement)." (F1; pt1-5; 415/418).

"Media makes it more difficult to put our voices heard (common agreement)." (F6; common agreement; 313/315).

Social acceptance:

"I'm not convinced that even if we all banded together we could make much difference to violence within the foreseeable future (...) The fact that a whole lot of people with silver hair band together and say... (...) Well, by the time they finish laughing and stopped bashing us over the head for five minutes, the novelty will wear off and everybody will be back to square one." (F2; pt5; 252/260).

"The pensioners are ignored in this country. They're absolutely ignored."
(F10; pt2; 289/290).

Multinationals:

"3: And it's going to affect a lot... I mean, I live in the retirement bungalows now. Well it makes it all that much further for retired people to walk, particularly the people that are at the local doctors (common agreement) and we all feel very strongly about it but not enough to make a petition of it.
1: I think you feel powerless against all these multiments!
3: Powerless, because it's already been done before anybody knows about it (common agreement).
1: And they have so much money to fight the case, don't they?
3: No point (common agreement). And I mean it's two big firms (...) they are just two big firms (common agreement)." (F6; pt1-3; 786/798)."

8.2.6 Resources

Participants also mentioned some barriers which referred to resources available to them. They were classified in two sub-themes, i.e. material constraints and non-material constraints. The former comprised references to the money required to start a project and bringing about change (e.g. for carrying out surveys before starting any action) and money which is due to be paid for membership or organisations (believed to be especially difficult for pensioners). Secondly, transport was mentioned as another main material constraint, which included references to how difficult it was to get a proper service of public transport, the high cost of travelling and the fact that
most of the organisations/groups are centrally located (in the big cities) and how difficult it is for those who do not live in the city.

With reference to non-material constraints, participants mentioned other activities they were involved rather than collective action and how busy they already were; the bureaucratic process one has to go through when is in the process of bringing about change (specially with developing projects); time available and derived from it, social change was perceived to be a very long process by the participants. Some examples for each of the barriers are provided in Table 8.5.

When compared to Kelly & Breinlinger’s (1996) qualitative study, lack of time; lack of transport to far-away meetings; lack of money and lack of knowledge (knowledge was coded as a barrier at the intraindividual level for this study) were also present among participants’ accounts. The participants in Kelly & Breinlinger’s studies were not over 65 and this reinforces that age does not affect perception of practical constraints in preventing involvement in collective action.

Although resources emerged as a factor to consider when predicting willingness to engage in collective action and that their role in the perception of barriers to engage in action, they were regarded only as one aspect which has already been addressed by theories with different underlying assumptions from the position adopted in this thesis. Thus, Resource Mobilisation Theory (Gamson, 1968, 1975; McCarthy & Zald, 1973, 1977; Oberschall, 1973; Tilly, 1978 in Kelly, 1993) and the motivational model in social psychology (Klandermans, 1984, 1997) have regarded resources as crucial for explaining willingness to engage in collective action. As discussed in chapter three, these approaches define the structural conditions that generate the deprivations and aspirations that make people likely to participate in collective action. However, they cannot account for why sometimes individuals do participate, even in the absence of resources.
Table 8.5: Resources available as barriers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resources</th>
<th>Aspects</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Material constraints</td>
<td>Money: &quot;But financially I cannot afford to subscribe to anything.&quot; (F12; pt6; 245).</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;when you’re on a fixed income as a pensioner, you can’t really afford to do too much.&quot; (F12; pt1; 298/299).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Transport: &quot;...I realised the seriousness of the situation in the future and I’ve never had a car and I thought it well not to have one, and so I have to rely on public transport and that’s one of the reasons I don’t join a group, because is getting to these places.&quot; (F3; pt1; 171/175).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cost: &quot;The other thing is of course that to go to town these days cost you, well even if you’ve got a railcard, which is costing...&quot; (F4; pt4; 417/418).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Long distances: &quot;where are the groups? Most of the groups are up in London and we are 25 miles away from London.&quot; (F10; pt2; 302/304).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-material constraints</td>
<td>Other tasks: &quot;No, I have other things to do.&quot; (F2; pt3; 351).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;Well, not so much age but just that I’ve got other interests that I’m involved with and they occupy me and therefore I tend not think of the other things.&quot; (F11; pt3; 177/179).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bureaucracy: &quot;I mean we need to cut out a lot of bureaucracy to get anything done...” (F3; pt1; 818/819).</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Time: &quot;I have thought about it (collective action) but time is a problem.&quot; (F13; pt4; 368).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;Mind you, again, it’s finding the time, isn’t it? I wouldn’t find it.&quot; (F11; pt2; 822/823).</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Long process: &quot;pensioners and people with disabilities have tried a great deal of lobbying and may be they have got some benefits from it but it’s a very slow long process...&quot; (F1; pt4; 635/637).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;I mean you need a lot of information and that’s not easily available. I’m sure it’s available but I mean it’s not easily available. You’ve got to spend hours over in the library going through all sorts of government reports to find out all the statistics on road movements and these sort of things&quot; (F3; pt2; 811/816).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Voluntary groups were strongly perceived as a way to change, in particular social welfare. Most of the participants felt that participation in these groups was less demanding and that they did not fall in the political sphere when compared to organisations which are included in a political dimension:

"...but quite a lot of the interest groups are trying to change people’s attitudes. I’m an osteoporosis sufferer and the osteoporosis group isn’t
just helping those of us that have but trying to change attitudes." (F2; pt4; 325/328).

"...where perhaps no terrific responsibility in the paid sphere but where we could assist and help and so on." (F7; pt3; 226/228).

"...so it’s not just thinking of yourself too, if you can do what you were saying you did some kind of work which involves going and helping people." (F7; pt1; 731/733).

Furthermore, participants expressed ways of overcoming barriers such as ‘time available’ or having other tasks that occupy them:

"if you find that that’s not suitable for you, you can say ‘sorry, I can’t do it anymore’, but if you have become committed (...) then you feel a bit sort of pressured. But if it’s a voluntary thing that you complete yourself that you carry on with it or not without disturbing the organisation." (F11; pt1; 984/991).

"you’re tied down. After all you’ve just had all those years of full time work (common agreement) where you had to go Monday morning and you left Friday afternoon and you don’t want that again (...) so it’s going to require quite careful organisation (common agreement)." (F7; pt3; 255/262).

8.3 Discussion

The evidence emphasises the fact that whether a motivated individual will participate in collective action depends ultimately on how he or she responds to barriers (Klandermans, 1997). However, this study confirmed that barriers could not be understood solely in terms of resources available, as Klandermans’ motivational model suggests. In this study, the importance of subjectively constructed barriers was highlighted, as including both identity and representational aspects.

Five main aspects were included in barriers perceived to be operating at the intraindividual level by the participants, i.e. self-efficacy; self-esteem; lack of concern and motivation; low collectivist orientation and lack of knowledge. Collectivist orientation was linked to continuity, in the sense participants saw themselves to have been individually oriented throughout their life-span. Linked to this, when barriers at
this level included age references, mainly aspects of self-continuity were identified by the participants, in which they compared their present age with when they were younger. Despite advancing years, participants perceived that they felt the same in terms of not being willing to engage in collective action. This would be in line with Atchley’s (1982) notion that activities support continuity of age identity.

Existing research on collective action in social psychology has already pointed out the importance of the five main factors mentioned above, i.e. self-efficacy (e.g. Bandura & Wood, 1989); self-esteem (e.g. Moghaddam & Perreault, 1992); lack of concern and motivation (e.g. Kelly & Breinlinger, 1996); collective orientation (e.g. Kelly & Kelly, 1994; Kelly & Breinlinger, 1996; Duncan, 1999) and lack of knowledge (e.g. Kelly & Breinlinger, 1996). Some of the quotations included in collective orientation showed factors identified by Kelly & Breinlinger (1996) as ambivalence in attitudes to group membership, reflecting both personal uniqueness and seeing oneself as a member of a social group (e.g. Brewer, 1991).

Participants using passive ways of political participation also described direct references to discontinuity, in which age would function as a barrier to engaging in collective action (e.g. lack of concentration). However, this subjective discontinuity was also an issue (e.g. different way of seeing ideals compared to when they were younger). These participants conceptualised discontinuity at the personal level when compared with the objective discontinuity which would seem to be applicable to the entire category of older people and is, therefore, more of a group level representation of discontinuity. When actions regarded as more demanding were mentioned, identified barriers did not seem to discriminate levels of political participation among the participants. Perceived barriers by the participants were those related to mobility, hearing and general health, which would account for the need to distinguish physical efficacy in the study of self-efficacy among older people (e.g. Davis-Berman, 1990; Parkatti et al., 1998).
Barriers operating at the interpersonal level included the following aspects: difficulty in approaching other people versus no right to impose or intrude on other people’s beliefs and ideas; threats of meeting manipulative people; difficulty to achieve consensus when other people are involved and to communicate with others; and previous experience. These factors are not necessarily specific to older people, but when expressing concerns about, for example, potential communication difficulties with younger people, the discourse moved from the interpersonal level of discourse to the intergroup level. This suggests that for this group a collectivist orientation might be accessed through the interpersonal route.

At the intragroup level, participants’ identification with ‘older people’ was salient, and self-ascribed characteristics were significant barriers (including deficits such as persistence, motivation, local interests, homogeneity and knowledge; followed by comparisons with the past and transferring their responsibility for bringing about social change by using “age” as an excuse). In contrast, nationality (which also appeared to be important when participants identified instances of social change) and gender appeared to be salient at this level. This illustrates the “multiplicity of identities” (Deaux, 1992; Brewer, 1999) and shows how other aspects rather than age may hinder participants’ willingness to engage in collective action. Moreover, reminiscence was again present in participants’ discourse at this level.

Barriers operating at the intergroup level focused on the relationship between older and younger people (including barriers likely to prevent participants in taking action together with younger people and barriers intervening in perceived efficacy of action brought by older people). Within the relationship between older people-younger people which was mentioned by the participants, negative stereotypes held by younger people were mentioned (e.g. not valuing what older people say). This could be identified as ‘younger non-accommodation’, in which participants perceived that younger people negatively stereotyped older people. However, younger-accommodation (e.g. older people perceiving that some of the younger people do good things, so it would legitimate engaging in action together) was also present among
older people's discourse when referring to the intergroup barriers. This highlighted the possibility of barriers regarded as more permeable and even motivating participants' willingness to engage in collective action. As discussed in chapter two, the concepts of accommodation vs. non-accommodation have been identified in studies of older people from a sociolinguistic approach (e.g. Williams et al., 1997).

At the group/societal level, lack of perceived responsibility was very often mentioned by the participants. Government appeared to be a powerful aspect, in which the need to prioritise specific and urgent policies was claimed by the participants. Other factors were attitudinal, lack of civic responsibility and awareness and selfishness. Finally, some barriers referred to the organisational area (e.g. profits) and others were about power (some of the references bringing identification with the group of older people). The latter ones in this study emphasised the importance of taking a social contextual perspective to the explanation of power (Reid & Ng, 1999). Moreover, the fact participants expressed their experience and actions were seen to have hardly any value in society was already shown in Hayden et al.'s (1999) study in which older people had also participated in a series of focus groups and these attitudinal aspects had been identified by the participants as the key barriers to achieving an active ageing.

Other barriers identified by the participants were about resources available to them, i.e. material constraints (i.e. money; transport) and non-material constraints (i.e. other tasks and activities; bureaucracy; time).
Among the several barriers which had been identified at the five different levels, it was observed that i) only the interpersonal level did not include identifications with the social category 'older people' nor other references to the process of ageing, e.g. poor health (although it was suggested that a collective orientation including age-related elements might be accessed through the interpersonal route); ii) some of them could be regarded as more transient than others and could be specific to a type of action (e.g. lack of knowledge at the intraindividual level, self-ascribed characteristics of the group-willingness to take responsibility at the intragroup level, and relations with the younger generation at the intergroup level). Thus the barriers may be impermeable/permeable depending on specific individual characteristics (e.g. self-efficacy; collective orientation) and/or societal ones (social representations of older people; level of group identification with the category 'older people'). Thus, type of barrier would respond to the taxonomy in figure 8.1 (including both identity and representational aspects), which was investigated in the following study.
8.4 Final conclusions

Results from the qualitative study presented here can be seen to contribute not only to our understanding of the processes involved in the generation of collective action in the context of older people, but also to further our understanding of the social psychological processes involved in ageing, thus complementing our knowledge of the socio-cognitive effects of ageing. Each of these are briefly summarised below.

*Explaining the generation of collective action*

- Collective action comprised the dimensions individual-group (type of action) and collective expression/collective change (type of goal). Moreover, it was shown there are other ways of promoting social change apart from the ones mentioned by most of the existing literature. For instance, participants referred to bringing about change in situations such as in leisure activities (e.g. a photographic society) and in the family (see also Kelly & Breimlinger, 1996). This made it possible to design a reliable and valid instrument for measuring collective action in the final study of this project (see chapter nine).

- This study proved that expressed desire for social change was a factor influencing motivation to engage in collective action (see chapter six). From social psychology, theorists on relative deprivation have already emphasised this in the study of collective action (Davis, 1959; Gurr, 1970; Crosby, 1976). However, this study supports previous research showing that a perception of the need for social change is not sufficient to explain collective action (e.g. Muller, 1972; Snyder & Tilly, 1972; Marsh, 1974; Martin et al., 1984). It was confirmed that the desire for social change is not a key factor and highlighted the need to take into account other social psychological factors when predicting collective action. Willingness to participate in collective action was explained by:
  a) perceived effectiveness of collective action;
  b) salience of group membership (i.e. identification with 'older people');
  c) legitimisation for action and inaction;
  d) social representations of older people;
e) barriers operating at different levels (intraindividual; interpersonal; intragroup; intergroup; group/societal), which included both identity and representational aspects.

These factors were contextualised in (i) instances of social change and (ii) types of action and it was shown some of the factors were not uniquely perceived by the participants to be specific to the older population. However, it was not possible from the data obtained in this study to establish systematic or causal relationships. The following study designed in this project addressed this.

- The need to take into account the context of social change was highlighted in this research, since different types of action were associated with particular instances of social change. Thus, when researching collective action, we need to specify the context in which each of the actions are set (e.g. responding to social issues related to the environment or to law and order). This was taken into account for the design of the final study of this research.

- The temporal dimension of the structure of participants’ identity in which specific emphasis was given to previous experience in collective action and social comparisons emerged as two important factors in the study of collective action: they were two common themes among the study of instances of social change; types of action and barriers. It was revealed how each of them could either facilitate action or operate as barriers to action (e.g. previous experience was an important factor when perceived effectiveness of collective action was shown among the participants but it could also be a barrier at the interpersonal level, particularly two aspects of it were identified, getting people motivated and people being interested in their own selves).

- The findings also support IPT that it is not uniquely self-esteem which motivates and guides identity processes but that distinctiveness, continuity and self-efficacy also need to be considered. It was shown how they could either operate as
facilitators or inhibitors of collective action. For instance, the principle of continuity, could work as a facilitator for someone who claimed he/she had always been ‘active and engaging in several collective actions’, even when discontinuity was shown (the case with someone who had never engaged in collective action but acknowledged that being old and retired had provided the opportunity of doing so). Contrarily, for other individuals who claimed it was now too late to try to engage in collective action, this discontinuity was negative.

- It was also suggested that when applying IPT in the context of collective action among older people, the operation of the identity principles include both personal and collective elements of identity, the latter shown to be clear and powerful facilitators for social change in this study. Similarly, Speller (2000) in her longitudinal study of place attachment in the context of enforced relocation of a mining community, shows the operation of the four principles of identity along a dimension from the individual to the collective level.

- Some differences were found among the participants according to the classification used in study one of this thesis (“active” vs. “passive”) which corresponded to actions used by existing research measuring political participation/collective action (e.g. Verba & Nie, 1972; Marsh, 1974; Barnes et al., 1979; Parry et al., 1992). Differences were found in each of the main sections comprising this study. Thus, one of them was when participants identified instances of social change they were concerned with. In that context, age identification appeared to be a salient characteristic of participants’ identity structure (i.e. facilitator of change; the different social issues perceived to be important or similar across age groups). Participants classified as “active” seemed to include an identity more based on positive evaluations (active and empowered) when compared to those participants using “passive” ways of political involvement. Besides, when several aspects were considered by the participants in relation to perceived effectiveness of collective action it appeared that some of them were specific to either “active” or “passive” participants. For instance, the need to join well-known organisations was uniquely
perceived as important by those “passive” participants. Within the same theme of effectiveness, voting was more often selected by “passive” participants. However, both groups perceived this action as an effective one regardless of showing a low political trust. In addition, legitimisation for non-involvement was mainly found among participants classified as using “passive” ways of political participation. Finally, age as a barrier was more evident when level of political participation among the participants was “passive”.

- Other properties/roles also defined older people’s identity structure as well as those related to “age” and interacted with each other (e.g. British, gender). This highlights the importance of “multiplicity of identities” (Deaux, 1992; Brewer, 1999) in the study of collective action.

- Collective action was shown to be multidimensional and that different barriers are likely to operate for different dimensions. An important aspect was that barriers stemmed from older people’s own perceptions and societal reactions to this social group and suggested the possibility of looking for degrees of permeability when they were applicable to the participants. This was systematically measured in the final study of this research.

- Finally, results highlighted the need to take into account behaviour that takes place outside the domain of party politics and therefore move forward towards a natural ecology of political and economic behaviour (Breakwell, 1992b), in which collective action would be defined by the two dimensions type of action (individual, group) and type of goal (collective change/collective expression).

The process of ageing

Some factors in the study of collective action were specific to the age context (in each of the main sections, i.e. instances of social change, types of action and barriers). Similarly, Kelly & Breinlinger (1996) studied non-activism in trade union and gender context and concluded this above mentioned specificity. Hence, here are the main
points derived from this:

- Age conceptualised in terms of physical/cognitive abilities may not be the most valid explanation for understanding and predicting collective action among older people. As noted above, other factors need to be considered in the study of collective action among older people.

- Older people responded to a variety of instances of social change which were not uniquely age oriented (Walker & Naegele, 1999) and showed a high interest in social issues and concerns with the community (Eurobarometer, 1992).

- The concept of “age” was used by the participants in multiple ways. For instance, an important finding was that age identification was invoked as influencing participants’ preference for bringing about social change. Another aspect of the concept of “age” was that age salience was perceived to affect the different issues in similar ways to other age groups (Minichiello et al., 2000).

- Locus of responsibility was an important aspect in the several instances of social change identified by the participants. Participants’ identification with the category ‘older people’ was shown to answer for “who should take responsibility” (potential for contribution) with most of the instances of social change. Moreover, according to IPT, locus of responsibility would be one of the characteristics encompassing the content of the structure of older people’s identity, which seemed to play an important part with regard to willingness to engage in collective action.

- Identification with the category ‘old people’ can facilitate and legitimate individual action in the form of age-specific roles, for example the grandparent role which has authority and power implicit within the role (e.g. influence through joining groups of people of diverse ages) for particular instances of social change (environment, family, rights and values).
• This study emphasised the importance of the social aspects of identity (Deaux, 1992), conceptually understood as inseparable from personal aspects of identity. However, the element of ‘collective identity’ might have easily emerged because people were in a group; it was the context of the study. Similarly, it has already been pointed out that the salience of an identity will depend on the fit of a specific categorical distinction to the situation (Breakwell, 1986; Hogg & Turner, 1987a). Thus, age (and in particular age as a relevant group membership) was shown to be a salient aspect in a situation in which age distinctions were emphasised.

• Evidence was given on lack of homogeneity among older people for the different sections. For instance, when participants identified the social issues of older people, heterogeneity was claimed by them. They referred to different backgrounds older people have and they mentioned several aspects such as poverty; loneliness; health and loss of a home. However, the same claim for heterogeneity seemed to allow some of the participants to legitimate non-involvement (i.e. belief that older people should need to be more homogeneous to become a powerful group in society) and hence it was identified as a barrier operating at the intragroup level. Despite this, social representations of older people shared by most of the participants distinguished between “them” (older people who complain about their health; believe that past used to be better; and who deny they are old) and “us” (identified as ‘old’; who believe there are social issues that need to be addressed and bring about change; who have many social interests). These results showed that social representations of older people may add content to older people’s identities. Secondly, individual differences in relation to collective action were emphasised.

• Other properties/roles defining older people’s identity structure rather than the ones related to “age” were salient and interacted (e.g. British, gender). As pointed above, this highlights the importance of “multiplicity of identities” (Deaux, 1992; Brewer, 1999) in the study of collective action. In relation to the process of ageing, this implies another important point in this thesis, i.e. age is not the only definition
Chapter Eight

of the structure of older people’s identity.

- The context of collective action showed how older people’s identity can be re-adapted and re-defined, which according to Baltes & Baltes (1990), would lead to acquiring a positive self-concept.

- Finally, participants embraced a notion of “oldness” which was not about chronological age, but about a state of being (“subjective meaning,” as claimed from IPT) that is about how one sees oneself (Minichiello et al., 2000). In this way, it was found that older people may not perceive the need to challenge age-based stereotyping and discrimination because of:

  1. Not perceiving older people as being markedly different from other groups (as it was stressed in the section of instances of social change in chapter six).

  2. Rejecting negative characteristics attributed to older people and therefore seeking to dissociate themselves from ageist stereotypes, and even reserving the negative stereotypes for other older people (Luszczy & Fitzgerald, 1986; Furstenberg, 1989; Cai et al., 1998; Minichiello et al., 2000).

  3. Older people internalising social representations of old age in which they believe that some old people should be treated as “old” (Minichiello et al., 2000). This could be particularly observed in the social representations of older people shared by most of the participants when they claimed for heterogeneity (“them” vs. “us”). Thus, according to the participants, those older people who complain about health, do not accept their age, believe in the past, etc. should encompass the concept of “old person”. Conversely, participants re-defined a new concept of old age which would start by accepting their real age and include positive aspects of the process of ageing, to the extent that it would legitimate collective action taken by older people.
8.5 Limitations of the study

It needs to be acknowledged the analysis presented in this chapter was only one possible reading and the adopted approach was based on particular research issues which were believed to be theoretically relevant for the study of collective action among older people (e.g. Flowers, Smith, Sheeran & Beail, 1997). As Dey (1993) states within the process of coding in the analysis:

"But there is no single set of categories waiting to be discovered. There are as many ways of 'seeing' the data as one can invent. Any distinction has to be considered in relation to the purpose for which it is drawn. With respect to that purpose, it may be more or less useful, but one distinction cannot be considered more or less valid than another independently of the reasons why it is made." (pp. 110-111).

Additionally, as acknowledged in the section of the presentation of the focus groups (see chapter six), some aspects might have had some effect on the type of data obtained in this study (e.g. accent of the researcher; some participants being more dominant than others; some members of a specific focus group knowing each other).

One limitation directly highlighted by some participants was that the voice of those people living in poverty had been omitted from the study. One responded expressed:

"You've got a fairly prosperous group here, I think. You could consult also some of those who perhaps live in doorways; people who are really having a very rough time or just unemployed, perhaps..." (F3; pt6; 838/841).

This comment raised the issue that there might be differences when explaining collective action according to the background, social class. And as in recent research (Minichiello et al., 2000), the fact that the sample was relatively well educated and included people who were involved in several groups/organisations might mean that they had higher expectations with regard to their rights as citizens and to be better positioned to recognise and react to ageism. To try and focus on the wider range would not have been possible in a study of this scale, and as presented before, the distinction and control was made according to levels of political participation and sex.
Finally, willingness to engage in collective action could not always be systematically identified from participants’ accounts, specially when barriers were not mentioned. Since they mainly focused on identifying ways to change a particular social problem (and subsequently they identified a series of types of action) and how effective they perceived the actions to be. And as pointed out elsewhere (Wollman & Stouder, 1991), a general feeling that a particular action can be effective does not necessarily imply that one person will act. The next and final study that was designed in this project addressed this issue and willingness to engage in collective action was systematically measured and related to possible predictors for specific types of action.

Following the final stage of the analysis, some further issues were raised. For instance, there seemed to exist some differences in type of discourse used by men and women. It was observed that men tended to use explanations which included economical and historical aspects, whereas women were more emotional, made more references to religion and referred to practical aspects of their everyday life rather than referring to economical or historical matters. Besides, since most of the social comparisons made by the participants were with “younger people”, it would be interesting to run a similar study with a sample constituted by younger people. This would address the identified and claimed theoretical sampling by Henwood & Pidgeon (1992) in the grounded theory approach, which would be driven by theoretical concerns (theory might be extended or even modified). Additionally, since “younger people” comprise several age cohorts (e.g. children, adolescents, adults) future research should take into account the most appropriate ways of researching with each of them. However, none of the above mentioned examples were part of the research questions that were aimed to be investigated in this study and thus, each of them could be a main study on their own for a future research agenda.
Chapter Nine

Integrative study of social psychological determinants of collective action among older people

"I hoisted the bucket slowly to the edge of the well and set it there. Happy, tired as I was, over my achievement. The song of the pulley was still in my ears, and I could see the sunlight shimmer in the still trembling water.

'I am thirsty for this water,' said the little prince. 'Give me some of it to drink...'

And I understood what he had been looking for."

Antoine de Saint-Exupéry (1943); The Little Prince, p. 76.

9.1 Introduction

The aim of chapter nine is to identify the broad aims of this study and the ways in which they build on the work done thus far. Following this, the methodology and sample composition will be described. The chapter will end with details of the composition of the scales that are used and the new variables which were consequently computed.

In the previous study several factors were shown to be relevant in the generation of collective action. In particular, perceived effectiveness of the action and previous experience appeared to influence people’s choices for one type or another of collective action. Additionally, both identity and representational aspects emerged as possible factors determining collective action. With regards to identity, it was shown age can be a relevant group membership (i.e. identification with ‘older people’), which appeared to facilitate collective action. In addition, the operation of the identity principles included both personal and collective elements of identity (e.g. self-efficacy and collective efficacy). Also, it was shown that as well as age-related aspects, several
properties/roles of the individual’s identity structure (e.g. nationality, gender, organisation membership) and characteristics such as collective orientation were relevant in the context of collective action. Besides, political trust and social representations of older people emerged as important belief systems influencing the choice of collective action by older people.

Finally, perceived barriers to engaging in collective action included both identity and representational aspects, which were classified according to five levels (i.e. intraindividual, interpersonal, intragroup, intergroup and societal). It was suggested that barriers may be impermeable/permeable depending on specific individual and societal factors. For this reason, this study was aimed at investigating the ways in which these various factors relate to each other. The study is based on a questionnaire-survey.

In addition, the previous study enabled the design of an instrument to measure collective action, in which the dimensions individual-group (type of action) and collective expression/collective change (type of goal) were included. Using this instrument, four types of actions were presented to the respondents, i.e. “Write to my MP”; “Explain to other people about the importance of this problem”; “Join a group demonstrating”; “Join an informal discussion group”. Possible factors accounting for collective action were also shown not only to depend on the above, but also on instances of social change. Thus in this study the above mentioned dimensions were taken into account and were contextualised within two different instances of social change. It was expected that willingness to participate in collective action would be affected by type of collective action and instance of social change (explored in chapter ten).

Following the identification of social psychological factors that explain collective action in the previous study, this study attempted to integrate these factors with predictions found by existing research (reviewed in chapter three and four according to theoretical approaches): previous experience (e.g. Muller & Opp, 1986; Jirovec &
Erich, 1995); perceived effectiveness of collective action (e.g. Marsh, 1977, Wolfsfeld, 1986a; Nemiroff & McKenzie-Mohr, 1992); organisational membership (e.g. Trela, 1971; Jerrome, 1992, Jirovec & Erich, 1992); group identification, e.g. older people (Miller et al., 1980), gender (Kelly & Breinlinger, 1996); self-efficacy (e.g. Gurin, Gurin & Morrison, 1978; Miller et al., 1980; Bandura & Wood, 1989); collective orientation (e.g. Gurin, 1985; Kelly & Kelly, 1994; Duncan, 1999); collective efficacy (Muller & Opp, 1986; Finkel et al., 1989; Rodríguez et al., 1993; Mummendey et al., 1999); political efficacy (e.g. Marsh, 1977; Barnes et al., 1979; Wolf et al., 1986; Fiske, 1987; Kelly & Kelly, 1994); and political trust (Marsh, 1977; Barnes et al., 1979; Zimmerman & Rappaport, 1988; Parry et al., 1992). General hypotheses for each social psychological factor are presented in the section below.

This study explored four broad areas:

Section One: Likelihood, effectiveness and tractability of instances of social change

- This includes a description of the importance assigned to the instances of social change, their perceived tractability, and willingness to participate in each of the four types of actions.

- To establish how effective each action is perceived to be by older people and possible differences according to sex and presented social issue (i.e. environment vs. family).

Section Two: Perception of barriers to collective action

- To explore patterns of perceived barriers for each type of action, identifying commonalities and differences across the four types of actions.
• To explore the relationship between levels of barriers and intentions to participate in types of collective action. This is also explored in relation to the effect of the presented social issue.

• To determine the ways in which each of the identity and ideology factors are related to perceptions of barriers to participate in collective action.

Section Three: Willingness to participate in collective action

• To examine overall levels of willingness to participate in collective action taking into account both individual (e.g. demographics, self-efficacy) and group variables (e.g. organisational memberships, social representations of older people). The literature suggests a number of areas that may be predictive of willingness to engage in collective action. These are outlined in the relevant chapter (chapter ten).

Section Four: Predictive model of collective action

• To develop an overall predictive model of collective action and to determine what the best predictors are.

The first three areas noted above will be addressed in chapter ten. The development of a predictive model of collective action will be elaborated in chapter eleven.

9.2 Method

9.2.1 Design of the questionnaire

A questionnaire was chosen for this study, as it was the most adequate instrument for collecting data from a large sample of older people.
The study consisted of a questionnaire which had been previously piloted with a sample of older people (n=20) and refined on the basis of this (e.g. rephrasing some of the items; including new questions). Note that the term “older people” was used in the barriers section and in the other sections this was “old people”. Although it was pointed out earlier in this thesis that the preferred term was “older people”, changes in the questionnaire had to be made after the pilot study revealed that by including “older” rather than “old” sometimes led to confusion among the respondents (“older compared to who?”).

There were four parts in the questionnaire, each comprising different sections. A list is provided below for each of the sections included.

**Part One** dealt with a number of social issues and then it focused on one particular issue and four possible actions were proposed to the respondents:
- Tractability of instances of social change \(^{(QI)}\).
- Identification of the four most important issues to solve \((QII)\).
- Presentation of four actions: Respondents were asked about previous experience, willingness to participate, perceived effectiveness of the action and perceived barriers to each action \((QIII)\).

In **Part Two** respondents were asked to give their views on several questions concerned with politics, group action and older people:
- Political efficacy \((QIV)\).
- Political trust \((QV)\).
- Collective orientation \((QVI)\).
- Age as a relevant group membership: identification with older people \((QVII)\).
- Collective efficacy \((QVIII)\).

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\(^{10}\) See Appendix 6: In the questionnaire each section is labelled with ‘Q’, followed by a number (from QI to QXII).
In Part Three respondents were asked about their views about themselves and older people in general:
- Self-efficacy (QIX).
- Importance and evaluation of several aspects of older people's identity structure (QX).
- Social representations of older people (QXI).

Part Four comprised socio-demographic and organisation membership questions and a question addressing the assessment of experimental demand characteristics, as will be explained later on in this chapter (QXII).

Instances of social change (Environment vs. Family) and Actions
In study two (see chapter seven) it was shown that particular instances of social change were associated with specific types of action. Hence to explore this further, the design of this study included two instances of social change: the family and the environment. They had been previously shown to be different in nature (chapter six).

Each of them were presented with four different types of action. Each action can be classified in relation to type of action ('individual' vs. 'group') and type of goal ('collective change vs. collective expression'), which resulted from study two.

Table 9.1: Distribution of Type of action / Type of goal for each action in the questionnaire.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Type of action</th>
<th>Type of goal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1: Write to my MP.</td>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>Collective change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2: Explain to other people about the importance of this problem.</td>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>Collective expression</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3: Join a group demonstrating. group.</td>
<td>Group</td>
<td>Collective change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4: Join an informal discussion group.</td>
<td>Group</td>
<td>Collective expression</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At the same time two separate issues/problems were presented for the same types of action in order to enable their comparison between different respondents. Each
participant was presented only with one issue. They were ‘lack of policies favouring
the traditional structure of the family’ (issue one: n=169) and ‘spoiling of the
environment’ (issue two: n=176).

Eight subtypes of questionnaires were designed (one type is enclosed as an example in
Appendix 6). Counterbalancing of the actions was done in order to avoid order effects
of the different types of actions presented (see Table below).

Table 9.2: Presented order for the eight types of questionnaire and number of respondents who
answered to each order.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Actions</th>
<th>No. of respondents who answered to each order</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Order 1 (1 2 3 4)</td>
<td>n=44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issue 1</td>
<td>Order 2 (2 3 4 1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Order 3 (3 4 1 2)</td>
<td>n=42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Order 4 (4 1 2 3)</td>
<td>n=44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>4 questionnaires</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Order 1 (1 2 3 4) | n=43                                        |
| Issue 2       | Order 2 (2 3 4 1)                            | n=45                                        |
| Order 3 (3 4 1 2) | n=43                                        |
| Order 4 (4 1 2 3) | n=45                                        |
| Total         | 4 questionnaires                             | 176                                         |

Each of the sections of the questionnaire are described below.

*Tractability of social issues (QI)*

The measurement of tractability of instances of social change was derived from a list
of ten social issues regarded as important for the respondents in the focus groups
(study two, chapter six), in which participants expressed desirability for social change.
The two ‘presented’ issues in the questionnaire (i.e. ‘lack of policies favouring the
traditional structure of the family’ and ‘spoiling of the environment’) were included in
this list of social issues. Since it had already been demonstrated that participants

Details of scale composition for each measurement can be found on section 9.3.2 on this chapter.
regarded them as important instances of social change, this measure required from respondents that they indicated how likely it was that each of the listed instances of social change could be solved if an effort was made. A five-point Likert-type scale was used with response categories ranging from ‘1’ “Not likely at all” to ‘5’ “Very likely indeed” (including ‘3’ as “neither likely nor unlikely” response category). The instances of social change were as follows:

- failure of the National Health Service to provide an efficient service;
- inadequate pensions for older people;
- lack of policies favouring the traditional structure of the family;
- crime and violence in many spheres of life;
- sleaze in politics;
- job insecurity resulting from the increased use of technology;
- lack of British control over decisions taken in the European Union;
- breakdown of law and order;
- selfishness in our society;
- spoiling of the environment.

Following the above list of social issues, respondents were asked to write which they thought were the four most important ones to solve in order of importance (QII). This allowed the researcher to establish whether there was any correspondence between the way these social issues were prioritised and the issue that respondents were presented with (i.e. social issue of the family or social issue of the environment). That is, it assessed the occurrence of a correspondence between prioritised social issues and the presented issue. Conversely, non correspondence applied to when either the issue of the environment or family was not perceived to be important or if it was, the presented issue in the questionnaire did not correspond to the one perceived to be important.

Previous experience and willingness to participate in collective action (QIII)

For each action, respondents were asked whether they had had previous experience of the action (before and after being 65 years old) and whether they were willing to take the action again (if taken it before) or if they would take it in the future (if never taken
Perceived effectiveness of the action (QIII)

Perceived effectiveness of the action is the belief that a specific type of action will be effective in bringing about social change. This measure was based on results from study two (chapter seven) where it was shown to be an important factor accounting for collective action. Past survey research had included this measure (e.g. Marsh, 1977, 1990; Wolfsfeld, 1986a; 1986b; Nemiroff & McKenzie-Mohr, 1992).

For each action, participants were required to indicate on a five-point Likert-type scale how effective they thought the action was. This was in response to what has already been demonstrated by previous research, i.e. the need to take into account situation-specific feelings of efficacy when predicting political behaviour (Huebner & Lipsey, 1981; Wolf et al., 1986; Wollman & Stouder, 1991). Response categories ranged from ‘1’ “Very ineffective” to ‘5’ “Very effective” (“Neither ineffective nor effective” response category of ‘3’).

Barriers (QIII)

The construct of barriers was operationalised according to five levels of analysis, i.e. intraindividual, interpersonal, intragroup, intergroup and societal/group (see results of study two in chapter eight). Two barriers for each level were presented to the participant, as shown in the table below.

Table 9.3: List of barriers in the questionnaire.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barrier</th>
<th>Level</th>
<th>List</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. 1</td>
<td>Intraindividual</td>
<td>“I lack the energy”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. 2</td>
<td>Intraindividual</td>
<td>“I am not the sort of person who does this kind of thing”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. 3</td>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
<td>“I find it difficult to communicate my point of view to others”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. 4</td>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
<td>“Others may perceive my action as an imposition”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. 5</td>
<td>Intragroup</td>
<td>“People of my age lack the desire to influence these things in this way”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. 6</td>
<td>Intragroup</td>
<td>“People of my age are not united in seeking change in this way”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. 7</td>
<td>Intergroup</td>
<td>“Others are unwilling to accept that older people have useful experience in this area”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. 8</td>
<td>Intergroup</td>
<td>“Others think that older people should not take this type of action”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. 9</td>
<td>Societal</td>
<td>“The way society is organised discourages older people from taking this action”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. 10</td>
<td>Societal</td>
<td>“Society does not give power to older people for this type of action”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Note that barriers at the group levels (intragroup, intergroup and societal/group) included explicit references to older people. For each barrier, respondents were asked to tick if the barrier applied or not to them (column one) and if it was applicable, they were asked about perceived permeability of the barrier, i.e. "Do you expect this barrier will remain permanent or that it will be removed?" (column two). This was measured on a five-point Likert-type scale ranging from ‘1’ - “It will remain permanent” to ‘5’ - “It will be removed” (‘3’ was “Unsure”).

When the pilot study was conducted, respondents had remarked that this format restricted them to considering only particular barriers and some of the participants wanted to add new barriers. In many cases the barriers they added were conceptually equivalent to those originally given. However, in order to reduce and eliminate feelings of frustration when answering the questions, an open ended question was also included. Respondents were asked to add any other barriers (space provided was for a maximum of three barriers) if they felt there were others and also to rate each of these in the same way they had the others.

**Political efficacy scale (QIV)**

The political efficacy scale used was the 6-item Political Efficacy Scale from Marsh (1977). Political efficacy is conceptualised as the feeling that individual political action does have, or can have, an impact upon the political process, i.e. that it is worthwhile to perform one’s civic duties. It is the feeling that political and social change is possible, and that the individual citizen can play a part in bringing about this change (Campbell et al., 1954). This scale includes both personal efficacy, which is defined as the confidence among citizens that they can participate in and influence politics (e.g. “People like me have no say in what government does”; voting is the only way that people like me can have any say in the way government runs things”) and system efficacy, which is referred to citizen’s beliefs about the responsiveness of the social system (e.g. “Parties are only interested in people’s votes, not in their opinions”; “I don’t think public officials care much about what people like me think”).
However, limitations of this scale have already been pointed out by criticisms that political efficacy is mainly focused on the action of voting; the perception that one does not have a say about what government does belongs to beliefs about the unresponsiveness of the system and that perceived personal efficacy involves the capacity of producing effects rather than a mere understanding of the political process (Craig & Maggiotto, 1982; Bandura, 1997). Since this scale had been the most widely used measure of political efficacy and reported to be a reliable measure of political efficacy (e.g. Barnes et al., 1979; Curtice & Jowell, 1995), it was used here. Some studies only used the three items referring to personal efficacy from this scale (e.g. Miller et al., 1980) and other added more items to both personal and system efficacy (e.g. Craig & Maggiotto, 1982; Rodríguez et al., 1993).

**Political trust scale (QV)**

In order to measure political trust, Marsh’s (1977) 4-item scale was used for this study. Marsh (1977) has referred to Gamson’s (1971) proposition that trust is the output dimension of the same body of political attitudes of which efficacy is the input dimension suggesting that efficacy would require the self-assurance that the authorities are responsive to the active demands of the citizens, i.e. the inputs. In this sense, trust would include the citizens’ evaluation of the general outputs of the authorities (Marsh, 1977). Marsh distinguishes between intrinsic (e.g. “When people in politics speak on television, to the newspapers, or in Parliament, how much do they tell the truth?”) and pragmatic trust (e.g. “How much do you trust the government in Westminster to do what is right?”). The former refers to a notion of honesty and the latter than the authorities keep their promises. The measure required from respondents to indicate how much they trust the system for each of the items, based on a five-point Likert-type scale with response categories ranging from ‘1’ “Almost never” to ‘5’ (“Just about always”) (“Uncertain” response category of ‘3’). Item number four was rephrased from the original scale in order to improve clarity, since it was dichotomous (“Generally speaking, would you say that this country is run by a few big interests concerned only for themselves or that it is run for the benefit of all the people?” was the original one and it was changed into “How much do you trust that this country is
run for the benefit of all the people?").

*Collective orientation scale (QVI)*

The collective orientation scale was adopted from the 6-item scale by Kelly & Breinlinger (1996). This scale conceptualised individualist-collectivist orientation as an individual characteristic and was used in a gender context (two of the items were gender related). Triandis et al. (1988) have already proposed to distinguish between individualism-collectivism at a cultural level and idiocentric-allocentric at an individual level. This scale includes items which were derived from Triandis et al. (1988) and Brown, Hinkle, Ely, Fox-Cardamone, Maras & Taylor (1992). They referred to a general individualist/collectivist orientation (e.g. “People should not be expected to do anything for the community unless they are paid for it”). The two items in Kelly & Breinlinger’s scale that were gender related were replaced in this study by direct references to the sample of the study, older people (“Old people must act as a group rather than as individuals”; “Improvements in conditions and opportunities for old people will only be achieved through collective action”).

There were six statements, measured on the five-point Likert-type scale ranging from ‘1’ -“Strongly disagree” to ‘5’ -“Strongly agree” (“Neither agree nor disagree” response category of ‘3’).

*Age as a relevant group membership (‘older people’) scale (QVII)*

The items related to age as a relevant group membership (‘older people’) used the 5-item scale on gender identity by Kelly & Breinlinger (1996), in which gender references were changed for old age ones. This scale was selected and adapted because it seemed to suit the conceptual framework of identity adopted in this thesis, including both group (e.g. “I feel strong ties with old people”) and individual (e.g. “Being old is central to the way I think of myself”) references. The items were measured on a five Likert-type scale from ‘1’ -“Strongly disagree” to ‘5’ -“Strongly Agree” (‘3’ -“Neither agree nor disagree”).
Collective efficacy scale (QVIII)

Collective efficacy has been defined as a direct extension of self-efficacy to a unit which is larger than the individual (Zaccaro, Blair, Peterson & Zazanis, 1995). It refers to a group's shared belief in its conjoint capabilities to organise and execute the courses of action required to produce given levels of achievements (Bandura, 1997).

The problem encountered when compiling a collective efficacy scale was that most of the existing ones presented a task-specific view (e.g. George & Feltz, 1995; Little & Madigan, 1997) and evidence suggested the construct of collective efficacy is in need of development (e.g. Bandura, 1997). Thus it seemed legitimate to base the scale on some aspects of a group potency general scale (Guzzo, Yost, Campbell & Shea, 1993) since both constructs are related in the sense that the referent belief is the group, not the individual. However, according to Guzzo et al. (1993), collective efficacy refers to an individuals' belief that a group can perform successfully (attribute of individuals) and potency is a shared belief in a group that it can be effective (attribute of groups).

The scale was also to be used in the context of bringing about social change. It was therefore designed with these requirements in mind and in line with Zaccaro et al.'s (1995) prescriptions that collective efficacy should assess the respondents' perceptions of how well the group can work together to successfully accomplish something, addressing magnitude (perceived level of performance the group can attain by working and co-operating together), strength (amount of confidence members have in co-ordination and achievement of a specific performance) and generality (perceptions of the co-ordination skills that are generalised across group tasks).

The measure required that the respondents indicated the extent to which they thought older people can successfully bring about changes in society. A five-point Likert-type scale was used with response categories ranging from '1' "Not at all" to '5' "To a great extent" ("To some extent" response category of '3'). Seven items were used, such as "Old people believe they can be very effective at bringing about changes in society"; or "Old people can achieve a lot of societal change if they put their mind to it".
Self-efficacy scale (QIX)
This scale included both general self-efficacy and physical self-efficacy measures, which are described below.

(i) General self-efficacy
In order to measure people’s general sense of personal efficacy, six items were borrowed from an existing self-efficacy scale (Sherer et al., 1982), which conceptualises self-efficacy as one’s belief in the ability to perform behaviour. The Sherer et al.’s (1982) scale combines both General Self-efficacy and Social Self-efficacy. Items in the original scale were rated on a 14-point scale, but Sherer & Adams (1983) cut it to a 5-point scale and it was found to produce comparable results to those on the original version.

The six items selected here from the original self-efficacy scale had been shown to be reliable on a previous longitudinal study on young people’s careers and identities (Banks, Bates, Breakwell, Bynner, Emler, Jamieson & Roberts, 1992). Four of the items referred to the general self-efficacy subscale (e.g. “If I can’t do a job the first time I keep trying until I do”; “I avoid trying to learn new things when they look too difficult for me”) and two of them corresponded to the social self-efficacy subscale, i.e. “I find it easy to make new friends”; “I do not know how to handle social gatherings.” A five-point Likert-type scale was used, specifying the degree of agreement with each of the statements, ranging from “Strongly disagree” to “Strongly agree”.

(ii) Physical self-efficacy
Previous literature has already emphasised the need to distinguish physical self-efficacy (e.g. Ryckman, Robbins, Thornton & Cantrell, 1982) instead of using global measures of self-concept. The same authors developed and validated a 22-item physical self-efficacy scale used within a sample of students.
There is a fairly large body of research paying attention to the study of physical self-efficacy among older people in a health context (e.g. Godin & Shephard, 1985; Davis-Berman, 1990; Hickey et al., 1995; Parkatti et al., 1998). The latter authors adapted the Ryckman et al.'s (1982) scale and some modifications were made to the original scale so that it could be used in an older population. Godin & Shephard (1985) and Davis-Berman (1990) also used Ryckman et al.'s (1982) scale but no changes were made to the original one. Since physical self-efficacy was mentioned by the participants in the previous study as an aspect to consider when willing to engage in collective action (chapter eight), a four-item scale was designed in order to restrict the range of aspects which include individuals’ physical self-efficacy to those most prominent in the population under investigation rather than using items from Ryckman et al.’s (1982) scale. They were as follows (two positive and two negative): “My physical health makes it difficult to deal with situations that arise”; “My physical fitness is good enough to tackle any problem”; “My eyesight makes it very difficult for me to be self-reliant”; “I am confident that my hearing is good enough to carry out any activity”. Like with the general self-efficacy scale above, respondents were asked to specify the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with each of the four items on a five-point Likert type scale.

Importance and evaluation of several aspects of older people's identity structure (QX)
These measures referred to the structure of identity, conceptualised as including both content and value dimensions (Breakwell, 1986). Items included in both measures were derived from what participants in study two (chapters six, seven, eight) considered as relevant for their self-definitions. Thus, the most mentioned self-definitions were incorporated, i.e. nationality, social class, age and gender.

In order to measure the importance of different aspects of identity for each respondent, a five-point Likert-type scale was used. Respondents were asked to specify the degree of importance of different aspects, ranging from “Not important at all” to “Very important”. For the measurement of evaluation of the above mentioned aspects for each individual, respondents were asked to evaluate each of the different aspects on a
Social representations of older people (QXI)

This measure was developed following the results obtained in chapter seven. The main themes were as follows: desirability for social change (e.g. “Most people think that old people have the desire to influence what is happening in society”); collective efficacy (e.g. “Most people think that old people cannot manage to co-operate within a group of people in order to bring about changes in society”); collective orientation (e.g. “Most people think that old people lack the collective awareness to bring about changes in society”); political trust (e.g. “Most people think that old people trust the political system”); other groups, mainly young people: communication, social prejudice, social acceptance (e.g. “Most people think that old people find it difficult to communicate their views to younger people”; “Most people think that old people are prejudiced against young people”; “Most people think that old people feel other age groups want to know about their opinions”). Others were temporality (e.g. “Most people think that old people live in the past”); resources ("Most people think that old people have a lot of time if they want to engage in collective action"); general characteristics (e.g. “Most people think that old people keep the family together”; “Most people think that old people have a great desire to be needed”); awareness and responsibility (e.g. “Most people think that old people do not take enough responsibility for what is going on in society”); political interest (“Most people think that old people are interested in political activities”); and societal power (“Most people think that old people are a powerful group in society”).

There were twenty-nine statements accounting for several themes within the social representations of older people in relation to collective action, measured on the five-point Likert-type scale ranging from ‘1’ - “Strongly disagree” to ‘5’ - “Strongly agree”. As shown above with the examples, items were both negative and positive in order to prevent respondents answering in the same way. They were introduced in random order.
Demographic and organisation membership measures and assessment of experimental demand characteristics (QXII)

(i) Demographic variables
Respondents were asked for information about gender, age, marital status and social class. For the latter, a question was used that referred to participants' occupation before retirement and partner's occupation before retirement. Answers were classified according to the Standard Occupational Classification (Office of Population Censuses and Surveys, 1991), based on five categories (see Table 9.4).

Table 9.4: Classification of social class based on occupation (OPCS, 1991):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Group allocation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>Professional, etc. occupations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>Managerial and Technical occupations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>Skilled occupations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(N) non-manual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(M) manual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV</td>
<td>Partly skilled occupations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>Unskilled occupations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(ii) Group membership
Respondents were firstly asked whether they belonged to any organisation (e.g. political, environmental, concerned with retired people) and if so, they were required to write down a maximum of three organisations (coded as 'primary', 'secondary' and 'third' organisations). Respondents' answers were classified according to seven categories, i.e. 'social issue and old age oriented'; 'social issue and not old age oriented'; 'not social issue and old age oriented'; 'neither social issue nor age oriented'; 'Welfare/self-help'; 'Welfare/self-help-old age oriented'; 'political parties').

Furthermore, for each organisation respondents reported membership of they were asked to provide information about the type of activity they had carried out within the organisation. The respondents were asked to tick a list of types of activities (a space was also provided in which participants could specify other types of involvement). Involvement was defined in relation to whether or not they participated in a range of activities, i.e. “active” for “Sometimes I help to organise some of the activities”; “I
often help to organise some of the activities”; “I have an official responsibility in the organisation” and “passive” participation for “I am just a member...”; “Sometimes I participate in some of the activities that are organised”; “I often participate in some of the activities that are organised”. This distinction in type of involvement was made based on criteria derived from empirical evidence from the first study (chapter five).

(iii) Assessment of Experimental Demand Characteristics
Some of the barriers to collective action that have been identified (chapter eight) specifically refer to age related issues. Within the questionnaire it was important to determine whether the mention of age in the question subsequently affected estimations of the barrier. That is, it may have been that age related barriers led to overestimation of the significance of the barrier. In order to check whether this had occurred, the following question was included at the end of the questionnaire (five-point Likert scale): “My answers will give the impression that age related barriers to the different proposed actions in this questionnaire are more important than they actually are.”

At the end of the questionnaire respondents were asked to provide their name, address and telephone number (confidentiality was assured by stating compliance with the Data Protection Act). Finally, respondents were invited to write down any further comments they would like to add.

9.2.2 Distribution of the questionnaire
A total number of 608 respondents were contacted through a variety of eighteen organisations. These can be classified as being in one of four categories (see summary of all of the organisations in Appendix 1):
- Category 1: Social issue / Age oriented. E.g.: ‘Association of Retired Persons’ (ARP050) and ‘Pensioners for Peace International’ (PPI).
- Category 2: Social issue / Not age oriented. E.g.: ‘Charter 88’ and ‘Friends of the Earth’.
- Category 3: Not social issue / Age oriented. E.g.: ‘University of the Third Age’
• Category 4: Not social issue / Not age oriented. E.g.: ‘The Guildford Institute’ and ‘Women’s Corona Society’.

The researcher attended at least one meeting at each organisation; 25 meetings were held in all. Several meetings were held at a few of the organisations: ‘Association of Retired Persons’ (2 local meetings; Guildford and Woking); ‘University of the Third Age’ (7 local meetings; Guildford with a monthly general meeting and both environmental and psychology discussion groups; Hove with both topical discussion groups, and an art group (Sussex Scene) and Brighton with a monthly general meeting); ‘The Guildford Institute’ (2 classes) and ‘Charter 88’ (2 local meetings; London and Norwich).

In addition, in ‘Age Concern’ the researcher also distributed questionnaires weekly at the Guildford computer centre; when participating in an ‘Age Concern’ walk and at one of the courses promoting a healthier lifestyle.

‘Pensioners for Peace International’ (PPI) had not planned any meeting during the period of the data collection but they advertised the research in their Newsletter and members willing to participate contacted the researcher directly.

The same procedure for administering the questionnaires was used as in study one. They were distributed at each meeting and respondents filled them in when they were there. The first four pages of the questionnaire were supervised by the researcher in order to ensure respondents understood the procedure and allowed them to feel confident and thus involved with the research.

Due to the considerable length of the questionnaire, some of the participants were not able to complete it all on the day of the meeting. In such cases it was ensured that participants filled in at least the first ten pages so that the procedure was understood and they were provided with a free-post envelope to return their completed...
questionnaire at a later date.

A total number of 345 questionnaires were completed out of 608 (response rate=56.7%). The summary of the total number of distributed and returned questionnaires, and response rates for each organisation/group is presented below:

Table 9.5: Summary of response rates of the distributed questionnaires for each organisation / group.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>No. Distributed</th>
<th>No. Returned</th>
<th>Response Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National Pensioners' Convention</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>31.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British Pensioners</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Association of Retired Persons</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>59.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal Rights for Men and Women</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>86.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Older Feminist Network</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>43.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pensioners for Peace International</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends of the Earth</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>66.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charter 88</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>59.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amnesty International</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World Wide Fund for Nature</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of the Third Age</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>194</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>57.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age Concern – Go 50</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>49.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Red Cross</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riverside - Drop-in Centre</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stoke &amp; District - Autumn Club</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women’s Corona Society</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>83.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Guildford Institute</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>66.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bowling Greens</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>608</strong></td>
<td><strong>345</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>56.7%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Organisations in the Table have been categorised 1-4. Category no. 1 corresponded to organisations that were social issue and age oriented. The highest response rates among this category were from the ‘British Pensioners and Trade Unions Action Association’ (100%), followed by PARITY – ‘Equal Rights for Men and Women’ (86.7%), ARP050 (59.2%), ‘Older Feminist Network’ (OFN) (43.5%) and ‘National Pensioners’ Convention’ (NPC) with the lower return (31.6%). It is likely that the latter presented such a low rate because it was a very big and important meeting in which several national and regional pensioner associations attended and there was no space left for the researcher to talk to all of the attendees together. Instead, participants had to be approached in short breaks in which they were already busy talking to other colleagues from other associations and groups.
In category 2, which corresponded to social issue and not age oriented organisations, the highest returns were from ‘Friends of the Earth’ (66.6%), followed by ‘Charter 88’ (59.4%), ‘Amnesty International’ (50%) and ‘World Wide Fund for Nature’ (WWF) with a 33.3% of responses. The latter low percentage may be due to the fact the leaders of several local groups distributed the questionnaires instead of the researcher since there were no official meetings planned. Thus, some of the potential respondents might not have been sufficiently persuaded that the research was worthwhile.

Category 3 included those organisations that were not social issue but age oriented. The highest response rates were from those groups in which only a few respondents were approached, i.e. ‘The Red Cross’ (100%), ‘Riverside-Drop-in centre’ (100%) and ‘Stoke & District - Autumn club’ (100%). They were followed by ‘University of the Third Age’ (57.7%) and ‘Age Concern -Go 50’ (49.6%).

Finally, for category 4 (neither social issue nor age oriented), the highest response rates were obtained from the ‘Bowling Greens’ (100%), followed by ‘The Women’s Corona Society’ (83.3%), and ‘The Guildford Institute’ (66.7%). Again, for the ‘Bowling Greens’ only two participants were contacted and they both responded.

In study one (chapter five) ‘Riverside-Drop-in centre’, ‘Stoke & District - Autumn club’ and ‘Bowling Greens’ had already participated and in that occasion they presented the lowest rates. Within this study it was the opposite, since participants who attended the meeting had been contacted by the researcher previously and they were willing to co-operate. Besides, similar response rates were obtained here for the educational centres, i.e. ‘The Guildford Institute’ and ‘The University of the Third Age’ when compared with the ones obtained in study one (65.7% for ‘The University of the Third Age’ and 56.9% for ‘The Guildford Institute’, see chapter five).
9.2.3 Participants

The sample contained 187 females (54% of the total) and 158 males (46% of the total). Ages ranged from 57 to 89 (mean of 72 years). Most participants were married (56%), followed by widows/widowers (27%). The rest were either divorced (9%), single (7%), or separated (2%). When considering sex and marital status, many of the women appeared to be widows (n=71) when compared with men (n=21). Most of men were married (76%) whereas women were mainly distributed between widows (38%) and married (39%).

In terms of the four categories of groups where respondents were sampled, the gender distribution was equivalent, with the exception of category 4 (‘not social issue/not age oriented’). The percentages are as follows: for category 1 (‘social issue/age oriented’) 55.3% of the respondents were male (n= 42) and 44.7% were female (n= 34); for category 2 (‘social issue/not age oriented’) the distribution according to gender was equal, i.e. 30 respondents for each gender; for category 3 (‘not social issue/age oriented’) 44% of the respondents were male (n= 77) and 56% were female (n= 98). Finally, for category 4 (‘not social issue/not age oriented’) 26.5% of the respondents were male (n= 9) and 73.5% were female (n= 25).

Table 9.6: Percentage of participants in each of the organisations according to gender.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Category 1: ‘Social issue/age oriented’</td>
<td>55.3%</td>
<td>44.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n=42</td>
<td>n=34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category 2: ‘Social issue/not age oriented’</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n=30</td>
<td>n=30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category 3: ‘Not social issue/age oriented’</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n=77</td>
<td>n=98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category 4: ‘Not social issue/not age oriented’</td>
<td>26.5%</td>
<td>73.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n=9</td>
<td>n=25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With regards to social class, respondents appeared to be belong to a rather high social class (mean of 2.1, which corresponds to managerial and technical occupations). Number of participants within each category was as follows: n=111 for professional

\(^{12}\text{People aged between 57 and 64 were also retired. Therefore, rather than being asked about their experience before and after they were 65, these people were asked about their experience before and after retirement.}\)
occupations, n=166 for managerial and technical occupations, n=43 for non-manual skilled occupations, n=8 for manual skilled occupations, n=6 for partly skilled occupations and n=4 for unskilled occupations. Seven cases were missing.

9.3 Analysis of the results

First a brief account of the demand characteristics check that was introduced (see section 9.2.1) is described. This is followed by a preliminary analysis section which includes details of the internal reliability for each of the scales used in the questionnaire. A table summarising the results obtained for the scales will be presented at the end of this chapter.

9.3.1 Assessment of Experimental Demand Characteristics

With regards to the above mentioned demand characteristics check, 38.7% of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement, followed by 36.2% of the respondents who disagreed with the statement; 16.3% agreed, 6.4% strongly disagreed and 2.4% strongly agreed. Thus, it was quite a good outcome, since 18.7% were in agreement and 42.6% in disagreement (the latter being the ideal answer). The implications of a high percentage of respondents who neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement might be either (i) they did not know the answer or were unsure; or (ii) they might have felt that the researcher had already introduced the age-related barriers and thus they could not provide an answer to this.

However, 18.7% of respondents said the instrument would overestimate the significance of age-related barriers. In order to assess the implications of this, it was checked whether respondents who agreed the instrument would overestimate the significance of age-related barriers answered differently from those respondents who disagreed. A variable was created (called 'group of respondents') in order to distinguish between two groups of respondents, i.e. those in agreement (including 'agree' and 'strongly agree') and those in disagreement (including 'disagree' and 'strongly disagree').
A series of independent samples t-test were run between group of respondents and perception of the barriers at each of the five levels (i.e. intraindividual, interpersonal, intragroup, intergroup, societal). There were non-significant effects of group of respondents on the perception of barriers at each of the five levels (see Table 9.7). Thus, although the assessment of experimental demand characteristics suggests that almost 20% of respondents believed that their answers would lead to overestimation of age-related barriers in the questionnaire, they did not assess the perceived barriers any differently than those who disagreed such an overestimation had taken place. In the light of this, all of the respondents were included in further analyses.

Table 9.7: Results of independent samples t-test between group of respondents and perception of each of the levels of barriers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barriers</th>
<th>Group of respondents in agreement</th>
<th>Group of respondents in disagreement</th>
<th>T-test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Std. Dev.</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Intraindividual</td>
<td>5.16</td>
<td>1.20</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Interpersonal</td>
<td>5.31</td>
<td>1.01</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Intragroup</td>
<td>4.55</td>
<td>1.23</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Intergroup</td>
<td>4.65</td>
<td>1.41</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Societal</td>
<td>4.55</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9.3.2 Preliminary analyses

Demographic variables (QXII)

Gender and marital status were represented as categorical variables. Age was measured in years. Social class was considered as an interval variable and an overall score for each respondent was computed, which included the respondent’s occupation before retirement and partner’s occupation before retirement.

‘Total number of organisations’ was measured as a sum of positive answers to belonging to an organisation, creating a new variable with the range of values from ‘0’ to ‘3’ (‘0’ corresponding to “not belonging to any organisation” and ‘3’ indicating
“belonging to three organisations”).

‘Type of involvement’ (‘passive’ and ‘active’ participation) was derived from the types of activities carried out within an organisation(s). A person who would have ticked in both ‘active’ and ‘passive’ items would be considered as ‘active’.

Two additional measures on type of organisation for each respondent were included for the analysis of this study, i.e. ‘social issue vs. not social issue organisation’ and ‘age oriented vs. not age oriented organisation’. They were referred to the organisation in which participants had been contacted and where they were presumably thus involved.

**Tractability of social issues scale(Q1)**

A principal component factor analysis (direct oblimin rotation) was performed for the ten social issue items. As expected, one factor was extracted, which explained 28.41% of the variance. Although factor loadings for each of the items were not that high (see Table 9.8), it was decided to include them all in the scale, since internal reliability was shown to be acceptable (α=.71). An overall score for tractability (called ‘tractability of social issues’) was obtained: the mean value of the ten tractability items was calculated.

Table 9.8: Factor analysis of social issue items.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEM</th>
<th>Factor loading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Failure of the National Health Service to provide an efficient service</td>
<td>.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Inadequate pensions for old people</td>
<td>.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Lack of policies favouring the traditional structure of the family</td>
<td>.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Crime and violence in many spheres of life</td>
<td>.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Sleaze in politics</td>
<td>.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Job insecurity resulting from the increased use of technology</td>
<td>.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Lack of British control over decisions taken in the European Union</td>
<td>.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Breakdown of law and order</td>
<td>.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Too much selfishness in our society</td>
<td>.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Spoiling of the environment</td>
<td>.66</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Eigenvalue 2.84  
Percent of Variance 28.41  
Alpha reliability coefficient .71
Priority of the issue (QII)
When the presented social issue (i.e. ‘lack of policies favouring the traditional structure of the family’ or ‘spoiling of the environment’) coincided with one of the top four prioritised issues, a score was given to reflect this, i.e. from “first most important” to “fourth most important”.

Previous experience and willingness to participate before and after 65 (QIII)
The accumulation of previous experience on each of the presented actions before being 65 years old was measured as a sum of positive answers for each of the four actions included in the questionnaire. Thus, a new variable was created with the range of values from ‘0’ to ‘4’, the latter accounting for the maximum of experience. The same procedure was used for the variable of ‘previous experience after being 65 years old’.

Perceived effectiveness of collective action scale (QIII)
There were four items included in the questionnaire that were designed to measure perceived effectiveness of collective action. The reliability of the items was calculated and found to be satisfactory (α = .73). A composite (mean) score was therefore calculated to be used in subsequent analyses as the measure of ‘perceived effectiveness of collective action’.

Table 9.9: List of ‘perceived effectiveness’ items and alpha reliability coefficient.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEM</th>
<th>ALPHA RELIABILITY COEFFICIENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Effectiveness: Write to MP</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Effectiveness: Explain to other people about the importance of the problem</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Effectiveness: Join a group demonstrating</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Effectiveness: Join an informal discussion group</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alpha reliability coefficient</td>
<td>.73</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Barriers (QIII)
Three separate measures were obtained for this section. They were (i) number of applicable barriers, (ii) applicability of barriers and (iii) permeability of barriers. Each of them are described below.
(i) Number of applicable barriers
Five composite variables of number of applicable barriers for each level of barriers for each of the four actions separately were created (i.e. number of applicable barriers at the intraindividual; interpersonal; intragroup; intergroup and societal levels). Values within each level ranged from ‘0’ to ‘2’ (‘0’= “no barriers applicable”; ‘1’= “one barrier applicable”; ‘2’= “two barriers applicable”).

(ii) Applicability of barriers
Five composite variables (categorical) were created for applicability of barriers (i.e. one for each of the five levels) for each action. Responses for both items at each level were added up (discriminating between those respondents who responded “No” to both items and those who responded positively to at least one of the two items). A number was given for each level.

(iii) Permeability of barriers scales
In order to compute the perception of permeability of the barriers for each of the actions, the mean value of the two items representing each level was computed. ('permeability for the intraindividual level’= mean [barrier no.1, barrier no. 2]; ‘permeability for the interpersonal level’= mean [barrier no.3, barrier no. 4]; ‘permeability for the intragroup level’= mean [barrier no.5, barrier no. 6]; ‘permeability for the intergroup level’= mean [barrier no.7, barrier no. 8]; ‘permeability for the societal level’= mean [barrier no.9, barrier no. 10]). Since there was a high number of responses in the non-applicability of barriers, it was decided to treat all “non-applicable” answers for each of the listed barriers as ‘6’ in the permeability scale. It seemed conceptually correct to consider “non-applicability” on the continuum, in which ‘6’ would follow “it will be removed”. That is, it might be argued that people who say a certain barrier is not applicable to them may consider that it does not actually constitute a barrier, that is, it can be easily overcome. This can be equated with the barrier being highly permeable. It is acknowledged, however, that there may be other reasons for the non-applicability of a barrier. However, in the light of this conceptual link the decision was made to conflate these two variables.
(non-applicability was equated with high permeability). This in turn dealt with the high percentage of ‘non-applicable’ responses.

Each of the three measures reported above was used for the preliminary analysis of this study. However, the new variable noted above conflates applicability and permeability (i.e. a strong barrier equates with less permeability and more applicability; a weak barrier with more permeability and less applicability). This more differentiated conceptualisation of the perception of a barrier was used as the outcome variable in some of the analyses. The readers attention will be drawn to occasions when this composite is used.

Using this measure, it would be necessary to have an overall score for the perception of the barrier (i.e. including the four actions together). Before creating these composite variables for each of the five levels of barriers, it was first checked that permeability did not differ across the four actions. To do this, a series of one-way repeated measures ANOVA’s were run for each of the items across the four actions and then internal reliability of each of the items was checked. Non-significant effects of each of the items for each level were shown and internal reliability of each of the items proved to be acceptable (see Tables 2 and 3 in Appendix 7). Below are presented the reports of reliability obtained for each level of barrier.

*Intraindividual level*

At the intraindividual level, cronbach alpha was found to be satisfactory ($\alpha = .78$). An overall mean score for permeability/applicability at the intraindividual level (called ‘perception of barriers at the intraindividual level’) was obtained (‘Perception of barriers at the intraindividual level’ = mean [barriers at the intraindividual level (action 1), barriers at the intraindividual level (action 2), barriers at the intraindividual level (action 3), barriers at the intraindividual level (action 4)].
Table 9.10: List of 'perception of barriers at the intraindividual level' items and alpha reliability coefficient.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEM</th>
<th>Alpha reliability coefficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Perception of barriers at the intraindividual level (action 1)</td>
<td>.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Perception of barriers at the intraindividual level (action 2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Perception of barriers at the intraindividual level (action 3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Perception of barriers at the intraindividual level (action 4)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Interpersonal level
The reliability of the items measuring perceived barriers at the interpersonal level was calculated and found to be satisfactory (α = .81). A composite (mean) score was therefore calculated to be used in subsequent analyses as the measure of 'perception of barriers at the interpersonal level'.

Table 9.11: List of 'perception of barriers at the interpersonal level' items and alpha reliability coefficient.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEM</th>
<th>Alpha reliability coefficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Perception of barriers at the interpersonal level (action 1)</td>
<td>.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Perception of barriers at the interpersonal level (action 2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Perception of barriers at the interpersonal level (action 3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Perception of barriers at the interpersonal level (action 4)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Intragroup level
Internal reliability for the four items at the intragroup level was reported as satisfactory (α = .79). An overall (mean) score was therefore calculated (called 'perception of barriers at the intragroup level').

Table 9.12: List of 'perception of barriers at the intragroup level' items and alpha reliability coefficient.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEM</th>
<th>Alpha reliability coefficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Perception of barriers at the intragroup level (action 1)</td>
<td>.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Perception of barriers at the intragroup level (action 2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Perception of barriers at the intragroup level (action 3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Perception of barriers at the intragroup level (action 4)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Intergroup level

The reliability of the items measuring perceived barriers at the intergroup level was found to be high ($\alpha = .85$). A composite (mean) score was calculated to be used in subsequent analyses as the measure of 'perception of barriers at the intergroup level'.

Table 9.13: List of 'perception of barriers at the intergroup level' items and alpha reliability coefficient.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEM</th>
<th>Alpha reliability coefficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Perception of barriers at the intergroup level (action 1)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Perception of barriers at the intergroup level (action 2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Perception of barriers at the intergroup level (action 3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Perception of barriers at the intergroup level (action 4)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Societal level

Finally, internal reliability of the items at the societal level was very high ($\alpha = .88$). Following these results, a composite variable was created (called 'perception of barriers at the societal level') which included the mean value of perceived barriers at this level.

Table 9.14: List of 'perception of barriers at the societal level' items and alpha reliability coefficient.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEM</th>
<th>Alpha reliability coefficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Perception of barriers at the societal level (action 1)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Perception of barriers at the societal level (action 2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Perception of barriers at the societal level (action 3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Perception of barriers at the societal level (action 4)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Political efficacy scale (QIV)

There were six items included in the questionnaire that were designed to measure political efficacy. The reliability analysis revealed that the scale would be more reliable if the item no.3 ("Sometimes politics and government seem so complicated that a person like me cannot really understand what is going on") was not included. Despite the reliability of the original scale being good ($\alpha = .80$), it was decided to drop the item from further analysis. Bandura (1997) had already identified the problem inherent in this item, i.e. one can comprehend fully the government systems but lack a sense of efficacy to influence them. Cronbach alpha indicated high reliability of this
scale (\( \alpha = .83 \)), which was higher than the reported consistency of the original scale (\( \alpha = .76 \)) by Marsh (1977).

Table 9.15: List of 'political efficacy' items and alpha reliability coefficient.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEM</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. People like me have no say in what government does</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Voting is the only way that people like me can have any say in the way government runs thing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I don't think public officials care much about what people like me think</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Generally speaking, those we elect as MP’s to Westminster lose touch with the people pretty quickly</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Parties are only interested in people's votes, not in their opinions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Alpha reliability coefficient .83

Each of the items included negative values. In order to achieve a consistent direction in scoring, they were recoded into positive, so that higher scores indicated greater degree of political efficacy. An overall mean score for 'political efficacy' was obtained.

Political trust scale (QV)

There were four items included in the questionnaire that were designed to measure political trust. The reliability of the items was calculated and found to be satisfactory (\( \alpha = .80 \)). A composite (mean) score was therefore calculated to be used in subsequent analyses as the measure of 'political trust'. Reliability was again slightly higher than the one obtained in Marsh's (1977) scale (\( \alpha = .74 \)).

Table 9.16: List of 'political trust' items and alpha reliability coefficient.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEM</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. How much do you trust the government in Westminster to do what is right?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. When people in politics speak on television, to the newspapers, or in Parliament, how much do they tell the truth?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. How much do you trust a British government of any party to place the needs of this country and the people above the interests of their own political party?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. How much do you trust that this country is run for the benefit of all the people?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Alpha reliability coefficient .80
Collective orientation scale (QVI)

There were six items included in the questionnaire that were designed to measure collective orientation. The reliability analysis revealed that if item no. 4 was included ("I work better in a group rather than on my own"), reliability was low (α = 0.48). Therefore, this item was removed from the scale. Internal reliability with the five remaining items was reported as acceptable (α = 0.53), which was similar to the one obtained in Kelly & Breinlinger scale (1996), i.e. α = 0.52 for general collective orientation and for gender related collective orientation, α = 0.68.

Table 9.17: List of ‘collective orientation’ items and alpha reliability coefficient.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEM</th>
<th>Alpha reliability coefficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. People should not be expected to do anything for the community</td>
<td>0.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unless they are paid for it</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Working with others is usually more trouble than it’s worth</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. In the long run, the only person you can count on is yourself</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Old people must act as a group rather than as individuals</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Improvements in conditions and opportunities for old people will only be achieved through collective action</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this scale, items 1-3 were negative, whereas the remaining ones were positive ones. In order to achieve a consistent direction in scoring, items 1, 2 and 3 were recoded (e.g. ‘1’ into ‘5’; ‘2’ into ‘4’), so that higher scores indicated greater degree of collective orientation. An overall score for collective orientation (called ‘collective orientation’) was obtained.

Age as a relevant group membership ('older people') scale (QVII)

There were five items included in the questionnaire that were designed to measure age as a relevant group membership ('older people'). The reliability analysis revealed that if item no. 4 was included ("I work better in a group rather than on my own"), reliability was low (α = 0.57). Therefore, it was decided to drop the item from further analysis. This item differed substantially in relation to the others in the sense it makes direct reference to old people as a group and for that it includes a temporal dimension ("I rarely"). Internal reliability for the four remaining items in the scale was shown to have improved considerably (α = 0.77). Similar results had been obtained in Kelly &
Breinlinger's (1996) original scale ($\alpha = .84$). Following these results, a composite variable was created called 'age as a relevant group membership' by calculating the mean value of items 1, 2, 3, 5.

Table 9.18: List of 'age as a relevant group membership, i.e. older people' items and alpha reliability coefficient.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEM</th>
<th>Factor loading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I feel strong ties with old people</td>
<td>.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I identify strongly with old people</td>
<td>.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Being old is central to the way I think of myself</td>
<td>.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I am an old person</td>
<td>.68</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Alpha reliability coefficient .77

Collective efficacy scale (QVIII)

Factor analysis (principal components method; direct oblimin rotation) was performed for the seven items measuring collective efficacy. This is the minimum number that can be included (Tabachnick & Fidell, 1996). As expected, one factor was extracted. Items accounted for 51.8% of the variance and cronbach alpha indicated high reliability of this scale ($\alpha = .84$). Following these results, a composite variable was created (called 'collective efficacy'), which included the mean value of the seven collective efficacy items.

Table 9.19: Factor analysis of collective efficacy items.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEM</th>
<th>Factor loading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Old people have confidence that they can bring about changes in society</td>
<td>.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Old people believe they can be very effective at bringing about changes in society</td>
<td>.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Old people expect to be powerful in bringing about changes in society</td>
<td>.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Old people can solve any problem they encounter when they try to bring about changes in society</td>
<td>.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Old people can achieve a lot of societal change if they put their mind to it</td>
<td>.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. No social issue is too difficult for old people to tackle</td>
<td>.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Old people expect to have a lot of influence over changes in society</td>
<td>.77</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Eigenvalue 3.63
Percent of Variance 51.8
Alpha reliability coefficient .84
**Self-efficacy scale (QIX)**

Principal factor extraction with direct oblimin rotation was used for the ten items measuring self-efficacy and in line with the previous literature, two factors were extracted, i.e. general self-efficacy (factor one) and physical self-efficacy (factor two).

Item no. 10 had been removed (“I am confident that my hearing is good enough to carry out any activity”). It presented a low loading (-.31) and it was the one contributing to a lowest internal reliability ($\alpha=.55$). Finally, generalising hearing in relation to ‘any activity’ showed to have caused problems to participants when responding to it.

Cronbach alpha indicated moderate reliability for both scales of self-efficacy ($\alpha=.71$ for general self-efficacy and $\alpha=.61$ for physical self-efficacy). Sherer et al.’s (1982) social self-efficacy scale presented the same reliability as the general self-efficacy scale within this study ($\alpha=.71$). However, internal reliability obtained for their general self-efficacy scale was reported to be higher ($\alpha=.86$). Regarding Banks et al.’s (1992) longitudinal study, cronbach alpha was shown to be lower than results obtained in the present study (for Wave 1, $\alpha=.60$; for Wave 2, $\alpha=.61$; for Wave 3, $\alpha=.63$).

In this scale, items 1,2,3,8 were positive and items 4,5,6,7,9 were negative. The latter ones were recoded so that higher scores indicated greater degree of self-efficacy. According to the underlying meaning of the two factors, two variables were calculated.
Table 9.20: Factor analysis of self-efficacy items.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEM</th>
<th>Factor 1 'General self-efficacy'</th>
<th>Factor 2 'Physical self-efficacy'</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. If I can't do a job the first time, I keep trying until I do</td>
<td>-.70</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I seem to be capable of dealing with most problems that come up in life</td>
<td>-.63</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I find it easy to make new friends</td>
<td>-.58</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I do not know how to handle social gatherings</td>
<td>.54 (R)*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I avoid trying to learn new things when they look too difficult for me</td>
<td>.60 (R)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I give up easily</td>
<td>.75 (R)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. My physical health makes it difficult to deal with situations that arise</td>
<td></td>
<td>.83 (R)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. My physical fitness is good enough to tackle any problem</td>
<td></td>
<td>-.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. My eyesight makes it very difficult for me to be self-reliant</td>
<td></td>
<td>.69 (R)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Eigenvalue 2.73 1.52  
Percent of Variance 30.29 16.89  
Alpha reliability coefficient .71 .61  
Intercorrelation .17

*(R) Reverse scoring on this item.

The variable called 'general self-efficacy' included the mean of the six general self-efficacy items (items 1,2,3,4,5,6). In addition, an overall score for 'physical self-efficacy' was obtained: the mean of the three physical self-efficacy items was calculated (items 7,8,9).

Social representations of older people scale (QXI)

Principal factor extraction with direct oblimin rotation was used for the twenty-nine items measuring social representations of older people. Two factors were extracted, i.e. negative evaluations (factor one) and positive evaluations (factor two).

Item no. 1, ("Most people think that old people trust the political system") had been removed, since it presented a very low loading (.20).

Cronbach alpha indicated high reliability for factor one (α=.88) and moderate reliability for factor two (α=.70).

Two composite variables were created, i.e. 'positive social representations of older
people' (mean value of the sum of the ten items in factor 2) and 'negative social representations of older people' (mean value of the sum of the eighteen items in factor 1).

Table 9.21: Factor analysis of social representations items.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEM</th>
<th>Factor 1</th>
<th>Factor 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Most people think that...&quot;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. ...Old people have no views in common with young people</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. ...Old people live in the past</td>
<td>0.69</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. ...Old people believe that the other generations do not</td>
<td>0.58</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>appreciate their experience of life</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. ...Old people want to impose their beliefs on other people</td>
<td>0.61</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. ...Old people find it difficult to communicate their views to</td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>younger people</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. ...Old people are prejudiced against young people</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. ...Old people are too apathetic to bring about changes in</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>society</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. ...Old people would rather be involved in local issues than</td>
<td>0.31</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>national issues</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. ...Old people cannot manage to co-operate within a group of</td>
<td>0.48</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>people in order to bring about changes in society</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. ...Old people have a lot of time if they want to engage in</td>
<td>0.34</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>collective action</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. ...Old people do not take enough responsibility for what is</td>
<td>0.46</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>going on in society</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. ...Old people are a minority</td>
<td>0.34</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. ...Old people are too concerned about themselves to bring about</td>
<td>0.62</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>changes in society</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. ...Young people are prejudiced against old people</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. ...Old people are narrow minded</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. ...Old people lack the collective awareness to bring about</td>
<td>0.54</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>changes in society</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27. ...Old people cannot be involved in action to bring about</td>
<td>0.42</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>changes in society</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. ...Old people prefer the past to the present</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. ...Old people have the desire to influence what is happening</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in society</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. ...Old people have wisdom</td>
<td>0.51</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. ...Old people have a great desire to be needed</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. ...Old people are interested in political activities</td>
<td>0.58</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. ...Old people keep the family together</td>
<td>0.51</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. ...Old people are happy to take risks</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. ...Old people can effectively bring about change in society</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. ...Old people feel they have some influence in the political</td>
<td>0.49</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>system</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. ...Old people feel other age groups want to know about their</td>
<td>0.34</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>opinions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29. ...Old people are a powerful group in society</td>
<td>0.58</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Guttman scaling on participation

In order to have an overall score of willingness to engage in collective action which included information on each of the four types of actions used in the questionnaire, Guttman scalogram analysis on willingness to participate followed. Guttman scalogram is a cumulative scaling procedure which “demands that a sequence of questions should represent a series of ‘bench marks’ along a single attitudinal continuum, each item representing a unique order of difficulty” (Marsh, 1977, p. 245).

Listwise deletion was used, with 5 cases not being included in the analysis. Results showed that the action “join a group demonstrating” presented the highest degree of unwillingness for the participants (0.65); followed by the actions of “Join an informal discussion group” (0.39); “Explain to other people about the importance of this problem” (0.29) and “Write to your MP” (0.27). Consistency coefficients proved to be good, specially the coefficient of reproducability presented a high value. Results are shown in the table below. These results were consistent with findings above of the order of actions regarding their perceived effectiveness. Moreover, the order of degree of willingness of the actions appeared to be from individual action (“write to your MP” and “explain to other people about the importance of this problem”) to group action (“join an informal discussion group” and “join a group demonstrating”).

Table 9.22: Results of Guttman Scaleogram Analysis on willingness to participate.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Actions</th>
<th>% Willingness</th>
<th>Difficulty</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Join a group demonstrating”</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>0.650</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Join an informal discussion group”</td>
<td>61.4</td>
<td>0.386</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Explain to other people about the importance of this problem”</td>
<td>71.5</td>
<td>0.285</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Write to your MP”</td>
<td>72.6</td>
<td>0.274</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Coefficients

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reproducability</th>
<th>Scalability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0.91</td>
<td>0.73</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
On the basis of the above results, a variable which included the number of activities in which each participant had shown the willingness to take part was created (called ‘willingness to participate in collective action’). This variable ranged from 0 to 4, ‘0’ meaning that the participant did not show willingness to participate in any of the activities and ‘4’ meaning that the participant showed willingness in four activities, i.e. all of them. It appeared that when comparing between them, a total number of 49 cases did not show willingness to participate in any of the activities; 45 cases only showed willingness in one activity, 57 cases in three of them; the higher of number of cases showing willingness between three (n=97) and four activities (n=92), which can be considered to encompass a very positive and encouraging picture of older people’s willingness to engage in collective action.
9.3.3 Summary of scales

To summarise each of the scales created for this study, a table is presented below.

Table 9.23: Summary of scales created for this study (n, mean, standard deviation and cronbach alpha for each scale).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCALE</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Dev.</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Alpha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total number of organisations</td>
<td>2.29</td>
<td>.94</td>
<td>344</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Priority of the issue</td>
<td>-.38</td>
<td>2.56</td>
<td>345</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Previous experience before 65</td>
<td>1.37</td>
<td>1.32</td>
<td>344</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Previous experience after 65</td>
<td>1.42</td>
<td>1.32</td>
<td>344</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tractability of social issues</td>
<td>3.10</td>
<td>.52</td>
<td>345</td>
<td>.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived effectiveness of collective action</td>
<td>3.05</td>
<td>.69</td>
<td>344</td>
<td>.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perception of barriers at the following levels:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Intraindividual</td>
<td>5.18</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>345</td>
<td>.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Interpersonal</td>
<td>5.36</td>
<td>.90</td>
<td>345</td>
<td>.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Intragroup</td>
<td>4.71</td>
<td>1.12</td>
<td>345</td>
<td>.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Intergroup</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>1.18</td>
<td>344</td>
<td>.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Societal</td>
<td>4.90</td>
<td>1.29</td>
<td>345</td>
<td>.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political efficacy</td>
<td>2.76</td>
<td>.93</td>
<td>345</td>
<td>.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political trust</td>
<td>2.40</td>
<td>.74</td>
<td>345</td>
<td>.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collective orientation</td>
<td>3.90</td>
<td>.50</td>
<td>345</td>
<td>.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age as a relevant group membership ('older people')</td>
<td>3.08</td>
<td>.84</td>
<td>345</td>
<td>.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collective efficacy</td>
<td>2.34</td>
<td>.67</td>
<td>344</td>
<td>.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General self-efficacy</td>
<td>3.86</td>
<td>.54</td>
<td>345</td>
<td>.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical self-efficacy</td>
<td>3.77</td>
<td>.71</td>
<td>345</td>
<td>.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive social representations of older people</td>
<td>2.81</td>
<td>.42</td>
<td>340</td>
<td>.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative social representations of older people</td>
<td>2.77</td>
<td>.50</td>
<td>340</td>
<td>.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willingness to participate in collective action</td>
<td>2.41</td>
<td>1.38</td>
<td>340</td>
<td>.91/.73*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* coefficient of reproducability / coefficient of scalability.

This chapter presented the research questions of this study, followed by a detailed description of the method procedure and a series of factor and reliability analysis used in order to derive new composite measures. Additionally, results obtained from the ‘assessment of experimental demand characteristics’ allowed inclusion of all of the respondents for further interpretation of results obtained in this study. The following
chapters (ten and eleven) will concentrate on addressing the research questions presented at the beginning of this chapter.
Chapter Ten

The exploration of relationships between social psychological variables in the study of collective action

"Research is formalized curiosity. It is poking and prying with a purpose."

Zora Neale Hurston (1903-1960).

10.1 Introduction

This chapter comprises an exploratory study which will form the basis for establishing a possible predictive model of collective action (chapter eleven). Most of the analyses presented in this chapter distinguish between the four actions separately in response to the assumption adopted in this thesis that we need to take into account the nature of the action and that some factors may be different for specific types of actions. Special emphasis is given to this distinction when perception of barriers are investigated here.

Hypotheses are introduced at the beginning of the appropriate sections and followed by the corresponding results. The first section of perceived tractability of instances of social change will be presented in order to determine what social issues are perceived as being more likely to be solved and identify what social issues are perceived to be most important to solve. This will be followed by a description of the actions older people are likely to take; and the identification of actions which are perceived to be more effective by older people. Possible differences according to sex and presented social issue will be investigated.

With regard to perceived barriers, first it will be explored what levels of barrier are applicable to older people. The differences between those that are willing to take
action and those who are not in the way they perceive the barriers will be explored. The presented social issue will be taken into account in doing this.

Profiles of perceived barriers across each of the four actions will be derived. This will be followed by the examination of the extent to which perception of barriers are specifically associated with identity variables (importance of age, evaluation of age, age as a relevant group membership, collective orientation, collective efficacy, general self-efficacy, physical self-efficacy, political efficacy) and ideology variables (political trust, positive and negative social representations of older people). Separate sections will pay specific attention to existing relationships between each of the identity variables and then about the relationships between the identity variables and social representations of older people. Following this, additional hypotheses with regard to existing literature will be presented.

The final part of this results section will explore the association between willingness to participate in collective action and each of the variables taken into account in this study. This will be followed by the identification of sub-groups within the sample in relation to social representations of older people and its characterisation with other variables in the analysis.

10.2 Instances of social change

In this section a description of which instances of social change are perceived to be more likely to be solved and order of importance given by the participants is provided.

*Tractability*

Respondents gave positive answers for five of the proposed instances of social change to the question "If an effort was made, how likely is it that each one of them could be solved". Instances of social change which were perceived as "likely" or "very likely" to be solved were failure of the National Health Service (68.2%); spoiling of the environment (62.3%); breakdown of law and order (58.3%); inadequate pensions for
old people (56.9%); crime and violence in many spheres of life (49%).

For three other instances, beliefs about tractability were more varied. These were lack of policies favouring the traditional structure of the family (29.7% unlikely, 34.7% neither likely nor unlikely, 27.6% likely); sleaze in politics (33.8% unlikely, 24.2% neither, 25.4% likely); lack of British control over decisions taken in the European Union (28.2% unlikely, 29.4% neither, 24.1% likely).

Finally, the issues of too much selfishness in our society and job insecurity were mostly perceived as unlikely to be solved (34.3% “unlikely” and 34.3% as “neither” in the former and 42.1% unlikely in the latter).

Order of importance

The four most important issues to be solved were believed to be failure of the National Health Service, spoiling of the environment, crime and violence and inadequate pensions for old people. Table 10.1 summarises these results.

Table 10.1: Summary of the four most important issues to solve identified by the participants.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Most important issues to solve / the highest %</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First most important</td>
<td>National Health (33.4%)</td>
<td>Environment (12.5%)</td>
<td>Crime and violence (10.5%) / Law and order (10.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n=115</td>
<td>n=43</td>
<td>n=36 (each)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second most important</td>
<td>Crime and violence (21.2%)</td>
<td>National Health (18.6%)</td>
<td>Inadequate pensions (13.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n=73</td>
<td>n=64</td>
<td>n=47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third most important</td>
<td>Crime and violence (14.2%) / Law and order (14.2%)</td>
<td>National Health (13.4%)</td>
<td>Job insecurity (12.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n=49 (each)</td>
<td>n=46</td>
<td>n=44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth most important</td>
<td>Environment (18.9%)</td>
<td>Inadequate pensions (16.9%)</td>
<td>Job Insecurity (10.2%) / Lack of British control over EU (10.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n=65</td>
<td>n=58</td>
<td>n=35 (each)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
These results were consistent with the above regarding perceived tractability, since failure of the National Health Service, spoiling of the environment, crime and violence, law and order and inadequate pensions for old people were perceived as likely to be solved if an effort was made. In other words, the most important issues were also those rated as being the most solvable. These results were in line with what was found in study two (as discussed in chapter six), in which the social issues of health, older people, environment and law and order were perceived to be important for the participants.

Further analysis was conducted in which a score for the priority of the two issues (environment/family) that were to be 'presented issues' was obtained. It appeared that 178 cases had perceived the issue of the environment as a priority and only 96 cases for the issue of the family. The following table shows the number of participants for each level of priority with both social issues:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Order of importance / Issue</th>
<th>Environment (n)</th>
<th>Family (n)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First more important</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second more important</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third more important</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth more important</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not applicable (importance was given to other issues)</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>249</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total cases for priority</strong></td>
<td><strong>178</strong></td>
<td><strong>96</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10.3 Actions older people are likely to take

Although previous experience has always been considered in the measurement and study of collective action, existing research on collective action has either treated previous experience as the only outcome measure of collective action (e.g. Wolfsfeld, 1986a); or measured collective action by considering both previous experience and willingness as the dependent variables (e.g. Marsh, 1977, Muller, 1982; Muller & Opp, 1986). Other studies have considered willingness as the outcome without paying
attention to the fact previous experience may influence intentional behaviour (e.g. Klandermans, 1984). Within this particular study, previous experience had been treated as an independent variable in order to predict willingness to participate in collective action (e.g. Fox & Schofield, 1989; Hinkle, Fox-Cardamone, Haseleu, Brown & Irwin, 1996).

In the previous study (chapter seven) it was shown how participants differentiated between two main stages in their life-span when they were asked about collective action (i.e. before and after retirement). The importance of previous experience for being willing to participate in a specific type of action also related to these two stages. It was suggested that not having participated in particular types of action need not affect willingness for future involvement. Therefore this questionnaire attempted to address the distinction between previous experience before and after being 65 and determine possible differences in relation to willingness to participate in collective action.

In line with the previous study, influence of past experience in willingness to participate in collective action was confirmed among the respondents: when it was reported that they had participated in each of the actions, willingness to participate was very high (e.g. ‘write to MP’ with 98.1%, n= 151) being lower with the action of ‘demonstrating’, but still it was a high percentage (88%, n= 66).

Again, and consistent with findings from study two, it was shown that participants presented a willingness to engage in collective action even if they had never participated, although it was lower than if they had taken the respective action before. The actions older people were most likely to take when they had never taken the action was ‘writing to the MP’ (52.4%); followed by ‘explain to other people’ (36.6%); ‘join an informal discussion group’ (36%) and lastly ‘join a group demonstrating’ (20.1%).
The action of ‘explain to other people’ was the one which respondents had mostly taken before and after being 65 years old (51.3% and 55.4% respectively). With the remaining ones, most of the respondents had not participated in them regardless of the distinction of before and after 65. The action of ‘joining a group demonstrating’ was shown to present lower rates for both before and after 65 (see table below).

Table 10.3: Participation in each of the four actions (before and after 65) and willingness to participate (if participated before and if never participated).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Participation before 65</th>
<th>Participation after 65</th>
<th>Willingness if participated before</th>
<th>Willingness if never participated</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Write to MP</td>
<td>35.1%</td>
<td>64.9%</td>
<td>33.6%</td>
<td>66.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n=121</td>
<td>n=224</td>
<td>n=116</td>
<td>n=229</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explain to other people</td>
<td>51.3%</td>
<td>48.7%</td>
<td>55.4%</td>
<td>44.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n=177</td>
<td>n=168</td>
<td>n=191</td>
<td>n=154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Join an informal discussion group</td>
<td>32.8%</td>
<td>67.2%</td>
<td>36.6%</td>
<td>63.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n=113</td>
<td>n=231</td>
<td>n=126</td>
<td>n=218</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Join a group demonstrating</td>
<td>17.7%</td>
<td>82.3%</td>
<td>16.2%</td>
<td>83.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n=61</td>
<td>n=284</td>
<td>n=56</td>
<td>n=289</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10.4 Perceived effectiveness of the actions

Results from study two showed that particular instances of social change were associated with specific types of action and it was suggested that in turn perceived effectiveness of collective action would differ according to the specific instances of social change. Additionally, in the previous qualitative study it could not be systematically identified whether there were gender differences in how effective different collective actions were perceived to be. This study investigated this. Thus, both presented social issue and gender were included in the analysis when determining whether some actions were perceived to be more effective than others.

MANOVA was conducted on perceived effectiveness of each of the four actions as dependent variables (i.e. ‘write to the MP’; ‘explain to other people’; ‘join an informal discussion group’; ‘join a group demonstrating’). There was a significant effect of
presented social issue on perceived effectiveness of the actions \( (F(4, 323)= 10.55, p<.001) \). There were no main effects of either sex \( (F(4, 323)= 1.75, ns) \) or the interaction between presented social issue and sex \( (F(4, 323)= .67, ns) \).

In relation to the main effect of presented social issue, between-subjects tests showed that each of the four actions were significantly affected by presented issue, i.e. perceived effectiveness of the actions of ‘writing to the MP’ \( (F(1, 326)= 5.63, p<.01) \); ‘explain to other people’ \( (F(1, 326)= 29.3, p<.001) \); ‘join an informal discussion group’ \( (F(1, 326)= 10.58, p<.001) \); ‘join a group demonstration’ \( (F(1, 326)= 27.78, p<.001) \). When participants were presented with the issue of the environment, each of the actions were perceived as more effective than when the presented issue was the family (see total means of presented issue for each of the actions in table below). Therefore, it can be said perceived effectiveness of collective action depends on the presented social issue.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perceived effectiveness of collective action</th>
<th>Presented issue</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Action 1</strong></td>
<td>Environment</td>
<td>3.27</td>
<td>.92</td>
<td>169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Family</td>
<td>3.03</td>
<td>.90</td>
<td>161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3.15</td>
<td>.92</td>
<td>330</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Action 2</strong></td>
<td>Environment</td>
<td>3.35</td>
<td>.93</td>
<td>169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Family</td>
<td>2.80</td>
<td>.89</td>
<td>161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3.08</td>
<td>.95</td>
<td>330</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Action 3</strong></td>
<td>Environment</td>
<td>3.17</td>
<td>.95</td>
<td>169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Family</td>
<td>2.83</td>
<td>.92</td>
<td>161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>.95</td>
<td>330</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Action 4</strong></td>
<td>Environment</td>
<td>3.25</td>
<td>.94</td>
<td>169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Family</td>
<td>2.71</td>
<td>.88</td>
<td>161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2.98</td>
<td>.95</td>
<td>330</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Action 1: Write to your MP.*

*Action 2: Explain to other people about the importance of this problem.*

*Action 3: Join an informal discussion group.*

*Action 4: Join a group demonstrating.*

When the total mean scores of perceived effectiveness were compared across the actions, although they presented similar rates, the following scale was identified:
'writing to the MP' was perceived as more effective (3.15); followed by 'explain to other people about the importance of the problem' (3.08); then by 'join an informal discussion group' (3.00) and finally the action perceived as least effective was 'join a group demonstrating' (2.98). Thus, those actions situated within the individual dimension were perceived to be more effective than the actions situated within a collective dimension.

10.5 Perceived barriers to collective action

The concept of barriers in this study was novel in two ways: (i) theoretically, as it included subjective factors (both identity and ideology aspects) and was studied in relation to the nature of the collective action; and (ii) related to the population of older people. Thus, it seemed appropriate to dedicate a considerable amount of space in this chapter to report on perceptions of barriers among older people at a very descriptive level. The research questions were as follows:

1. What are the patterns of perceived barriers for each type of action? What are the commonalities and differences across the four types of actions?

2. Are some particular levels of barriers more applicable than others among older people when they do not intend to participate in a particular type of collective action?

3. When older people show willingness to engage in a specific type of collective action, do they still perceive any barriers, and if so, what are the most applicable levels? It was anticipated from the previous study that there would be evidence of perceived barriers among older people even when willingness to participate in collective action was expressed.

4. Is there any significant effect of perception of the barriers on willingness to participate in each type of collective action according to presented social issue?
Chapter Ten

5. To what extent are each of the identity and ideology factors related to the perception of barriers to participating in collective action among older people? It was anticipated that some particular levels of perceived barriers would be significantly related to each of the identity and ideology factors, based on theory and research reviewed in chapter four and from the qualitative study of this thesis.

Each of the above research questions will be answered in order in each of the separate sections presented below, with the exception of questions two and three (presented in section 10.5.2).

10.5.1 Profiles of perceived barriers

Since barriers to action had not been systematically studied by previous research and due to the fact they incorporated five levels of analysis, it was intended to first explore whether there were any patterns of responses regarding barriers. Thus, in order to identify profiles of barriers for each of the four actions in the study, Configural Frequency Analysis (CFA) was chosen for this phase of analysis. CFA is a non-parametric, multivariate analysis of association which identifies response patterns that are over-represented (types) and under-represented (anti-types) (Krauth, 1985; VonEye, 1988, 1990).

CFA was run for the four types of actions and considering each of the ten variables which corresponded to the five levels of barriers. Zero Order for clusters showed an $\geq 5$ (e= expected values) for the four types of actions, which did not make it possible to accept any of the types and anti-types shown.

Alternatively, a categorical variable was created for each of the two items that corresponded to each level (called 'applicability of barriers', as explained in the scales section 9.3.2 in chapter nine). Zero Order for clusters appeared to show significant results for the four types of actions.
Therefore, results of Configural Frequency Analysis on respondents' significant response patterns for each of the actions are shown in the sub-sections below.

10.5.1.1 Action 1: Write to the MP

Table 10.5: CFA on respondents' significant response patterns for the action of 'writing the MP'.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pattern</th>
<th>1°</th>
<th>2°</th>
<th>3°</th>
<th>4°</th>
<th>5°</th>
<th>frequency</th>
<th>z</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>T1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>29.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>T2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>5.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>T3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>8.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>A1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>A2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>A3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>A4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-3.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

"1°=Yes; "2°=No
T= Type; A= Anti-type
(n=336)

*Intraindividual level.
*Interpersonal level.
*Intragroup level.
*Intergroup level.
*Group / Societal level.

T significant response type at p<.001
A significant response anti-type at p<.001
Bonferroni adjustment for p at .05 = .0016

Those significant response types were the same in the sense that barriers were not applicable either at the intraindividual or at the interpersonal levels. Besides, there appeared to be an obvious response pattern which distinguished between barriers at the individual and group levels, the latter ones being selected as the only applicable barriers (response pattern no. 2, i.e. T, accounting for the responses of 29 cases) and the response pattern in which the intragroup level stood out above the rest (T, accounting for the responses of 38 cases).

Besides, barriers at the intragroup level appeared to be perceived as such in most of the response type patterns (T, T,).
In contrast, significant response anti-types were selection of barriers both at either intraindividual or interpersonal levels to this particular action and there was not such a distinction between individual and group levels within a same response pattern. As an example, a tendency to include barriers at the individual, intragroup and intergroup level indistinctively was shown in $A_4$.

10.5.1.2 Action 2: Explain to other people about the importance of this problem

Table 10.6: CFA on respondents' significant response patterns for the action of 'explaining to other people about the importance of the problem'.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pattern</th>
<th>$1^a$</th>
<th>$2^b$</th>
<th>$3^c$</th>
<th>$4^d$</th>
<th>$5^e$</th>
<th>frequency</th>
<th>$z$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>$T_1$</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>24.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>$T_2$</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>6.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>$T_3$</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>6.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>$T_4$</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>5.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>$A_1$</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>$A_2$</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-3.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$^a$Yes; $^b$No
$^T$Type; $^A$Anti-type (n=336)

$^a$Intraindividual level.
$^b$Interpersonal level.
$^c$Intragroup level.
$^d$Intergroup level.
$^e$Group / Societal level.

T significant response type at p<.001
A significant response anti-type at p<.001
Bonferroni adjustment for p at .05 = .0016

Similarly to the previous action, the first significant response type was the same (none of the barriers were applicable to the respondents, $T_1$). In addition, the significant response pattern where there appeared to be a clear distinction between individual and group levels ($T_4$) was also significant for the previous action ($T_2$). However, in this particular action one of the significant response patterns included barriers at each of the levels, i.e. the individual ones, together with the group ones ($T_5$, accounting for the response of 32 cases).
Thus, response patterns types no. 1 and no. 3 showed contrasting response patterns; in the former none of the barriers were applicable to the respondents, whereas in the latter each of the barriers were equally applicable.

In addition, barriers at each of the group levels were the most applicable across the response type patterns in which there appeared to be at least an applicable barrier (T₂, T₃, T₄).

With reference to the significant response anti-types, there was no distinction between individual and group levels within the same anti-type.

10.5.1.3 Action 3: Join an informal discussion group

Table 10.7: CFA on respondents' significant response patterns for the action of 'joining an informal discussion group'.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pattern</th>
<th>1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>3&lt;sup&gt;rd&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>4&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>5&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>frequency</th>
<th>z</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>T₃</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>15.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>T₂</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>9.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>T₃</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>5.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>T₄</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>5.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>T₅</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>6.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>A₁</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>A₁</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>A₂</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-3.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

"1"=Yes; "2"=No
T= Type; A= Anti-type
(n=336)

<sup>*</sup>Intraindividual level.
<sup>2</sup>Interpersonal level.
<sup>3</sup>Intragroup level.
<sup>4</sup>Intergroup level.
<sup>5</sup>Group / Societal level.

T significant response type at p<.001
A significant response anti-type at p<.001
Bonferroni adjustment for p at .05 = 0.016

With reference to significant response types, response patterns no. 1 (T₁) and no. 5 (T₅) showed contrasting profiles; in the former none of the barriers were applicable to
the respondents, whereas in the latter all of the barriers were equally applicable. Apart from T_5, where all the barriers were applicable, in the rest of response patterns barriers were not applicable either at the intraindividual or at the interpersonal levels.

Similarly to the MP action, there appeared to be an obvious distinction between individual and group levels. The latter ones either appeared to go together (T_3, accounting for the response of a similar number of cases: n=30); distinguishing intragroup and intergroup levels (T_4, accounting for the response of 29 cases) or the intragroup level stood out above the rest (T_2, accounting for the response of a similar number of cases: n=43).

Thus, barriers at both intragroup and intergroup levels appeared to be perceived as such in most of the response type patterns (T_3, T_4, T_5).

Significant response anti-types were a selection of barriers at both intraindividual and interpersonal levels to this particular action, showing a distinction between barriers at individual and group levels within the same response pattern (A_2).

10.5.1.4 Action 4: Join a group demonstrating

Table 10.8: CFA on respondents’ significant response patterns for the action of ‘join a group demonstrating’.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pattern</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>frequency</th>
<th>z</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*1*=Yes; "2"=No

T= Type; A= Anti-type
(n=336)

*Intraindividual level.
*Interpersonal level.
*Intragroup level.
*Intergroup level.
*Group / Societal level.
When comparing $T_1$ with $T_2$, they appeared to show contrasting type profiles. In the former pattern none of the barriers were applicable to the respondents, whereas in the latter all of the barriers were equally applicable. Besides, they did not differ as much as the other actions in number of cases ($54$ cases in $T_1$ and $48$ cases in $T_2$). In addition, barriers at the intraindividual and intragroup levels appeared to be more important here when compared to the above actions, appearing in three of the four types, i.e. $T_2$, $T_3$, $T_4$.

In relation to the significant response anti-types, the individual level was not represented as much as in the other actions (only in response $A_2$ where barriers at the interpersonal level were applicable).

To recap, four main findings emerged from this analysis. First, for each of the actions it appeared that most of the respondents tended to respond that none of the barriers were applicable to them. When comparing between actions, action 1 ("Write to the MP") presented the highest number of respondents with that particular response pattern ($n=109$); followed by action 2 ("explain to other people...") with 93 subjects; action 3 ("join an informal discussion group") with 63 cases and lastly action 4 ("join a group demonstrating") with 54 cases. Those results seemed to be consistent with the classification of such actions, where the first ones were positioned on the individual dimension and considered to be less demanding and the last ones were positioned on the group dimension and regarded as more demanding to the respondent.

Furthermore, there was a response pattern across the different actions which included barriers at each of the levels, with the exception of action no. 1 ("write to the MP"). The action of "joining a group demonstrating" appeared to have the highest number of respondents within this particular pattern ($n=48$) in comparison to the remaining actions ("explain to other people": $n=32$; "join an informal discussion group": $n=32$).
Second, there appeared to be a common response type pattern across three of the actions ('write to the MP', 'explain...' and 'join an informal discussion group'). This was the one which distinguished between barriers at the individual and group levels, the latter ones being selected as the only applicable barriers. However, the action of demonstrating did not present this response pattern.

Thirdly, despite the actions of 'write to the MP' and 'join an informal discussion group' were situated on different dimensions individual-group action, they shared the same response type patterns.

Fourthly, when paying particular attention to the five levels across each of the four actions, barriers at the intragroup level were shown to be most frequent in the four types of actions, although the number of perceived barriers at the intragroup level was higher in the actions situated on a group dimension (i.e. 'join an informal discussion group' and 'join a group demonstrating').

In addition, the actions of 'explain...' and 'join a discussion group' evidenced barriers situated within the intergroup level and in the former action also the societal level appeared to be equally applicable. The intraindividual level was very much more mentioned in the action of 'join a group demonstrating'.

Finally, responses anti-types presented a very low frequency, and did not differ much across the actions whatever the general pattern was, with the exception again of the action of 'join a group demonstrating' in which the individual level was not represented as much as in the other actions.

10.5.2 Applicability of barriers in relation to willingness to participate in action

It is first necessary to provide information at a very descriptive level with regard to perception of barriers at each of the five levels (i.e. intraindividual, interpersonal, intragroup, intergroup and societal) for each of the four actions in this study. Frequencies of number of applicable barriers for each action derived for participants
who were willing to participate in each of the actions and those who were not willing. Three main results were obtained (Tables 10.9 and 10.10). Firstly, when respondents expressed their non-willingness to participate in the action, a greater number of barriers were perceived than when respondents showed willingness to participate in specific actions. In particular, the action of demonstrating presented a higher number of applicable barriers in comparison to the other actions, being remarkably higher at the intraindividual (n= 152) and intragroup (n= 147) levels.

Table 10.9: Percentage of applicable barriers for each level across the four actions when participants did not show willingness to engage in each of them.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action / Barriers</th>
<th>1\textsuperscript{*}</th>
<th>2\textsuperscript{*}</th>
<th>3\textsuperscript{*}</th>
<th>4\textsuperscript{*}</th>
<th>5\textsuperscript{*}</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Write to the MP</td>
<td>46.8</td>
<td>25.8</td>
<td>56.5</td>
<td>35.5</td>
<td>38.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n= 44</td>
<td>n= 24</td>
<td>n= 52</td>
<td>n= 33</td>
<td>n= 36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Explain to other people...</td>
<td>42.4</td>
<td>44.3</td>
<td>54.1</td>
<td>46.4</td>
<td>44.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n= 42</td>
<td>n= 43</td>
<td>n= 53</td>
<td>n= 45</td>
<td>n= 47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Join an informal discussion group</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>50.8</td>
<td>38.6</td>
<td>48.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n= 70</td>
<td>n= 37</td>
<td>n= 67</td>
<td>n= 51</td>
<td>n= 63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Join a group demonstrating</td>
<td>68.5</td>
<td>42.3</td>
<td>66.5</td>
<td>47.7</td>
<td>48.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n= 152</td>
<td>n= 94</td>
<td>n= 147</td>
<td>n= 104</td>
<td>n= 107</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{*}Intraindividual level.
\textsuperscript{1}Interpersonal level.
\textsuperscript{1}Intragroup level.
\textsuperscript{1}Intergroup level.
\textsuperscript{1}Group / Societal level.

Table 10.10: Percentage of applicable barriers for each level across the four actions when participants showed willingness to engage in each of them.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action / Barriers</th>
<th>1\textsuperscript{*}</th>
<th>2\textsuperscript{*}</th>
<th>3\textsuperscript{*}</th>
<th>4\textsuperscript{*}</th>
<th>5\textsuperscript{*}</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Write to the MP</td>
<td>12.8</td>
<td>15.7</td>
<td>46.6</td>
<td>36.5</td>
<td>32.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n= 32</td>
<td>n= 39</td>
<td>n= 115</td>
<td>n= 91</td>
<td>n= 81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Explain to other people...</td>
<td>17.6</td>
<td>37.9</td>
<td>55.9</td>
<td>44.6</td>
<td>46.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n= 43</td>
<td>n= 92</td>
<td>n= 137</td>
<td>n= 108</td>
<td>n= 113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Join an informal discussion group</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>18.7</td>
<td>52.1</td>
<td>38.6</td>
<td>40.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n= 31</td>
<td>n= 39</td>
<td>n= 110</td>
<td>n= 80</td>
<td>n= 85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Join a group demonstrating</td>
<td>35.8</td>
<td>34.5</td>
<td>68.1</td>
<td>41.7</td>
<td>42.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n= 43</td>
<td>n= 41</td>
<td>n= 81</td>
<td>n= 50</td>
<td>n= 51</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{*}Intraindividual level.
\textsuperscript{1}Interpersonal level.
\textsuperscript{1}Intragroup level.
\textsuperscript{1}Intergroup level.
\textsuperscript{1}Group / Societal level.
Secondly, among those respondents who were not willing to engage in collective action it was found that across each of the four types of actions barriers at the intraindividual level presented a very high percentage in comparison to those respondents who were willing to participate (e.g. for the action of ‘write to the MP’, 46.8% of the participants who did not show willingness to participate perceived barriers at the intraindividual level, whereas that only 12.8% of those who showed willingness to participate in this specific action perceived barriers at the intraindividual level). Thirdly, among all of the participants, independently of whether they were willing or not to engage in collective action, barriers at the intragroup level presented a high percentage of applicability.

10.5.3 Perception of barriers in relation to willingness to participate in action by taking into account presented social issue

Before presenting perception of the barriers\textsuperscript{13} in relation to willingness to participate in collective action, it was examined whether the presented social issue (environment vs. family) affected perceptions of the barriers. For this, a series of MANOVA’s were performed for each action separately. Each MANOVA had five dependent variables, consisting of perception of the barriers at five levels (i.e. intraindividual, interpersonal, intragroup, intergroup and societal) and one independent variable (i.e. presented social issue).

For the action of ‘writing to the MP’ a MANOVA revealed a non significant effect of ‘presented issue’ (F (5, 336)= 1.33, ns).

For the remaining actions, significant effects of ‘presented issue’ were found. For the action of ‘explaining to other people about the importance of the problem’ a MANOVA revealed a main effect for ‘presented issue’ (F (5, 337)= 2.55, p<.05). In the light of the significant multivariate F ratio the pattern of significant univariate

\textsuperscript{13}Perception of the barriers’ refers to the new variable computed in chapter nine (section 9.3.2) which conflates applicability and permeability (i.e. a strong barrier equates with less permeability and more applicability; a weak barrier with more permeability and less applicability).
effects can be noted. In relation to the main effect of ‘presented issue’, barriers operating at the intraindividual (F= 3.9, df= 1, p< .05), interpersonal (F= 4.59, df= 1, p< .05) and intergroup (F= 9.09, df= 1, p< .01) levels were affected by ‘presented issue’.

A series of independent samples t-tests were run between ‘presented issue’ and the above significant barriers. It was shown that when the issue of the environment was presented, barriers at the intraindividual / interpersonal / intergroup levels were perceived to be weaker barriers (i.e. more permeable and less applicable) than when participants were presented with the issue of the family (stronger barriers, i.e. less permeable and more applicable). Results are reported in the table below
table.

Table 10.11: Results of independent samples t-test between social issue presented to the respondents and perception of intraindividual, interpersonal and intergroup barriers for the action of ‘explain to other people about the importance of the problem.’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barriers</th>
<th>Issue: Environment</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Issue: Family</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>T-test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Std. Dev.</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Std. Dev.</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Intraindividual</td>
<td>5.54</td>
<td>1.07</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>5.28</td>
<td>1.24</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>t = 2.01, df= 331.52, p&lt;.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Interpersonal</td>
<td>5.30</td>
<td>1.19</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>5.01</td>
<td>1.34</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>t = 2.1, df= 334.21, p&lt;.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Intergroup</td>
<td>5.14</td>
<td>1.39</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>4.67</td>
<td>1.44</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>t = 3.05, df= 340.31, p&lt;.01</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For the action of ‘joining an informal discussion group’ a MANOVA revealed a main effect for ‘presented issue’ (F (5, 335)= 2.64, p< .05). In the light of the significant multivariate F ratio the pattern of significant univariate effects can be noted. In relation to the main effect of ‘presented issue’, perception of barriers differed in relation to presented social issue for barriers operating at the intraindividual (F= 8.42, df= 1, p< .01), interpersonal (F= 4.26, df= 1, p< .05) and societal/group (F= 4.98, df=1, p< .05) levels. A series of independent samples t-tests were run between ‘presented issue’ and the above significant barriers. It was revealed that participants who were presented with the issue of the environment, perceived barriers at the

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14 Having calculated the Bonferroni test for the three levels of barriers in this analysis (significance level of .05 divided by 3), the significance level of .02 resulted as the appropriate significance level for comparing between the three levels of barriers.
intraindividual / interpersonal / societal levels to be weaker than participants who were presented with the issue of the family (stronger barriers). Results are reported in the table below.\(^{15}\)

Table 10.12: Results of independent samples t-test between social issue presented to the respondents and perception of intraindividual, interpersonal and societal barriers for the action of 'join an informal discussion group.'

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barriers</th>
<th>Issue: Environment</th>
<th></th>
<th>Issue: Family</th>
<th></th>
<th>T-test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Std. Dev.</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Std. Dev.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Intraindividual</td>
<td>5.47</td>
<td>1.14</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>5.06</td>
<td>1.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Interpersonal</td>
<td>5.63</td>
<td>.97</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>5.39</td>
<td>1.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Societal</td>
<td>5.05</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>4.68</td>
<td>1.55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For the action of 'joining a group demonstrating' a MANOVA revealed a main effect for 'presented issue' (F (5, 333)= 3.12, p< .01). In the light of the significant multivariate F ratio the pattern of significant univariate effects can be noted. In relation to the main effect of 'presented issue', barriers were operating at the intraindividual (F= 8.60, df= 1, p< .01), interpersonal (F= 4.51, df= 1, p< .05), intergroup (F= 3.99, df= 1, p< .05) and societal (F= 8.25, df= 1, p< .01) levels.

Table 10.13: Results of independent samples t-test between social issue presented to the respondents and perception of intraindividual, interpersonal, intergroup and societal barriers for the action of 'join a group demonstrating.'

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barriers</th>
<th>Issue: Environment</th>
<th></th>
<th>Issue: Family</th>
<th></th>
<th>T-test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Std. Dev.</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Std. Dev.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Intraindividual</td>
<td>4.76</td>
<td>1.45</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>4.30</td>
<td>1.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Interpersonal</td>
<td>5.28</td>
<td>1.20</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>5.02</td>
<td>1.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Intergroup</td>
<td>5.14</td>
<td>1.39</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>4.67</td>
<td>1.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Societal</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>1.56</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>4.53</td>
<td>1.53</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{15}\)Having calculated the Bonferroni test for the three levels of barriers in this analysis (significance level of .05 divided by 3), the significance level of .02 resulted as the appropriate significance level for comparing between the three levels of barriers.
Table 10.13 above\textsuperscript{15} shows the results of a series of independent samples t-tests that were run between "issue" and the above significant barriers, showing that when the issue of the environment was presented, barriers at the intraindividual / intergroup / societal levels were perceived to be weaker barriers than when participants were presented with the issue of the family (stronger barriers).

Following these results, in order to determine whether perception of the barriers\textsuperscript{17} differed when taking into account willingness to participate in collective action, a series of independent samples t-test between willingness to engage in action and perception of barriers were run for each action. These results are presented below. Since MANOVA results above showed there were non-significant differences of perception of the barriers according to the social issue presented to the respondents for the action of 'writing to the MP', t-tests were only run by including all of the participants without taking into consideration 'presented issue'. However, since the remaining actions revealed perception of barriers differed according to the presented issue, it was decided to divide the analysis in three sections: (i) including all of the participants, (ii) including participants who responded to the social issue of the environment and (iii) including participants who responded to the social issue of the family.

As was shown in section 10.3 (actions older people are likely to take; table 10.3), willingness to participate when participants had taken the action before was not included, since people who were willing could not be compared with those who were not willing. The latter comprised a reduced number of participants (n=3 for action of 'write to the MP'; n=7 for action of 'explain to other people'; n= 5 for action of 'joining a discussion group' and n= 9 for the action of 'joining a group demonstrating'). Thus, comparisons were made only when participants had never

\textsuperscript{15}Having calculated the Bonferroni test for the four levels of barriers in this analysis (significance level of .05 divided by 4), the significance level of .01 resulted as the appropriate significance level for comparing between the four levels of barriers.

\textsuperscript{17}Perception of the barriers' refers to the new variable computed in chapter nine (section 9.3.2) which conflates applicability and permeability (i.e. a strong barrier equates with less permeability and more applicability; a weak barrier with more permeability and less applicability).
taken the action before.

10.5.3.1 Action: Write to the MP

(i) All participants included

There was a highly significant effect of willingness to participate on the perception of the barriers at the intraindividual level (t = 4.77, df = 129.98, p < .001). Those who showed willingness to participate perceived barriers at this level to be weaker, i.e. more permeable and less applicable (mean = 5.60) than those who were not willing to participate (mean = 4.69). Below results are presented for each of the five levels.\(^1\)

Table 10.14: Results of independent samples t-test between willingness to participate in collective action and perception of each of the levels of barriers for the action of 'write to the MP.'

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barriers</th>
<th>Willingness</th>
<th>Non-willingness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Std. Dev.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Intraindividual</td>
<td>5.60</td>
<td>.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Interpersonal</td>
<td>5.62</td>
<td>.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Intragroup</td>
<td>4.91</td>
<td>1.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Intergroup</td>
<td>5.16</td>
<td>1.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Societal</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>1.29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10.5.3.2 Explain to other people about the importance of the problem

(i) All participants included

There were no significant effects of willingness to participate on the perception of the barriers (see table below) when all participants were included.

\(^1\)Having calculated the Bonferroni test for the five levels of barriers (significance level of .05 divided by 5), the significance level of .01 resulted as the appropriate significance level for comparing between the five levels of barriers.
Table 10.15: Results of independent samples t-test between willingness to participate in collective action and perception of each of the levels of barriers for the action of 'explain to other people about the importance of the problem' (all participants included).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barriers</th>
<th>Willingness</th>
<th>Non-willingness</th>
<th>T-test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean Std. Dev. N</td>
<td>Mean Std. Dev. N</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Intraindividual</td>
<td>5.33 1.02 53</td>
<td>4.83 1.61 92</td>
<td>t=2.28, df=141.57, ns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Interpersonal</td>
<td>5.29 1.03 53</td>
<td>4.75 1.75 92</td>
<td>t=2.35, df=142.95, ns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Intragroup</td>
<td>4.55 1.40 53</td>
<td>4.58 1.64 92</td>
<td>t=-.11, df=143, ns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Intergroup</td>
<td>4.86 1.43 53</td>
<td>4.80 1.53 91</td>
<td>t=.24, df=142, ns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Societal</td>
<td>4.5 1.58 53</td>
<td>4.83 1.53 92</td>
<td>t=-1.24, df=143, ns</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(ii) Issue: Environment

There were no significant effects of willingness to participate on the perception of the barriers (see table below).

Table 10.16: Results of independent samples t-test between willingness to participate in collective action and perception of each of the levels of barriers for the action of 'explain to other people about the importance of the problem' (only participants who were presented with the social issue of the environment were included in the analysis).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barriers</th>
<th>Willingness</th>
<th>Non-willingness</th>
<th>T-test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean Std. Dev. N</td>
<td>Mean Std. Dev. N</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Intraindividual</td>
<td>5.4  .98 25</td>
<td>4.74 1.75 31</td>
<td>t=1.78, df=48.7, ns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Interpersonal</td>
<td>5.5  .84 25</td>
<td>4.79 1.84 31</td>
<td>t=1.91, df=43.86, ns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Intragroup</td>
<td>4.42 1.39 25</td>
<td>4.71 1.61 31</td>
<td>t=-.71, df=54, ns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Intergroup</td>
<td>4.82 1.69 25</td>
<td>4.92 1.60 30</td>
<td>t=-.22, df=53, ns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Societal</td>
<td>4.58 1.69 25</td>
<td>4.65 1.72 31</td>
<td>t=-.14, df=54, ns</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(iii) Issue: Family

Similar to the above section, there were no significant effects of willingness to participate on the perception of the barriers (see table below).
Table 10.17: Results of independent samples t-test between willingness to participate in collective action and perception of each of the levels of barriers for the action of 'explain to other people about the importance of the problem' (only participants who were presented with the social issue of the family were included in the analysis).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barriers</th>
<th>Willingness</th>
<th>Non-willingness</th>
<th>T-test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean Std. Dev.</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Mean Std. Dev.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Intraindividual</td>
<td>5.27 1.08 28</td>
<td>4.88 1.55 61</td>
<td>( t = 1.38, \text{df}= 73.14, \text{ns} )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Interpersonal</td>
<td>5.11 1.15 28</td>
<td>4.73 1.72 61</td>
<td>( t = 1.22, \text{df}= 75.29, \text{ns} )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Intragroup</td>
<td>4.66 1.42 28</td>
<td>4.51 1.66 61</td>
<td>( t = .42, \text{df}= 87, \text{ns} )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Intergroup</td>
<td>4.89 1.18 28</td>
<td>4.74 1.51 61</td>
<td>( t = -.53, \text{df}= 65.98, \text{ns} )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Societal</td>
<td>4.43 1.51 28</td>
<td>4.93 1.43 61</td>
<td>( t = -1.5, \text{df}= 87, \text{ns} )</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10.5.3.3 Join an informal discussion group

(i) All participants included

There was a highly significant effect of willingness to participate on the perception of the barriers at the intraindividual level (\( t = 4.49, \text{df}= 190.10, \text{p}< .001 \)). Those who showed willingness to participate, perceived barriers at this level to be weaker (mean=5.45) than those who were not willing to participate (mean=4.59). Below results are presented for each of the five levels.

Table 10.18: Results of independent samples t-test between willingness to participate in collective action and perception of each of the levels of barriers for the action of 'join an informal discussion group' (all participants included).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barriers</th>
<th>Willingness</th>
<th>Non-willingness</th>
<th>T-test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean Std. Dev.</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Mean Std. Dev.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Intraindividual</td>
<td>5.45 1.10 72</td>
<td>4.59 1.60 127</td>
<td>( t = 4.49, \text{df}= 190.10, \text{p}&lt; .001 )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Interpersonal</td>
<td>5.57 .94 72</td>
<td>5.26 1.42 127</td>
<td>( t = 1.84, \text{df}= 191.96, \text{ns} )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Intragroup</td>
<td>4.66 1.32 72</td>
<td>4.75 1.55 126</td>
<td>( t = -.42, \text{df}= 168.30, \text{ns} )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Intergroup</td>
<td>5.03 1.33 72</td>
<td>5.02 1.46 128</td>
<td>( t = .05, \text{df}= 198, \text{ns} )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Societal</td>
<td>4.83 1.52 72</td>
<td>4.66 1.66 127</td>
<td>( t = .71, \text{df}= 197, \text{ns} )</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(ii) Issue: Environment

There was a highly significant effect of willingness to participate on the perception of the barriers at the intraindividual level (\( t = 4.10, \text{df}= 74.10, \text{p}< .001 \)). Those who
showed willingness to participate perceived barriers at this level to be weaker (mean=5.65) than those who were not willing to participate (mean=4.62). Below results are presented for each of the five levels.

Table 10.19: Results of independent samples t-test between willingness to participate in collective action and perception of each of the levels of barriers for the action of 'join an informal discussion group' (only participants who were presented with the social issue of the environment were included in the analysis).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barriers</th>
<th>Willingness</th>
<th>Non-willingness</th>
<th>T-test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean Std. Dev.</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Mean Std. Dev.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Intraindividual</td>
<td>5.65 .72</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>4.62 1.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Interpersonal</td>
<td>5.69 .77</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>5.28 1.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Intragroup</td>
<td>4.72 1.44</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>4.66 1.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Intergroup</td>
<td>5.10 1.43</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>5.08 1.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Societal</td>
<td>5.08 1.49</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>4.75 1.66</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(iii) Issue: Family

There were no significant effects of willingness to participate on the perception of the barriers operating at the five levels.

Table 10.20: Results of independent samples t-test between willingness to participate in collective action and perception of each of the levels of barriers for the action of 'join an informal discussion group' (only participants who were presented with the social issue of the family were included in the analysis).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barriers</th>
<th>Willingness</th>
<th>Non-willingness</th>
<th>T-test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean Std. Dev.</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Mean Std. Dev.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Intraindividual</td>
<td>5.25 1.36</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>4.57 1.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Interpersonal</td>
<td>5.44 1.08</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>5.24 1.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Intragroup</td>
<td>4.60 1.19</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>4.81 1.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Intergroup</td>
<td>4.96 1.23</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>4.97 1.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Societal</td>
<td>4.57 1.53</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>4.59 1.67</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
10.5.3.4 Join a group demonstrating

(i) All participants included

There was a highly significant effect of willingness to participate on the perception of the barriers at the intraindividual level ($t= 3.91$, df$= 265$, $p< .001$). In addition, a significant effect of willingness to participate was found on the perception of barriers at the interpersonal level ($t= 2.41$, df$= 122.56$, $p< .01$).

Table 10.21: Results of independent samples t-test between willingness to participate in collective action and perception of each of the levels of barriers for the action of 'join a group demonstrating' (all participants included).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barriers</th>
<th>Willingness</th>
<th>Non-willingness</th>
<th>T-test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Std. Dev.</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Intraindividual</td>
<td>5.02</td>
<td>1.20</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Interpersonal</td>
<td>5.39</td>
<td>.86</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Intragroup</td>
<td>4.54</td>
<td>1.24</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Intergroup</td>
<td>5.11</td>
<td>1.30</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Societal</td>
<td>5.12</td>
<td>1.13</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table above shows those who showed willingness to participate perceived the barriers at an individual level (i.e. intraindividual and interpersonal) to be weaker than those who were not willing to participate.

(ii) Issue: Environment

There were significant effects of willingness to participate on the perception of the barriers at the intraindividual ($t= 2.61$, df$= 119$, $p< .01$) and interpersonal ($t= 2.49$, df$= 89.10$, $p< .01$) levels.

Those who showed willingness to participate perceived barriers at these levels to be weaker barriers (mean$= 4.98$ for the intraindividual level and mean$= 5.55$ for the interpersonal level) than those who were not willing to participate (mean$= 4.17$ for the intraindividual level and mean$= 5.07$ for the interpersonal level). Results for each of the five levels of barriers are presented below.
Table 10.22: Results of independent samples t-test between willingness to participate in collective action and perception of each of the levels of barriers for the action of 'join a group demonstrating' (only participants who were presented with the social issue of the environment were included in the analysis).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barriers</th>
<th>Willingness</th>
<th>Non-willingness</th>
<th>T-test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Std. Dev.</td>
<td>Mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Intraindividual</td>
<td>4.98</td>
<td>1.20</td>
<td>4.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Interpersonal</td>
<td>5.55</td>
<td>.70</td>
<td>5.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Intragroup</td>
<td>4.48</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>4.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Intergroup</td>
<td>5.02</td>
<td>1.40</td>
<td>4.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Societal</td>
<td>5.23</td>
<td>1.21</td>
<td>4.88</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(iii) Issue: Family

There was only a significant effect of willingness to participate on the perception of the barriers at the intraindividual level (t= 2.88, df= 144, p< .01). Those who showed willingness to participate perceived barriers at the intraindividual level to be weaker barriers than those who were not willing to participate (see table below).

Table 10.23: Results of independent samples t-test between willingness to participate in collective action and perception of each of the levels of barriers for the action of 'join a group demonstrating' (only participants who were presented with the social issue of the family were included in the analysis).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barriers</th>
<th>Willingness</th>
<th>Non-willingness</th>
<th>T-test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Std. Dev.</td>
<td>Mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Intraindividual</td>
<td>5.06</td>
<td>1.23</td>
<td>4.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Interpersonal</td>
<td>5.21</td>
<td>.99</td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Intragroup</td>
<td>4.60</td>
<td>1.26</td>
<td>4.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Intergroup</td>
<td>5.21</td>
<td>1.21</td>
<td>4.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Societal</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>1.05</td>
<td>4.51</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As the table below shows, results obtained above with regard to willingness to participate in collective action and perception of the barriers for each action, in all of them (with the exception of the action of 'explain to other people') it was shown that people who were not willing to participate in collective action perceived barriers at the intraindividual level to be stronger than those who showed willingness to engage in collective action. The action which included more significant results in terms of levels
of the barriers was ‘joining a group demonstrating’ (both intraindividual and interpersonal levels when all participants were included and the issue of the environment was presented), followed by the actions of ‘write to the MP’ and ‘join an informal discussion group’ (intraindividual level: when all participants were included for the action of ‘write to the MP’ and when all participants were included and the issue of the environment was presented for the action of ‘join an informal discussion group’).

Only one significant result was obtained when the issue of the family was presented. This was within the action of ‘join a group demonstrating’ (in which only perceived barriers at the intraindividual level were rated).

Table 10.24: Summary of results obtained between willingness to participate in collective action and perception of the barriers for each of the four actions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Willingness to participate if never taken the action</th>
<th>Levels of analysis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MP - general (all participants included)</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explain - general (all participants included)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explain - Environment</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explain - Family</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion - general (all participants included)</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion - Environment</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion - Family</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrate - general (all participants included)</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrate - Environment</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrate - Family</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>a</sup>Intraindividual level.
<sup>b</sup>Interpersonal level.
<sup>c</sup>Intragroup level.
<sup>d</sup>Intergroup level.
<sup>e</sup>Group / Societal level.
10.5.4 Association of perception of barriers with other theoretical variables in the study

The analysis presented below was tested with those composite variables measuring 'perception of the barriers', including the four actions in the study. A high score indicated a high level of permeability and less applicability of the barrier (weaker barrier) and a low score denoted less permeability and more applicability of the barrier (stronger barrier).

Prior to testing the associations between perception of barriers and some of the other theoretical variables, a series of non-parametric correlations were run to examine how each of the five levels of analysis within the barriers might be related to each other. Although each of the correlations were highly significant, it was shown that the closer the levels of barriers were with each other, the stronger the correlations appeared to be. Thus, perceived barriers at the intraindividual level were more strongly correlated with perceived barriers at the interpersonal level than with the remaining levels; perceived barriers at the intergroup level were more strongly correlated with perceived barriers at both the intragroup and societal levels than with the other levels.

Table 10.25: Correlations between perception of the barriers at each level.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Intraindividual</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>.38***</td>
<td>.37***</td>
<td>.29***</td>
<td>.27***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(345)</td>
<td>(345)</td>
<td>(344)</td>
<td>(345)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Interpersonal</td>
<td>--</td>
<td></td>
<td>.30***</td>
<td>.39***</td>
<td>.32***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(345)</td>
<td>(344)</td>
<td>(345)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Intragroup</td>
<td>--</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.49***</td>
<td>.47***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(344)</td>
<td>(345)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Intergroup</td>
<td>--</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.66***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(344)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(345)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Societal</td>
<td>--</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

***p<.001
n in brackets

In order to test for possible differences between the correlations above, each of them were transformed into Fishers r-z z' correlations. They were compared between each other by calculating the following formula when testing differences between two correlations:
\[ z = \frac{(z'1 - z'2)}{\sqrt{\left(\frac{1}{(n1-3)}\right) + \left(\frac{1}{(n2-3)}\right)}} \]

Results revealed that significant differences between the correlations were at intragroup, intergroup and societal levels, i.e. the group dimension dominated the existing differences. Thus, the differences between correlations no. 1,2,3,4,5,6 (in which there were individual levels) in the table below and correlations no. 10 (intergroup/societal) were much greater than the differences between correlations no. 10 and correlations 8 and 9 (uniquely group levels).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Correlation</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Intraindividual / Interpersonal</td>
<td></td>
<td>.15 *</td>
<td>1.33 ns</td>
<td>1.67 ns</td>
<td>1.20 ns</td>
<td>.14 ns</td>
<td>.87 ns</td>
<td>1.76 *</td>
<td>1.37 ns</td>
<td>5.19 ***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Intraindividual / Intragroup</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.18 ns</td>
<td>1.52 ns</td>
<td>1.05 ns</td>
<td>.29 ns</td>
<td>.71 ns</td>
<td>1.91 *</td>
<td>1.53 ns</td>
<td>5.34 ***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Intraindividual / Intergroup</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.34 ns</td>
<td>.13 ns</td>
<td>1.46 ns</td>
<td>3.09 ***</td>
<td>2.70 **</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Intraindividual / Societal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.47 ns</td>
<td>1.81 *</td>
<td>.80 ns</td>
<td>3.43 ***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Interpersonal / Intragroup</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.34 ns</td>
<td>3.33 ns</td>
<td>2.96 ***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Interpersonal / Intergroup</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.00 ns</td>
<td>1.62 *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Interpersonal / Societal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2.63 **</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Intragroup / Intergroup</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.39 ns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Intragroup / Societal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Intergroup / Societal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < .05  **p < .01  ***p < .001"
In particular, both identity and ideology variables were studied in relation to perception of the barriers\textsuperscript{19}. Identity variables comprised importance of age; evaluation of age; age as a relevant group membership ('older people'); collective orientation; collective efficacy; general self-efficacy; physical self-efficacy; political efficacy and ideology variables included political trust; positive and negative social representations of older people.

Previous literature (Kawakami & Dion, 1995) has shown that those factors that encourage personal aspects of identity (in this study i.e. importance and evaluation of age; general self-efficacy; physical self-efficacy and collective orientation) will lead to intragroup comparisons (intragroup differences will be perceived to be larger). Besides, those factors which encourage collective aspects of identity will lead to intergroup comparisons (in this study i.e. age as a relevant group membership - 'older people'; collective efficacy), in which intergroup differences will be accentuated. For this reason, one would expect that the higher the levels of personal aspects of identity will be related to more applicability and less permeability (i.e. stronger barriers) of the perceived barriers operating at the intragroup level. However this direction cannot be applied in the same way to each of the personal aspects of identity and levels other than the intragroup will also be operating (e.g. one would expect that high general self-efficacy would be related to more permeability and less applicability of barriers, i.e. weaker barriers operating at the individual level, that is intraindividual and interpersonal). On the other hand, higher collective aspects of identity will be expected to be associated with stronger barriers at the intergroup and group/societal levels. In addition to this, in the previous study it was also shown that personal aspects of identity were particularly regarded as barriers operating at the intraindividual level.

With regard to ideology factors (i.e. political trust and social representations of older people) it will be expected that political trust will be related to barriers operating at the

\textsuperscript{19}Perception of the barriers' refers to the new variable computed in chapter nine (section 9.3.2) which conflates applicability and permeability (i.e. a strong barrier equates with less permeability and more applicability; a weak barrier with more permeability and less applicability).
societal level and that social representations will be related to intragroup, intergroup and societal barriers. In particular, it is expected that positive social representations will be related to weaker barriers and that negative social representations will be associated with stronger barriers.

The hypotheses were the following:
(i) Importance of age: Importance of age will be related to perceived barriers operating at both the intraindividual and intragroup levels; the higher importance of age will be related to stronger barriers at both intraindividual and intragroup levels.
(ii) Evaluation of age: Positive evaluation of age will be associated with stronger barriers at both the intraindividual and intragroup levels.
(iii) General self-efficacy: General self-efficacy will be related to perception of barriers at the individual level. High general self-efficacy will be related to weaker barriers operating at both intraindividual and interpersonal levels.
(iv) Physical self-efficacy: Like with general self-efficacy, high physical self-efficacy will be associated with weaker barriers operating at both intraindividual and interpersonal levels.
(v) Collective orientation: Collective orientation will be related to perception of barriers at the individual (intraindividual and interpersonal) and intragroup levels. High collective orientation will be related to weak barriers.
(vi) Age as a relevant group membership ('older people') will be associated with intergroup barriers. High identification with 'older people' will be related to stronger barriers operating at the intergroup and group/societal levels.
(vii) Collective efficacy will be associated with perception of barriers operating at the intragroup and intergroup levels. High collective efficacy will be related to weaker barriers operating at these levels.
(viii) Since political efficacy conceptually involved both individual and societal aspects, it was expected to be associated with barriers operating at each of the five levels. High political efficacy will be related to weaker barriers at each of the five levels.
(xix) Political trust will be related to barriers operating at the societal level. In
particular, it is expected that high political trust will be associated with weaker barriers operating at the societal level.

(x) Positive social representations of older people will be related to weaker barriers operating at the intragroup, intergroup and societal levels.

(xi) Negative social representations of older people will be related to stronger barriers at each of the intragroup, intergroup and societal levels.

Non-parametric correlations were run between each of the variables above and ‘perception of the barriers’ at each level in order to test each of the above specified hypotheses. Results are presented below.

(i) Importance of age
As expected, importance of age was correlated with perception of barriers operating at the intraindividual level and it was revealed that high importance of age was related to more applicability and less permeability of barriers at the intraindividual level, i.e. stronger barriers ($r = -0.13$, $n = 345$, $p<0.01$). Contrary to the prediction that importance of age would also be associated with perceived barriers at the intragroup level, no significant relationship was found between importance of age and barriers at the intragroup level.

(ii) Evaluation of age
The hypotheses directed at testing the association between evaluation of age and perceived barriers at both the intraindividual and intragroup levels were not supported.

(iii) General self-efficacy
As predicted, general self-efficacy was related to barriers at the individual level: high general self-efficacy was associated with less applicability and more permeability (i.e. weaker barriers) of both barriers at the intraindividual ($r = 0.22$, $n = 345$, $p<0.001$) and interpersonal levels ($r = 0.13$, $n = 345$, $p<0.05$).
(iv) Physical self-efficacy
Unexpectedly, physical self-efficacy was related to perception of barriers at the societal level. High physical self-efficacy was associated with weaker barriers operating at the societal level ($r=.13, n=345, p<.01$). Contrarily to the hypothesised relationship between physical self-efficacy and both barriers at both the intraindividual and interpersonal levels, no significant relationships were found.

(v) Collective orientation
The hypothesised relationship between collective orientation and perceived barriers at the individual and intragroup levels was only partially supported. High collective orientation was related to weaker barriers operating at the intraindividual level ($r= -.14, n=345, p<.01$). However, no significant relationships were found between collective orientation and barriers at the interpersonal and intragroup levels.

(vi) Age as a relevant group membership ('older people')
The data supported the hypothesis. It was shown high identification with older people was associated with barriers operating at the intergroup ($r=- .16, n=344, p<.01$) and societal levels ($r=- .14, n=345, p<.01$), perceived as stronger barriers.

(vii) Collective efficacy
A high positive correlation existed between collective efficacy and barriers at the intragroup level ($r= .19, n=344, p<.001$), which indicates that high collective efficacy is related to weaker barriers operating at the intragroup level. However, no significant correlation was found between collective efficacy and barriers at the intergroup level. Instead, a prediction which has not been hypothesised was found: high collective efficacy was related to weaker barriers at the intraindividual level ($r= .11, n=344, p<.05$).

(viii) Political efficacy
As predicted, political efficacy was related to barriers at each of the five levels, i.e. intraindividual ($r= .17, n=345, p<.01$); interpersonal ($r= .12, n=345, p<.05$);
intragroup \((r = .23, n= 345, p<.001)\); intergroup \((r = .33, n= 344, p<.001)\); societal \((r = .42, n= 345, p<.001)\). Relations were stronger among those group variables. Thus, high political efficacy was related to weaker barriers at each of the five levels; the relationship being stronger among barriers at a group level.

*(xix) Political trust*

As predicted, political trust was related to barriers operating at the societal level. There was a high correlation between high political trust and weaker barriers for the barriers operating at the societal level \((r = .19, n= 345, p<.001)\).

*(x) Positive social representations of older people*

Only one significant relationship was confirmed, that was social representations were related to weaker barriers at the intragroup level \((r = .11, n= 340, p<.05)\).

*(xi) Negative social representations of older people*

As predicted, there was a significant correlation between negative social representations and perceived barriers at the intragroup \((r = -.15, n= 340, p<.01)\); intergroup \((r = -.17, n= 340, p<.01)\) and societal levels \((r = -.14, n= 340, p<.01)\). Negative social representations were related to stronger barriers at each of the group levels.

In summary then, most of hypothesised predictions of the relationships between each of the identity and ideology factors and perception of barriers were statistically significant and in the predicted direction. Weaker barriers (i.e. less applicability; more permeability) were associated with general self-efficacy, physical self-efficacy, collective orientation, collective efficacy, political efficacy, political trust and positive social representations at the respective levels. On the other hand, stronger barriers (i.e. more applicability; less permeability) were associated with importance of age, age as a relevant group membership ('older people') and negative social representations of older people.
Only two significant results that had not been hypothesised were obtained. They were weaker barriers being associated with collective efficacy at the intraindividual level and weaker barriers associated with physical self-efficacy at the societal level. Thus, the concept of collective efficacy was shown to involve both individual and collective aspects of older people's identity structure. Moreover, the fact that physical self-efficacy was associated with perceptions of barriers at the societal level rather than at the individual level may account for the influence of societal ascriptions on the older person's identity structure, which may be perceived as more important than how individuals would assess their personal situation (individual level).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>1*</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Importance of age</td>
<td>-.13**</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>-.10</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>-.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation of age</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>-.00</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>-.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age as a relevant group membership ('older people')</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>-.16**</td>
<td>-.14***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collective orientation</td>
<td>.14**</td>
<td>-.09</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collective efficacy</td>
<td>.11*</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>.19**</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General self-efficacy</td>
<td>.22***</td>
<td>.13*</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>-.09</td>
<td>-.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical self-efficacy</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.13***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political efficacy</td>
<td>.17***</td>
<td>.12*</td>
<td>.23***</td>
<td>.33***</td>
<td>.42***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political trust</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.19***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive social representations</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>.11*</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>-.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative social representations</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>-.15**</td>
<td>-.17***</td>
<td>-.14**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p<.05. **p<.01. ***p<.001
n in brackets
When focusing on some of the non-significant results which had been hypothesised as significant, it can be noted that only perception of barriers at the intraindividual level was prevalent in importance of age and collective orientation. Thus the hypothesis suggesting that factors encouraging personal aspects of identity would lead to intragroup comparisons was not supported for these factors. Similarly, non-significant results were obtained for all five levels of barriers in relation to evaluation of age.

10.6 Association between identity variables

In this section, associations between identity variables were examined by performing a series of non-parametric correlations. Hypotheses presented below were based on relationships noted in the previous literature.

10.6.1 Hypotheses

(i) Age as a relevant group membership - collective efficacy: Existing research on group identification and collective efficacy has provided contradictory results. Research specifically using samples of older people has shown that old age identifiers may express less collective efficacy (Miller et al., 1980). On the other hand, Spears, Doosje & Ellemers (1999) have suggested that group members who do not feel strong ties with their group may express less interest in the improvement of their group’s standing. Since in previous study in this thesis it was shown that age as a relevant group membership (‘older people’) prompted and facilitated participants to feel responsible and bring about social change as a group of older people, in this thesis the relationship between group identification and collective efficacy was hypothesised as follows: high identification with older people will be
related to high collective efficacy.

(ii) Age as a relevant group membership - political efficacy: High identification with older people will be related to low political efficacy (Miller et al., 1980).

(iii) Age as a relevant group membership - collective orientation: Studies about individualist-collectivist orientation have revealed that individuals who show collectivist orientation are more likely to be involved in collective action (Triandis et al., 1988; Wheeler, Reis & Bond, 1989). Moreover, their study has received attention in relation to group identification, by concluding that individuals who have a strong ingroup identification do have a more collectivist orientation in general and that there may be an interaction between both variables (Hinkle & Brown, 1990; Brown et al., 1992; Kelly & Brinlinger, 1995). High identification with older people will be related to high collective orientation.

(iv) Age as a relevant group membership - Evaluation of age: Miller et al.'s (1980) study has shown that non-identifiers with older people express less positive feelings towards older people, implying more denial of ageing. It was expected that high identification with older people will be related to positive evaluation of older people.

(v) Efficacy variables: Collective efficacy has been depicted as a direct extension of self-efficacy (Zaccaro et al., 1995). It was expected that collective efficacy will be positively correlated to both general self-efficacy and physical self-efficacy. Additionally, previous research has shown that people who feel effective in dealing with their personal environment also feel effective in dealing with government. This, collective efficacy, general self-efficacy and physical self-efficacy will be positively related to political efficacy (Bandura, 1997). In addition, one would expect that general self-efficacy and physical self-efficacy are related to each other.
10.6.2 Results

(i) Age as a relevant group membership - collective efficacy
Contrarily to the prediction above, no correlation was found between identification with older people and collective efficacy.

(ii) Age as a relevant group membership - political efficacy
Despite what had been predicted, there was no relation between identification with older people and political efficacy.

(iii) Age as a relevant group membership - collective orientation
As predicted, there was a strong positive significant relation between identification with older people and collective orientation ($r = .18$, $n = 345$, $p < .001$).

(iv) Age as a relevant group membership - Evaluation of age
As predicted, high identification with older people was related to positive evaluation of age ($r = .12$, $n = 340$, $p < .05$), which suggests less denial of ageing among this sample of older people.

(v) Efficacy
With regard to the associations between collective efficacy and the remaining efficacy variables, hypothesis was confirmed: high collective efficacy was significantly related to general self-efficacy ($r = .15$, $n = 344$, $p < .01$); physical self-efficacy ($r = .13$, $n = 344$, $p < .05$); and political efficacy ($r = .13$, $n = 344$, $p < .05$).

Secondly, when both self-efficacy variables were correlated with political efficacy, only physical self-efficacy was positively and significantly correlated with political efficacy ($r = .12$, $n = 345$, $p < .05$). Finally, high general self-efficacy was related to high physical self-efficacy ($r = .25$, $n = 345$, $p < .001$).

Other significant relationships which were not predicted were found when identity variables were correlated with each other:
Higher importance of age was related to positive evaluation of age ($r=.33$, $n=340$, $p<.001$); higher identification with older people ($r=.22$, $n=345$, $p<.001$); surprisingly with low collective efficacy ($r=-.19$, $n=344$, $p<.001$); and low general self-efficacy ($r=-.12$, $n=345$, $p<.05$).

Positive evaluation of age was associated with high general self-efficacy ($r=.13$, $n=340$, $p<.05$).

High identification with older people was related to low physical self-efficacy ($r=-.22$, $n=345$, $p<.001$).

Collective orientation was positively related to general self-efficacy ($r=.15$, $n=345$, $p<.01$).

Table 10.28: Correlations between identity variables.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Importance of age</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>.33*</td>
<td>.22***</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>-.19***</td>
<td>-.12*</td>
<td>-.09</td>
<td>.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(340)</td>
<td>(345)</td>
<td>(345)</td>
<td>(344)</td>
<td>(345)</td>
<td>(345)</td>
<td>(345)</td>
<td>(345)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation of age</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>.12*</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.13*</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identification with 'older people'</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>.18***</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>-.22***</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(345)</td>
<td>(345)</td>
<td>(345)</td>
<td>(345)</td>
<td>(345)</td>
<td>(345)</td>
<td>(345)</td>
<td>(345)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collective orientation</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.15***</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(345)</td>
<td>(345)</td>
<td>(345)</td>
<td>(345)</td>
<td>(345)</td>
<td>(345)</td>
<td>(345)</td>
<td>(345)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collective efficacy</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>.15***</td>
<td>.13*</td>
<td>.13*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(344)</td>
<td>(344)</td>
<td>(344)</td>
<td>(344)</td>
<td>(344)</td>
<td>(344)</td>
<td>(344)</td>
<td>(344)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General self-efficacy</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>.25***</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(345)</td>
<td>(345)</td>
<td>(345)</td>
<td>(345)</td>
<td>(345)</td>
<td>(345)</td>
<td>(345)</td>
<td>(345)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical self-efficacy</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>.12*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(345)</td>
<td>(345)</td>
<td>(345)</td>
<td>(345)</td>
<td>(345)</td>
<td>(345)</td>
<td>(345)</td>
<td>(345)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

n in brackets

- Significant results - predicted to be significant
- Significant results - relationship not hypothesised
- Non-significant results - predicted to be significant
- Non-significant results - relationship not hypothesised
10.7 Association between identity and social representations variables

Before presenting a more sophisticated analysis on social representations variables in this study, in which older people were classified in sub-groups according to the social representations held, a series of non-parametric correlations were run between identity and social representations variables to test the following hypothesis:

- Identity variables will be positively related to positive social representations of older people and negatively related to negative social representations of older people.

As shown in the table below, the hypothesis was generally confirmed. However, non significant associations were found between importance of age; collective orientation and social representations of older people. For other identity variables there was only a significant relation with either positive or negative social representations (e.g. evaluation of age; physical efficacy) but the direction was as predicted. Finally, the highest significant correlations were between collective efficacy and positive (r= .39, n= 339, p<.001) and negative social representations of older people (r= -.17, n= 339, p<.001).

Table 10.29: Correlations between identity and social representations variables.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Positive Social Representations</th>
<th>Negative Social Representations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Importance of age</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation of age</td>
<td>.16**</td>
<td>-.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age as a relevant group membership ('older people')</td>
<td>.12*</td>
<td>.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collective orientation</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collective efficacy</td>
<td>.39***</td>
<td>-.17***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General self-efficacy</td>
<td>.16**</td>
<td>-.11*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical self-efficacy</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>-.15**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political efficacy</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>-.15**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p<.05. **p<.01. ***p<.001
n in brackets
10.8 Additional predictions from previous literature

Some specific findings from previous literature are presented below in testable hypotheses for this study.

10.8.1 Perceived tractability and efficacy

According to Bandura & Wood (1989), given a social environment with many limited opportunities and constraints, people who have a high sense of efficacy will be able to exercise more control over it, and will view it as more changeable than those who have a low sense of efficacy. Thus, viewing a social system as intractable weakens a sense of personal efficacy.

10.8.1.1 Hypothesis

Those individuals presenting a high sense of efficacy (general self-efficacy, physical self-efficacy, collective efficacy, political efficacy) will be more likely to perceive the instances of social change as more tractable than those presenting a low sense of efficacy.

10.8.1.2 Results

These hypotheses were partly confirmed. There was only a significant and positive correlation between perceived tractability of social issues and collective efficacy ($r = .11$, $n = 344$, $p < .05$) and perceived tractability and political efficacy ($r = .22$, $n = 345$, $p < .001$). Thus, among the efficacy variables in this study, the most important and decisive one appeared to be political efficacy, followed by collective efficacy rather than self-efficacy.

10.8.2 Political efficacy and political trust

According to Gamson (1968), people are moved to social action when they feel politically efficacious but they show a low political trust. People who believe they can help to achieve desired futures will act on that belief regardless of political trust.
Similar results were found by Curtice & Jowell (1995) by concluding a fall in political trust did not seem to be responsible when there appeared to be an increased willingness of people to take action in general. Instead, politically efficacy appeared to be more strongly related to action.

10.8.2.1 Hypothesis

The impact of political efficacy on willingness to take part in collective action will be greater than the effect of political trust.

10.8.2.2 Results

A stepwise regression was performed for both political efficacy and trust in order to predict willingness to participate in collective action. Contrary to the prediction, it was found that both political efficacy ($\beta = .24, p<.001$) and political trust ($\beta = -.18, p<.001$) were important predictors of willingness to participate in collective action ($F= 10.95, df= 2, 337, p<.001$). They accounted for an estimated 55% of the population variance. Thus, high political efficacy and low political trust were both good predictors of willingness to participate in collective action.

10.8.3 Political trust and unconventional action

Previous research has revealed that people who show willingness to engage in the action of demonstrating will show a low political trust (Craig, 1979; Finkel, 1985; Pollock, 1983; Zimmerman & Rappaport, 1988; Parry et al., 1992) when compared to other conventional actions.

10.8.3.1 Hypothesis

People willing to participate in a demonstration will be more likely to present low political trust when compared to willingness to participate in the other types of actions (i.e. write to the MP; explain to other people about the importance of a problem; and join an informal discussion group).
10.8.3.2 Results

A series of independent sample t-tests were run for each of the four actions separately for willingness to participate in collective action if participants had never taken the action (analysis of participants that had taken the action before could not be run due to unequal distribution of the sub-groups of respondents). As predicted, there was a significant effect of willingness to join a group demonstrating on political trust (t = -2.82, df= 267, p<.01), i.e. older people who were willing to participate in a demonstration were more likely to present a low political trust than those who were not willing to. Non-significant effects of willingness of each of the remaining actions on political trust were shown.  

Table 10.30: Results of independent samples t-test between willingness to participate in collective action for each of the four actions and political trust.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Actions</th>
<th>Willingness Mean</th>
<th>Std. Dev.</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Non-willingness Mean</th>
<th>Std. Dev.</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>T-test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Write to the MP</td>
<td>2.49</td>
<td>.77</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>2.44</td>
<td>.77</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>t= .48, df= 189, ns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Explain to other people...</td>
<td>2.34</td>
<td>.66</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>2.44</td>
<td>.79</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>t= .83, df= 143, ns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Join an informal discussion group</td>
<td>2.41</td>
<td>.74</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>2.46</td>
<td>.73</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>t= 1.69, df= 198, ns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Join a group demonstrating</td>
<td>2.15</td>
<td>.59</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>2.47</td>
<td>.77</td>
<td>215</td>
<td>t= -2.82, df= 267, p&lt;.01</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10.8.4 Type of political activity and political efficacy

Existing research on types of political participation has revealed that those individuals who are politically inactive have a low sense of political efficacy and view all modes of political action as ineffective, whereas those who are active within the political system believe they can influence it (Wolfsfeld, 1986b; Parry et al. 1992; Curtice & Jowell; 1995).

\footnote{Having calculated the Bonferroni test for the four types of actions in this analysis (significance level of .05 divided by 4), the significance level of .01 resulted as the appropriate significance level for comparing between the four actions.}
10.8.4.1 Hypothesis
Within this study a distinction was made between older people who used ‘active’ types of involvement from those who used ‘passive’ types (chapter nine). It is expected that people using ‘active’ ways of political involvement will present higher political efficacy and will perceive each of the actions as more effective than those older people using ‘passive’ participation.

10.8.4.2 Results
An independent sample t-test was run in order to test the effect of type of involvement on political efficacy. As predicted, there was a significant effect of type of involvement on political efficacy: older people who were using ‘active’ ways of political involvement were more likely to present higher political efficacy than those who were using ‘passive’ participation ($t = -2.78$, $df = 321$, $p < .01$).

However, the hypothesis was only partially confirmed, since there was no significant effect of type of involvement on perceived effectiveness of collective action (see table 10.31).

Table 10.31: Results of independent samples t-test between type of involvement and political efficacy and perceived effectiveness of collective action.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>‘Active’</th>
<th></th>
<th>‘Passive’</th>
<th></th>
<th>T-test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Std. Dev.</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Std. Dev.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political efficacy</td>
<td>2.86</td>
<td>.93</td>
<td>254</td>
<td>2.51</td>
<td>.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived effectiveness</td>
<td>3.08</td>
<td>.69</td>
<td>253</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$t$-test</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political efficacy</td>
<td>$t = -2.78$, $df = 321$, $p &lt; .01$</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived effectiveness</td>
<td>$t = -0.8$, $df = 320$, $ns$</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
10.9 Exploration of factors related to willingness to participate in collective action

A series of independent samples t-test and non-parametric correlations between ‘willingness to participate in collective action’ and each of the factors included in this study were calculated. Expected relationships between variables are presented below.

10.9.1 General theoretical hypotheses: prediction of collective action

As discussed in chapter three, some of the factors being used for this study were based on different theoretical assumptions than the one adopted in this thesis. However, results obtained by previous research on collective action were found useful as a starting reference and a basis on which to develop the general hypotheses of this research in relation to willingness to engage in collective action:

1. *Perceived tractability:* Higher perceived tractability of the instances of social change will be associated with more willingness to participate in collective action.

2. *Priority of social issue:* High priority of the social issue will be related to more willingness to engage in collective action.

3. *Previous experience.* More experience in collective action will be related to more willingness to engage in collective action (e.g. Jirovec & Erich, 1995). In particular, within this study both experience before 65 and after 65 were included and the above described prediction of collective action was expected to operate in a similar way for both types of experience. In addition, a higher overall experience before 65, will be associated with higher overall experience after 65 (Jirovec & Erich, 1995).

5. *Age as a relevant group membership, i.e. identification with older people:* high group identification will be associated with more willingness to engage in collective action (as found in previous study). However, previous research has shown that individuals who do not identify with their age group engage more in political participation than those who strongly identify with older people (Miller et al., 1980) and that identification with a specific age-oriented social movement is a better predictor than identification with older people (Simon et al., 1998).

6. *Self-efficacy:* High self-efficacy will be associated with more willingness to participate in collective action (e.g. Gurin et al., 1978; Miller et al., 1980; Finkel et al., 1989). The same relation is expected to be for physical efficacy and willingness to participate in collective action. However, the opposite relation could be proposed as well: low physical efficacy may be related to more willingness to participate in collective action (e.g. Jirovec & Erich, 1995).

7. *Collective orientation:* High collective orientation will be associated with more willingness to participate in collective action (e.g. Wheeler et al., 1989; Kelly & Kelly, 1994; Kelly & Breinlinger, 1996; Duncan, 1999).

8. *Collective efficacy:* High collective efficacy will be associated with more willingness to participate in collective action (e.g. Muller & Opp, 1986; Rodríguez et al., 1993; Mummendey et al., 1999).

9. *Political efficacy:* High political efficacy will be associated with more willingness to engage in collective action (e.g. Marsh, 1977; Barnes et al., 1979; Wolf, et al., 1986; Fiske, 1987).

10. *Political trust:* Low political trust will be associated with more willingness to participate in collective action (e.g. Marsh, 1977; Parry et al., 1992).
Chapter Ten

11. Perception of barriers:
   a) The more barriers older people perceive at the different levels (i.e. intraindividual, interpersonal, intragroup, intergroup, societal), the less likely it is that they will be motivated to participate in collective action (Oegema & Klandermans, 1994).
   b) Weak barriers (i.e. less applicability and higher permeability) at each of the five levels will be associated with more willingness to participate in collective action (Klandermans & Oegema, 1987).

12. Social representations of older people: Derived from previous study, positive evaluations of social representations of older people will be related to more willingness to engage in collective action. Contrarily, negative evaluations of social representations of older people will be negatively associated with willingness to participate in collective action.

13. Finally, in the previous study it was illustrated that nationality was perceived to be an important aspect of older people’s identity structure and suggested that more importance of nationality would be related to less willingness to engage in collective action.

10.9.2 Results

1. Perceived tractability

Unexpectedly, no significant correlations were found between perceived tractability and willingness to participate in collective action ($r = .10$, $n = 340$, ns).

2. Priority of social issue

As predicted, overall priority of the issues was positively and significantly correlated with willingness to participate in collective action ($r = .36$, $n = 340$, $p < .001$), i.e. the higher the level of priority (presented issue corresponded to their choice of priority), the more likely participants were to show willingness to take action.
3. Previous experience
As expected, high previous experience before 65 ($r = .56$, $n = 340$, $p < .001$) and after 65 ($r = .66$, $n = 340$, $p < .001$) were strongly related to willingness to participate in collective action. Besides, experience before 65 and after 65 were positively associated with each other ($r = .73$, $n = 344$, $p < .001$).

4. Perceived effectiveness of collective action
As predicted, high perceived effectiveness of the actions was strongly related to more willingness to participate in collective action ($r = .55$, $n = 339$, $p < .001$).

5. Age as a relevant group membership, i.e. identification with older people
Despite what was predicted, no relationship was found between identification with older people and willingness to participate in collective action ($r = .04$, $n = 340$, ns).

6. General self-efficacy and physical self-efficacy
Despite what was predicted, no relationship was found between general self-efficacy and willingness to participate in collective action ($r = .03$, $n = 340$, ns) or physical self-efficacy and willingness to engage in action ($r = .00$, $n = 340$, ns).

7. Collective orientation
As predicted, high collective orientation was related to more willingness to participate in collective action ($r = .22$, $n = 340$, $p < .001$).

8. Collective efficacy
High collective efficacy was related to more willingness to participate in action, as predicted ($r = .14$, $n = 339$, $p < .01$).

9. Political efficacy
As predicted, there was a significant positive correlation between willingness to participate and political efficacy ($r = .19$, $n = 340$, $p < .001$).
10. Political trust
Despite what was predicted, no relationship was found between political trust \((r = -0.10, n = 340, \text{ns})\) and willingness to participate in collective action.

11. Perception of barriers
a) Number of perceived barriers: As predicted, higher number of perceived barriers was related to less willingness to participate in collective action \((r = -0.14, n = 320, p < 0.01)\).

b) Perception of the barriers: The significant results were found with perceived barriers at the intraindividual level \((r = 0.36, n = 340, p < 0.001)\). Thus, less willingness to participate in collective action was associated with stronger barriers at the intraindividual level.

12. Social representations of older people
Despite what was predicted, no relationship was found either between positive social representations of older people \((r = 0.03, n = 335, \text{ns})\) or negative social representations of older people \((r = -0.04, n = 335, \text{ns})\).

13. Importance of nationality
As predicted, high importance of nationality was related to less willingness to participate in collective action \((r = -0.15, n = 340, p < 0.01)\).

Other non-significant correlations were found between willingness to participate in collective action and chronological age \((r = 0.00, n = 339, \text{ns})\); importance of age \((r = -0.02, n = 340, \text{ns})\); or evaluation of age \((r = -0.00, n = 335, \text{ns})\). Following results from the previous studies in this thesis, it was confirmed that age as including physical/cognitive abilities may not be the most important factor explaining participation and that age alone does not deter political participation. Age-related characteristics of both content and value of older people's identity structure are not direct determinants of willingness to participate in collective action.
Table 10.32: Correlation between willingness to participate in collective action and perceived tractability, priority of social issue, previous experience, perceived effectiveness, identity, ideology, age and perception of barriers variables.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Tractibility</th>
<th>Priority Issue</th>
<th>Experience before 65</th>
<th>Experience after 65</th>
<th>Perceived Effectiveness</th>
<th>Age as a relevant group membership ('older people')</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Willingness to participate in collective action</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.36***</td>
<td>.56***</td>
<td>.66***</td>
<td>.55***</td>
<td>.04</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p<.05 **p<.01 ***p<.001
n in brackets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>General self-efficacy</th>
<th>Physical self-efficacy</th>
<th>Collective Orientation</th>
<th>Collective Efficacy</th>
<th>Political Efficacy</th>
<th>Political trust</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Willingness to participate in collective action</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>-.00</td>
<td>.22***</td>
<td>.14**</td>
<td>.19***</td>
<td>-.10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p<.05 **p<.01 ***p<.001
n in brackets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Willingness to participate in collective action</td>
<td>-.14**</td>
<td>.36***</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(320)</td>
<td>(340)</td>
<td>(340)</td>
<td>(340)</td>
<td>(339)</td>
<td>(340)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p<.05 **p<.01 ***p<.001
n in brackets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>+ Social Representations</th>
<th>- Social Representations</th>
<th>Importance of nationality</th>
<th>Chronological Age</th>
<th>Importance of Age</th>
<th>Evaluation of Age</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Willingness to participate in collective action</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>-.15**</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>-.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(335)</td>
<td>(335)</td>
<td>(340)</td>
<td>(339)</td>
<td>(340)</td>
<td>(335)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p<.05 **p<.01 ***p<.001
n in brackets
Sub-groups within the study

Within this study the following sub-groups of participants were also considered in relation to willingness to participate in collective action:

1. **Nature of the contacted organisation** (social issue vs. not social issue oriented; age vs. not age oriented):
   a) Participants who belong to age-oriented organisations will be more likely to present higher willingness to engage in collective action than those older people who belong to organisations which are not age-oriented (Trela, 1971).
   b) Participants who belong to social issue organisations will be more likely to present higher willingness to engage in collective action than those who belong to organisations that are not social issue oriented (e.g. Simon et al., 1998).
   c) Older people in the sample will present higher involvement in social issue groups and political parties (Jirovec & Erich, 1992).

2. **Number of organisations**: the higher the number of organisations individuals belong to the greater the willingness to participate in collective action (Marsh, 1977).

3. **Level of political participation (active/passive)**: Older people who are involved in active ways of political participation will be more likely to show willingness to participate in collective action than those who are involved in passive ways.

4. **Social issue presented in the questionnaire (environment/family)**: Since the issue of the environment was perceived as a more important one for the participants (section 10.2), it was expected that people who were presented with the social issue of the environment would be more likely to show willingness to participate in collective action than those who were presented with the social issue of the family.

5. **Sex**: Men are expected to be more likely to present higher willingness to participate in collective action than women (e.g. Barnes et al., 1979; Hudson & Gonyea, 1990; Jirovec & Erich, 1992).
In order to check whether willingness to participate differed according to the above described subgroups, independent samples t-tests were conducted between them, with the exception of number of organisations at memberships, in which a bivariate correlation was run. Results are reported for each hypothesis separately.

1. Nature of the contacted organisation

a) There were significant differences between the two groups on willingness to participate but results were contrary to what was predicted. Participants who belonged to non age-oriented organisations presented more willingness to participate in collective action (mean= 2.66) than those who were members of age-oriented organisations (mean= 2.31) (t= 2.05, df= 338, p<.05).

b) There were significant differences between the two groups on willingness to participate in collective action in the way it was predicted. Participants who belonged to social issue organisations (mean= 2.83) showed more willingness to participate in collective action than those who belonged to organisations that are not social issue oriented (mean= 2.13) (t= 4.67, df= 338, p<.001).

c) In order to determine whether older people in the sample will present higher involvement in social issue groups and political parties, a one-way ANOVA analysis was run for the effect of the nature of the first organisation participants reported to belong to on age. There was a significant effect of the nature of organisation (F (6, 321)= 2.54, p<.05). Examination of the mean scores of age were compared across the nature of the different organisations and gave support to the hypothesis. Both social issue and not old age oriented groups (mean= 73.2, std. dev.= 5, n= 53) and political parties (mean= 74.8, std.dev.= 6.9, n= 25) were constituted by people who were older in the sample when compared to the rest of organisations (social issue and old age oriented: mean= 70.3, std. dev.= 4, n= 39; not social issue and old age oriented: mean= 71.6, std.dev.= 6.2, n= 90; neither social issue nor old age oriented: mean= 71.5, std.dev.= 6.5, n= 86; Welfare/self-help: mean= 72.7, std.dev.= 7, n= 24; Welfare/self-help-age oriented: mean= 66.5, std.dev.= 6.9, n= 4).
2. *Number of organisations*

As predicted, there was a significant and positive correlation between number of organisations and willingness to participate in collective action ($r=.25$, $n=339$, $p<.001$).

3. *Level of political participation (active/passive)*

In line with the prediction, there were significant differences between the two groups (passive, active) on willingness to participate. Participants using active ways of participation (mean= 2.57) showed more willingness to participate in collective action than those who used passive ways (mean= 2.09) ($t=-2.56$, $df=316$, $p<.01$).

4. *Social issue presented in the questionnaire (environment/family)*

In line with the prediction, there were significant differences between the two groups (those presented with the issue of the environment and those presented with the issue of the family) on willingness to participate. Individuals who were presented with the social issue of the environment (mean= 2.77) showed more willingness to engage in action than those who were presented with the social issue of the family (mean= 2.03) ($t=5.09$, $df=330$, $p<.001$).

5. *Sex*

Contrary to what was predicted, there was no significant effect of sex on willingness to participate in collective action, as evident in the table below.
Table 10.33: Summary of results of independent samples t-tests between willingness to participate in collective action and subgroups of respondents.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subgroup</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Dev.</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>T-test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social issue org.</td>
<td>2.83</td>
<td>1.32</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>t=4.67, df=338, p&lt;.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not social issue org.</td>
<td>2.13</td>
<td>1.36</td>
<td>206</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age oriented org.</td>
<td>2.31</td>
<td>1.39</td>
<td>247</td>
<td>t= 2.05, df=338, p&lt;.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not age oriented org.</td>
<td>2.66</td>
<td>1.35</td>
<td>93</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active</td>
<td>2.57</td>
<td>1.33</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>t=-2.56, df=316, p&lt;.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passive</td>
<td>2.09</td>
<td>1.51</td>
<td>68</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issue: Environment</td>
<td>2.77</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>t=5.09, df=330, p&lt;.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issue: Family</td>
<td>2.03</td>
<td>1.42</td>
<td>167</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>2.37</td>
<td>1.43</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>t=.42, df=338, ns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>2.43</td>
<td>1.34</td>
<td>184</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10.10 Identification of sub-groups within the sample in relation to social representations of older people using cluster analysis (CA)

Both Factor Analysis (FA) and Cluster Analysis (CA) identify related groups of variables. Due to theoretical reasons, when studying SR, within this study it was aimed to look for commonalities and degree of consensus. A FA in the study of SR would not have been appropriate in the sense FA depends on individual differences variations. Moreover, FA allows variables to be either positively or negatively related to a factor. On the other hand, CA can be restricted to search only for positive associations between variables (Norusis, 1994).

Therefore, cluster analysis was used for identifying relatively homogeneous groups of cases based on selected attributes (in this case the items that constituted the social representation of older people). In this sense, social representations were described as a type of collective map (Doise, et al., 1993).

Hierarchical analysis (Ward’s method) was used to help to determine the number of clusters for k-means, which is presented below. Ward’s method is frequently used for cluster formation, in which for each cluster the means for all variables are calculated.
On the basis of that analysis, two main clusters were clearly suggested from the dendrogram.

Having identified two groupings of cases, K-means cluster analysis was conducted and a two cluster solution was requested. The k-means method of clustering was a 'quick' method appropriate for a sample with a large number of cases to cluster (>200). Three hundred and thirty-two cases were 'valid', i.e., had responded to all items and were included in subsequent analysis.

On the basis of the K-means cluster analysis, two cluster groups were derived. These were described as cluster JAGGER (n=186) and cluster McCARTNEY\(^2\) (n=146) respectively. These descriptors will be used in subsequent analysis and discussion. The two clusters identified in the analysis were considered sufficiently independent of each other on the basis that the mean score significantly differed at the p<.01 level for 27 items, at the p<.05 level for one item and only one item was not significantly different (item SR_4: "Most people think that old people have a great desire to be needed"). Therefore, the two clusters differed significantly on 28 of the 29 items included in the analysis. From that the two clusters, JAGGER and McCARTNEY, respectively were considered different enough to justify their use in further analysis.

10.10.1 Aspects of the representation accessed by cluster JAGGER and cluster McCARTNEY using Discriminant Function Analysis (DFA)

Discriminant Function Analysis was considered appropriate in order to establish which variables best discriminated between the two clusters described as cluster JAGGER and cluster McCARTNEY. Stepwise discriminant function analysis was used. This made it possible to distinguish the amount of variance occurring in the two groups.

\(^2\)The author opted for the names of Mick Jagger and Paul McCartney. The reason for that choice was not merely a question of ardent admiration. Both of them are two still dynamic and active over 55 year old musicians representing two of the most influential and controversial British rock groups in the sixties, i.e. 'The Rolling Stones' and 'The Beatles'.

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A stepwise discriminant function was calculated that accounted for 69.7% of the between cluster groups variance.

From results shown in the table below, each of the variables contributed strongly to the discrimination of the two groups. It appeared unlikely that people in cluster JAGGER and those in cluster McCARTNEY had the same means on the discriminant function (\( \lambda = .30 \), \( \chi^2(13, N=332=386.419, p<.001 \)). On the basis of the stepwise procedure, variable SR_22 ("Most people think that old people are too concerned about themselves to bring changes") was the best predictor between cluster JAGGER (n=186) and cluster McCARTNEY (n=146). Loadings on the discriminant function are listed in tables 5a and 5b in Appendix 7.

The overall percentage of cases classified correctly was 96.1% (319 out of 332 cases). Of 186 cases in cluster JAGGER, 178 were predicted correctly to be members of cluster JAGGER (95.7%), while 8 (4.3%) were assigned incorrectly to cluster McCARTNEY. Similarly, 141 out of 146 (96.6%) of cluster McCARTNEY cases were identified correctly, and 5 (3.4%) were misclassified.

Table 10.34: Results of Discriminant Function Analysis (DFA) between older people representation dimensions on the basis of cluster group membership.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Variable entered*</th>
<th>Wilk's Lambda</th>
<th>Significance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>SR_22</td>
<td>.598</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>SR_15</td>
<td>.5</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>SR_5</td>
<td>.436</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>SR_27</td>
<td>.401</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>SR_24</td>
<td>.378</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>SR_12</td>
<td>.361</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>SR_3</td>
<td>.346</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>SR_10</td>
<td>.337</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>SR_11</td>
<td>.329</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>SR_21</td>
<td>.320</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>SR_26</td>
<td>.312</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>SR_8</td>
<td>.307</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>SR_23</td>
<td>.303</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Canonical Discriminant Functions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Function</th>
<th>% variance</th>
<th>Wilk's Lambda</th>
<th>( \chi^2 )</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>69.7</td>
<td>.303</td>
<td>386.419</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Labels of listed variables in table 4 in Appendix 7.
The DFA demonstrated that the two cluster groups differed significantly on each of the different variables entered in the analysis. As shown in the table below, the mean scores for variables SR_22, SR_15, SR_5, SR_27, SR_24, SR_12, SR_11, SR_21, SR_8, SR_23 were significantly higher for cluster JAGGER than for cluster McCARTNEY. This suggested that cluster JAGGER was more likely to hold negative social representations of older people. Furthermore, the mean scores for variables SR_3, SR_10, SR_26 were significantly higher for cluster McCARTNEY than for cluster JAGGER, indicating that positive social representations were higher for members of cluster McCARTNEY.

Table 10.35: Means and SD scores for selected variables in each cluster.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable*</th>
<th>Cluster JAGGER</th>
<th>Cluster McCARTNEY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SR_22</td>
<td>3.67 .69</td>
<td>2.45 .79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SR_15</td>
<td>3.62 .70</td>
<td>2.62 .84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SR_5</td>
<td>3.56 .92</td>
<td>2.57 .80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SR_27</td>
<td>3.45 .75</td>
<td>2.58 .74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SR_24</td>
<td>3.75 .65</td>
<td>2.60 .85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SR_12</td>
<td>3.59 .76</td>
<td>2.75 .85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SR_3</td>
<td>2.85 .89</td>
<td>3.37 .80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SR_10</td>
<td>2.17 .64</td>
<td>2.43 .70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SR_11</td>
<td>3.32 .74</td>
<td>2.55 .81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SR_21</td>
<td>3.38 .92</td>
<td>2.62 1.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SR_26</td>
<td>2.42 .74</td>
<td>2.92 .78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SR_8</td>
<td>3.90 .65</td>
<td>3.03 .90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SR_23</td>
<td>3.61 .71</td>
<td>2.77 .86</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Labels of listed variables in table 4 in Appendix 7.

Thus, the above analysis showed how the two clusters of people differed. An underlying discovery emerged, i.e. what constituted the social representations of older people was not content related in the sense that one cluster responded to a certain criteria and the other did not. It was an evaluative dimension with emotional weight.

10.10.2 Cluster characterisation

The section presented here is merely exploratory. It attempts to determine what identity and political trust variables best discriminate between membership of Cluster JAGGER and cluster McCARTNEY. Firstly though, possible differences between the two clusters for sociodemographic factors, organisation membership and type of
political involvement, willingness to participate and perception of the barriers\textsuperscript{22} were explored.

**Sociodemographic factors**

\(\chi^2\) revealed no significant difference between the clusters on the basis of sex (\(\chi^2 = .004,\) \(df = 1, ns\)); marital status (\(\chi^2 = 4.90, df = 4, ns\)) and social class (\(\chi^2 = 11.59, df = 13, ns\)).

**Organisation membership**

For organisation membership three different aspects were considered in order to determine whether there are differences on each of these aspects in relation to cluster membership, i.e. nature of the organisation (where respondents were contacted); number of organisations the respondents belonged to; and organisations the respondents reported to belong to and level of participation.

\textit{a) Nature of the organisation}

\(\chi^2\) revealed no significant difference between the two cluster groups on the basis of nature of the organisation in which the respondents were contacted (social issue vs. not social issue: \(\chi^2 = 1.69, df = 1, ns\); age oriented vs. not age oriented: \(\chi^2 = 1.30, df = 1, ns\)).

\textit{b) No. of organisations}

An independent samples \(t\)-test between the two clusters and number of organisations revealed non-significant effects (\(t = -.40, df = 329, ns\)).

\textit{c) Primary, secondary, third organisation and levels of participation}

Firstly, according to the organisations the respondents reported to belong to, \(\chi^2\) revealed no significant differences between the two clusters on the basis of the nature

\textsuperscript{22}Perception of the barriers' refers to the new variable computed in chapter nine (section 9.3.2) which conflates applicability and permeability (i.e. a strong barrier equates with less permeability and more applicability; a weak barrier with more permeability and less applicability).
of the organisations mentioned by the participants (for primary organisation: $\chi^2 = 7.55$, 
$df = 6$, ns; for secondary organisation: $\chi^2 = 2.48$, $df = 6$, ns; and for third organisation: 
$\chi^2 = 3.70$, $df = 6$, ns).

Secondly, for each of the above organisations mentioned, $\chi^2$ showed no significant 
differences between the two clusters and levels of activity (for primary organisation: 
$\chi^2 = .83$, $df = 1$, ns; for secondary organisation: $\chi^2 = .58$, $df = 1$, ns; for third 
organisation: $\chi^2 = .17$, $df = 1$, ns).

**Willingness to participate**

An independent samples t-test between the two clusters and willingness to participate 
in collective action revealed non-significant effects ($t = .77$, $df = 327$, ns).

**Perception of the barriers**

A series of independent samples t-test between cluster membership and ‘perception of 
the barriers’ for each specific action were run and significant differences in each of the 
four types of actions were revealed.

**Action 1: Write to the MP**

There were no significant effects of cluster membership on perception of barriers at 
each of the five levels.

Table 10.36: Results of independent samples t-test between cluster membership and perception of each 
of the levels of barriers for the action of ‘write to the MP’.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barriers</th>
<th>Clust. JAGGER</th>
<th></th>
<th>Clust. McCARTNEY</th>
<th></th>
<th>T-test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean Std. Dev.</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Mean Std. Dev.</td>
<td>N</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Intraindividual</td>
<td>5.49 1.19</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>5.52 1.00</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>$t = -.25$, $df = 330$, ns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Interpersonal</td>
<td>5.63 .90</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>5.63 .90</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>$t = .04$, $df = 330$, ns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Intragroup</td>
<td>4.85 1.34</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>5.01 1.33</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>$t = -1.07$, $df = 330$, ns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Intergroup</td>
<td>5.04 1.47</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>5.34 1.06</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>$t = -2.13$, $df = 326.34$, ns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Societal</td>
<td>5.09 1.50</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>5.20 1.27</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>$t = -.70$, $df = 329$, ns</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

387
Action 2: Explain to other people about the importance of this problem

This was the action where there was a significant effect of cluster membership on a higher number of levels, i.e. interpersonal, intragroup and intergroup. Individuals who shared positive social representations of older people perceived weaker barriers (i.e. more permeable and less applicable) at the interpersonal, intragroup and intergroup levels than individuals who shared negative social representations of older people. Results including each of the five levels are presented in the table below.

Table 10.37: Results of independent samples t-test between cluster membership and perception of each of the levels of barriers for the action of ‘explain to other people about the importance of the problem’.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barriers</th>
<th>Clust. JAGGER</th>
<th>Clust. McCARTNEY</th>
<th>T-test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Std.</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Intraindividual</td>
<td>5.34</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Interpersonal</td>
<td>5.03</td>
<td>1.33</td>
<td>186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Intragroup</td>
<td>4.61</td>
<td>1.46</td>
<td>185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Intergroup</td>
<td>4.70</td>
<td>1.54</td>
<td>186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Societal</td>
<td>4.62</td>
<td>1.65</td>
<td>185</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Action 3: Join an informal discussion group

There was a significant effect of cluster membership on perception of barriers at the intergroup level (t=-2.37, df=329.76, p<.01). Individuals who held positive social representations perceived weaker barriers at the intergroup level (mean=5.25) than individuals holding negative social representations (mean=4.90). Below results are presented for each of the five levels.

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23Having calculated the Bonferroni test for the five levels of barriers (significance level of .05 divided by 5), the significance level of .01 resulted as the appropriate significance level for comparing between the five levels of barriers.
Table 10.38: Results of independent samples t-test between cluster membership and perception of each of the levels of barriers for the action of 'join an informal discussion group'.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barriers</th>
<th>Clust. JAGGER</th>
<th>Clust. McCARTNEY</th>
<th>T-test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Std. Dev.</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Intraindividual</td>
<td>5.18</td>
<td>1.40</td>
<td>185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Interpersonal</td>
<td>5.49</td>
<td>1.12</td>
<td>185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Intragroup</td>
<td>4.82</td>
<td>1.42</td>
<td>185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Intergroup</td>
<td>4.90</td>
<td>1.54</td>
<td>186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Societal</td>
<td>4.74</td>
<td>1.63</td>
<td>186</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Action 4: Join a group demonstrating

A significant effect was found of cluster membership on perception of barriers at the intragroup (t= -2.7, df= 322.90, p< .01) and intergroup levels (t= -2.31, df= 325.68, p< .01). Individuals with positive social representations perceived weaker barriers at the intragroup and intergroup level than individuals with negative social representations. Results for each of the five levels are shown below.

Table 10.39: Results of independent samples t-test between cluster membership and perception of each of the levels of barriers for the action of 'joining a group demonstrating'.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barriers</th>
<th>Clust. JAGGER</th>
<th>Clust. McCARTNEY</th>
<th>T-test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Std. Dev.</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Intraindividual</td>
<td>4.55</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td>185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Interpersonal</td>
<td>5.12</td>
<td>1.29</td>
<td>186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Intragroup</td>
<td>4.03</td>
<td>1.67</td>
<td>185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Intergroup</td>
<td>4.63</td>
<td>1.65</td>
<td>184</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Societal</td>
<td>4.65</td>
<td>1.67</td>
<td>186</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To review, people who shared positive evaluations in the social representations of older people perceived barriers at the applicable levels to be weaker than those who held negative evaluations (as shown in section 10.5.4). When actions were compared, it appeared that perception of barriers at the intergroup level was common across the three of the four types of actions (for 'writing to the MP', non significant results were found). Moreover, the action of 'explain to other people about the importance of the problem' was the only one in which there were significant results with barriers
operating at the interpersonal level. This might be due to the fact this action is directly referred to communication aspects. In addition, with the action of 'joining an informal discussion group' only significant results were obtained with barriers operating at the intergroup level. Note that there were no significant effects of cluster membership on barriers at the intraindividual level for any of the actions and, as illustrated above, barriers operating at the group level were significant across three of the four actions. Thus, the importance of barriers operating at the group level when considering social representations of older people held by the respondents was stressed by these results.

*Overall willingness to participate in collective action and perception of the barriers*

The above results enabled an empirical test of the following hypothesis:

**H1.** People who hold positive social representations of older people will perceive the barriers to be weaker (i.e. less applicable; more permeable) than those people who share negative social representations.

**H2.** Barriers at the group level will significantly discriminate between the two clusters of respondents (those who share positive social representations from those who share negative social representations).

A MANOVA with perception of the barriers as the five dependent variables (i.e. perception of the barriers at the intraindividual, interpersonal, intragroup, intergroup and societal levels) and cluster membership (positive and negative social representations) as the independent variable was performed. The main effect of cluster membership was trending towards significance \( F(5, 326)= 2.02, p= .06 \). When comparing the means of the two clusters it was shown that respondents with negative social representations perceived the barriers to be stronger (i.e. more applicable, less permeable), whereas those individuals with positive social representations appeared to perceive barriers to be weaker (see table below). These results gave some support therefore to H1.

In the light of the above results, the pattern of significant univariate effects can be noted. It was found there was a significant effect of cluster membership on perception
of barriers at the intragroup (F(1, 330) = 5.07, p < .05) and intergroup levels (F(1, 330) = 8.13, p < .01). There were non-significant effects of cluster membership on barriers at the intraindividual (F(1, 330) = .23, ns), interpersonal (F(1, 330) = 1.21, ns) and societal levels (F(1, 330) = 2.17, ns). Thus, H2 was confirmed, since barriers that were distinguishing between the two clusters were those located within a group dimension. When comparing the means of both intragroup and intergroup levels, respondents with positive social representations perceived barriers at the group level to be weaker than did people with negative social representations.

Table 10.40: Descriptive statistics of perception of the barriers for each of the two clusters.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Positive Social Representations</th>
<th>Negative Social Representations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Std. Dev.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Intraindividual</td>
<td>5.20</td>
<td>.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Interpersonal</td>
<td>5.43</td>
<td>.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Intragroup</td>
<td>4.86</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Intergroup</td>
<td>5.19</td>
<td>1.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Societal</td>
<td>4.98</td>
<td>1.19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chronological age, importance of age, evaluation of age, political efficacy, political trust, general self-efficacy, physical self-efficacy, age as a relevant group membership ('older people'), collectivist orientation and collective efficacy

DFA was used to determine whether the variables listed above distinguished between those people in cluster JAGGER and those in cluster McCARTNEY. It appeared that people in cluster JAGGER and those in cluster McCARTNEY had different means on the discriminant function, which accounted for 4.58% of the between cluster groups variance (λ = .95, χ² (1, 327) = 15.16, p < .001). Stepwise method revealed one variable as the only contributor to the discrimination of the two groups, i.e. collective efficacy.

The overall percentage of cases classified correctly was not excessively high (60.1%). Of 185 cases in cluster JAGGER, 138 were predicted correctly to be members of cluster JAGGER (74.6%), while 47 (25.4%) were assigned incorrectly to cluster McCARTNEY. Similarly, 61 out of 146 (41.8%) of cluster McCARTNEY cases were identified correctly, and 85 (58.2%) were misclassified.
The two groups appeared to differ significantly not only on collective efficacy (p<.001) but also on general self-efficacy (p<.01), physical self-efficacy (p<.05) and age (p<.05). As shown in the table below, the mean scores for these first three variables were significantly higher for cluster McCARTNEY than for cluster JAGGER. Thus, those people sharing positive evaluations of older people would show a higher level of collective efficacy, general self-efficacy and physical self-efficacy. Besides, those people with negative evaluations appeared to be older.

Table 10.41: Means and SD scores for significant variables in each cluster.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Cluster JAGGER</th>
<th>Cluster McCARTNEY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collective efficacy</td>
<td>2.21</td>
<td>.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General self-efficacy</td>
<td>3.79</td>
<td>.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical self-efficacy</td>
<td>3.71</td>
<td>.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>72.5</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Given the finding that the clusters differed significantly in terms of collective efficacy and the significant difference in terms of general self-efficacy, physical self-efficacy and age between the two clusters, a series of bivariate correlations were conducted to examine how collective efficacy might be related to general self-efficacy, physical self-efficacy and age. The results of this analysis were as follows: there was a significant positive correlation between collective efficacy and physical self-efficacy only for cluster JAGGER (r= .165, n=185, p<.05) and a significant negative correlation between collective efficacy and age for cluster McCARTNEY (r= -.17, n= 146, p<.05). There was a significant negative correlation between age and physical self-efficacy, for cluster JAGGER (r= -.34, n= 186, p<.01) and cluster McCARTNEY (r= -.289, n= 146, p<.01).

Besides, only cluster McCARTNEY presented a significant negative correlation between age and general self-efficacy (r = -.183, n = 146, p < .05).

Finally, there was a significant positive correlation between general and physical self-efficacy, for cluster JAGGER (r = .170, n = 186, p< .05) and cluster McCARTNEY (r = .325, n = 146, p < .01).
10.10.3 Cluster characterisation by types/anti-types

The final analysis presented in this chapter consisted in exploring types and anti-types (derived from the study of profiles in barriers, section 10.5.1) in relation to cluster membership in two ways by using crosstabulations. However, no significant results were obtained. Results are shown in Appendix 7 (Tables 6,7,8,9,10), in which first each of the four actions were included together and then each action was considered separately with the respective types and anti-types.

10.11 Discussion

The following key findings can be outlined:

- Some of the results suggest the need to study collective action within a specific context, i.e. responding to social issues and their nature and type of action (specially the distinction between individual action and group action).

- More experience with a specific type of action was related to more willingness to participate in collective action. However, such willingness was still in evidence among older people who had never participated in specific actions.

- There were differences in perception of barriers according to the levels (intraindividual, interpersonal, intragroup, intergroup, societal). This suggested the importance of looking at different levels of analysis in order to explain the generation of collective action. For instance, it was shown that a higher percentage of barriers at the intraindividual level were associated with less willingness to participate in collective action but vice versa for perceived barriers at the intragroup level.

- Older people can show intention to engage in collective action but still perceive barriers to participating.
Perception of the barriers were related to identity and ideology factors. Those factors situated within a more personal level were associated with perception of barriers at an individual level, whereas those situated within a group level were associated with intragroup, intergroup and societal levels. However, as will be discussed, this did not apply to all of the factors.

Aspects of identity were shown to be interrelated with each other, as predicted by IPT (Breakwell, 1986, 1988, 1992a, 1993). This suggests the need to consider the whole hierarchically organised structure of identity.

Social representations of older people were shown to provide a system of interpretation to older people in the context of collective action. They were characterised by an evaluative dimension (i.e. positive and negative social representations) and specified both the content and value of older people's identity structure.

People sharing positive social representations of older people tended to perceive barriers as weak, whereas when individuals held negative social representations of older people, barriers were perceived to be stronger. This was specially applicable with barriers operating at a group level.

Willingness to participate in collective action was related to priority of the social issue, previous experience, perceived effectiveness of collective action, perception of barriers, identity factors (e.g. collective efficacy) and several aspects of organisation membership (e.g. nature of the contacted organisation, level of political participation).

Age as defined in relation to physical/cognitive abilities was not the most important factor explaining willingness to participate in collective action. However, it was shown how age-related factors can operate as subjective barriers, which encompass both identity and representational aspects.
The key findings from this study are discussed below. These are divided by different themes, i.e. instances of social change; previous experience; perception of barriers; identity aspects and ageing; social representations of older people; individual vs. group action and finally willingness to participate in collective action.

**Instances of social change**

Those instances of social change which were perceived as more solvable were also regarded as important by older people in the sample (i.e. National Health Service; pensions for old people; law and order; crime and violence; spoiling of the environment). In contrast, the social issues of selfishness in society and job insecurity were perceived by older people to be less tractable and less important. This highlights the relevance of the subjective importance that a specific issue has for the individual when considering perceptions of how tractable the issue is perceived to be.

When there was a correspondence between the way the social issues ('spoiling of the environment' or 'lack of policies favouring the traditional structure of the family') were prioritised and the issue that participants were presented with, more willingness to participate in collective action was shown.

Perceived effectiveness was shown to differ according to the instance of social change presented to the participants: when older people were presented with the social issue of the environment, each of the four actions were perceived to be more effective than when the presented social issue was that of the family.

Perception of barriers at the applicable levels also differed according to the issue presented to older people (with the exception of the action situated within the individual/collective change dimensions, i.e. 'writing to the MP'). It was shown that when the social issue of the environment was presented barriers appeared to be weaker (less applicable; more permeable) than when the issue presented was that of the family (stronger barriers). These differences were evident for most of the actions in the study, and for each of them perceived barriers were located at a range of different
levels (e.g. individual to group). The fact that stronger barriers were perceived when the social issue of the family was presented and that when the issue of the environment was presented barriers were perceived to be weaker might be explained in terms of perceived tractability and importance of the social issues. Thus, the issue of the environment was perceived to be rather important by the participants and likely to be solved, whereas the issue of the family was perceived to be less important and less tractable. However, when perception of the barriers was studied in relation to willingness to participate in collective action, significant results were obtained for perception of barriers at an individual level. These barriers were perceived as stronger when individuals were not willing to participate in collective action. This pattern of results was obtained in relation to both presented issues. As noted earlier, the priority assigned to the issues differed as did their perceived tractability and perceived effectiveness. However, in the light of their similar patterns when perceived barriers to collective action and willingness to participate is concerned, the issues were not generally separated (all participants were included together) in subsequent analyses.

This complex picture draws attention to the need to take into account the specific problems a particular action attempts to address, as pointed out by previous research (Barnes et al., 1979; Muller, 1979; Muller & Opp, 1986; Fox & Schofield, 1989; Parry et al., 1992). Collective action should not therefore be explored in isolation. Instead, research should be tied to specific instances of social change in order to build up an integrated picture for understanding and explaining the generation of collective action. Collective action is context-specific in the sense it responds to social issues and in particular, to the nature of each social issue. This was also supported by findings of the previous study in this thesis.

Previous experience

Influence of past experience in willingness to participate in collective action was confirmed among older people, as had been suggested in the previous study (see chapter seven). When it was reported that respondents had participated in a specific action, willingness to participate in that action was very high: more experience before
and after being 65 was strongly correlated with more willingness to participate in collective action.

Moreover, when older people had never participated in a specific action, they still showed willingness to participate. This was greatest for the action of 'writing to the MP'; followed by 'explain to other people'; 'join an informal discussion group' and least for 'join a group demonstrating'. Thus, actions situated on a more individual dimension were more preferred than those at a group level. This may have implications in terms of predicting future involvement of older people in collective action; and in terms of the ways individuals may start to empower themselves. Moreover, similar percentages of participation for each of the actions were obtained for both experience before and after 65. This suggests a continuity in the life-span independently of age (this is also supported by the fact previous experience before and after 65 were positively associated with each other). These results link with what was discussed in the previous study (chapter eight). Here, participants showed that despite advancing years, they felt the same in relation to participation in collective action. The literature in this area similarly suggests that there is no substantial change of political involvement with age (Braungart, 1984).

**Barriers**

With regard to patterns of barriers that were identified for each action, it was shown most of the barriers were not applicable to the participants. In particular, the action of 'writing to the MP' (individual, collective change) was the one with the highest number of older people that presented the response pattern in which none of the barriers at any level were applicable to them; the other individual action of 'explaining to other people' (collective expression) had the next highest number of people saying that there were not barriers to this action. Numbers of people presenting no barriers further decreased for the group actions of 'joining an informal discussion group' (collective expression) and 'joining a group demonstrating' (collective change). This suggested that when actions were situated on a group dimension (i.e. 'join an informal discussion group'; 'join a group demonstrating'), older people perceived more barriers
rather than when actions were individual (i.e. 'write to the MP'; 'explain to other people'). However, the distinction collective expression - collective change did not seem to make any difference in terms of applicability of the barriers.

Perceived barriers at the group level appeared to be a common response pattern across each of the four types of actions, although higher in the actions situated on a group dimension (i.e. 'join an informal discussion group' and 'join a group demonstrating'). More specifically, barriers at the intragroup level were common across the four types of actions for all older people. Barriers at this level were directly referred to the group of older people (e.g. "people of my age lack the desire to influence these things in this way"), which shows that the influence of age as a relevant group membership operates as a barrier to all types of actions. This shows the effects of identification with older people.

In addition, applicability of barriers at the intraindividual and intragroup levels seemed to be more important for the action of 'join a group demonstrating', situated within the group/collective change dimension. However, for the action situated within the individual/collective change dimension ('write to the MP') perceived barriers at the intraindividual level were not represented in any of the response types. Surprisingly, barriers to this action were situated within group levels (i.e. intragroup; intergroup; societal).

These results have various implications. At a conceptual level, this emphasises the need to examine the nature of the type of action instead of providing general conclusions on collective action which are based on either one type of action (e.g. signing a petition) or various actions within a same issue (e.g. most of the existing literature on nuclear issues). Secondly, these results validated the use of looking at different levels of analysis in the study of collective action. And in relation to older people, the fact that they perceived fewer barriers for individual actions than for group actions may affect their choice for type of action. This would help explain why at the present older people are mostly involved in activities such as voting, suggested as the
main common form of political expression among older people and being classified as an individual action (Wilson, 2000).

Moreover, it was shown that non-willingness was associated with a higher number of applicable barriers than willingness. Although conceptually different, Oegema & Klandermans (1994) had already predicted that a higher number of barriers will be associated with less willingness to engage in collective action. However, this research provided the distinction between subjective barriers with five levels of analysis and made it possible to go more in depth with this: it was shown that a high percentage of perceived barriers at the intraindividual level were perceived by participants when they did not show any intention to participate in collective action. Also, a high number of older people perceived more barriers at the intragroup level - specially for the actions at an individual dimension - when they showed willingness to participate in collective action than when they did not show intention to participate. This might be explained in terms of negative identity, in which negativism would encourage the direct confrontation against external sources (Breakwell, 1986).

It was also clear that people may still perceive barriers even when they are willing to participate in collective action. This added to the existing literature in this area which, with different theoretical approaches, has mainly explored barriers to participation only when individuals had not engaged in collective action having previously shown their intention to participate (e.g. Klandermans & Oegema, 1987).

The relationships found between each of the identity and ideology factors and perception of barriers at the different levels partly supported the SIT prediction: existing literature emphasises that factors which promote personal aspects of identity will lead to intragroup comparisons and factors which encourage group aspects of identity will lead to intergroup comparisons (e.g. Kawakami & Dion, 1995; Spears et al., 1999). Linking this prediction to the study of perceived barriers to action in this research, it was found that some of the factors situated within a more personal level, i.e. importance of age, collective orientation, and general self-efficacy were only
associated with perception of barriers at an individual level. Unexpectedly, physical self-efficacy was only associated with barriers operating at the societal level (low physical self-efficacy was related to stronger barriers at that level) emphasizing the importance of societal barriers being applicable among older people with low physical self-efficacy (societal discrimination) instead of other barriers at an individual level. This example of the way in which individual factors affect perceptions of societal barriers is interesting and potentially important. The concept of barriers thus provides some understanding of the link and integration between aspects of older people's identity structure and existing social representations of older people. Also, unexpectedly, collective efficacy (which includes group aspects) was associated with perception of barriers at the intraindividual levels and (as expected) with perception of barriers at the intragroup level. This latter finding confirmed that group aspects of identity may also focus on intragroup comparisons (Smith, Spears & Hamstra, 1999) and with regards to the significance of barriers at the intraindividual level for collective action would claim and suggest a re-definition of the concept of collective efficacy as affecting both individual and collective aspects of older people's identity structure.

When focusing on some of the non-significant results (they had been hypothesised as significant, see Table 10.27), for importance of age and collective orientation only perception of barriers at the intraindividual level was prevalent. Thus the hypothesis with regard to those factors that encourage personal aspects of identity would lead to intragroup comparisons was not supported for these factors, together with evaluation of age, in which non-significant results were obtained for any of the five levels of barriers. Two main conclusions can be derived from these results. Firstly, for importance of age, it might be the case that the items of perceived barriers at the intraindividual level were more associated with old age than was intended, the stereotypes of older people being more strongly accessed in the intraindividual level (e.g. barrier no.1: “I lack the energy”). This issue will be noted further in relation to the experimental demand characteristics in the final discussion (chapter twelve).
Secondly, the age-specific evaluative component of older people’s identity structure did not affect perception of the barriers which might suggest that other evaluative components not necessarily being age-specific would have a major influence on older people’s perception of the barriers to collective action.

In line with predictions suggested by existing research mentioned above, age as a relevant group membership (i.e. older people) was only associated with barriers at the group level (intergroup and group/societal). More specifically, stronger identification with ‘older people’ was associated with stronger barriers operating at both intergroup and societal levels (Turner, 1999). In addition, the importance of the group dimension in the study of social representations of older people was confirmed, since both positive and negative social representations were related to barriers operating at the intragroup level for positive social representations and at the intragroup, intergroup and societal levels for negative social representations. Finally, the importance of political efficacy in the study of barriers to collective action was emphasised; it was the only factor which was significantly related to the barriers operating at each of the five levels. Since political efficacy emerged as the factor affecting each of identity and representational aspects of older people, this might increase the power of this social psychological factor when included in a predictive model of collective action. This will be addressed in the following chapter.

Each of the stronger barriers included age-related aspects of older people’s identity structure and social representations held by them (i.e. high importance of age; age as a relevant group membership- strong identification with ‘older people’; negative social representations of older people). On the other hand, weaker barriers were associated with aspects which either included age characteristics (e.g. high collective efficacy; positive social representations of old people) or which were not explicitly referred to age (e.g. high general self-efficacy; high political efficacy). Thus, this showed that when integrating both identity and social representational factors in the study of collective action one needs to pay specific attention to individual differences (e.g. perception of the barriers will differ across older people whether they present a higher
or lower level of self-efficacy). This evidenced again the assumption in this thesis of heterogeneity among older people, as suggested in the previous studies of this thesis.

Furthermore, as was elaborated in chapter four, it was confirmed that barriers cannot uniquely be understood in terms of the resources available (costs and benefits): the questionnaire included open-ended questions at the end of each section of barriers (designed from pilot study, as discussed in chapter nine). Answers showed that participants not only identified resources at both intraindividual and group levels, but also other aspects were listed, which could be classified according to the five levels of analysis, i.e. intraindividual, interpersonal, intragroup, intergroup and societal (see Appendix 8 for the detailed list). Hence, this confirmed and validated the approach adopted in this research which specifies levels of analysis in the conceptualisation of barriers to action.

Identity aspects and ageing
An important point can be made in relation to the results obtained when the identity variables were correlated with each other. That is, aspects of identity do not function in isolation from each other; rather, they dynamically interact with each other, as predicted by IPT (Breakwell, 1986, 1988, 1992a, 1993). Thus, this highlights the importance of taking into account the whole identity structure of the person in the context of collective action; and not just age-related definitions.

In line with Miller et al.'s (1980) research, it was shown individuals who identified most strongly with older people showed more positive evaluations of age (in Table 10.28). Other significant results showed how several aspects of the content of older people's identity structure had also a value attached to them (i.e. importance of age; general self-efficacy), as predicted by IPT. In particular, the importance of age and higher levels of general self-efficacy were related to positive evaluations of age. The fact that lower identification with older people is related to negative evaluation of age seemed to contradict the so called "denial of ageing" (Bultena & Powers, 1978; Puglisi & Jackson, 1978) in which a weak identification with older people would lead
to positive evaluations of the self-concept. It rather supported the idea that these participants conceded and accommodated to age (Furstenberg, 1994); positive aspects of ageing would be enhanced by participants who presented a strong identification with older people. Besides, the fact that general self-efficacy is an important aspect on age-specific aspects of older people's identity structure, has already been emphasised in previous research among older people (e.g. Godin & Shephard, 1985; Parkatti et al., 1998).

As predicted, the different elements of the efficacy principle were related to each other. For instance, high collective efficacy was related to high general and physical self-efficacy and high political efficacy. These results have implications for theoretical conceptualisations of efficacy in the context of older people. They would provide encouragement to situation-specific characteristics for the development of a general measurement of efficacy.

As expected, high identification with older people was related to high collective orientation. This is comparable with existing research that has paid attention to different types of group identifications and shown similar results with regard to collective orientation (e.g. Brown et al., 1992; Kelly & Brinlinger, 1995). On the other hand, strong identification with the group of older people was associated with low physical efficacy. This latter aspect suggests psychological acceptance of the process of ageing itself (i.e. less denial of ageing). Furthermore, other research (e.g. Miller et al., 1980) has shown that a significant relationship between old age identification and participation in collective action persists even after controlling for feelings of low self-efficacy.

Higher importance of age was remarkably related to higher identification with older people but the fact that high importance of age was related to low collective efficacy and to low general self-efficacy might imply that self-awareness of being old among some older people leads to the accommodation of the negative stereotypes of the old person as "fragile and with less ability to bring about social change" (e.g. Minichiello
et al., 2000).

Individual orientation was associated with low general self-efficacy among older people. Thus, those older people who feel personally efficacious are more collectively orientated. Since the scale of collective orientation included references to the group of older people as acting as a group, this may add new information with regards to the link between the individual and his/her orientation towards working together with the group of older people. It could be suggested that older persons who feel personally efficacious are potentially more likely to conceive older people as a social group and even legitimate collective action with older people acting together. This could also have implications for therapeutic purposes, in which older people presenting low levels of self-efficacy and/or self-esteem could be instigated to participate in tasks involving action with other peers in order to help them develop a sense of control over their lives.

Despite what was predicted, no significant relation was found between identification with older people and collective efficacy. This was not that surprising, since existing literature is characterised by contradictory results on this. The fact that in the previous study of this research it was suggested that there was a strong link between both factors might have been partly affected by the context in which the research had been conducted (older people discussing between each other). In this study, participants responded to the questionnaire individually and in some cases the organisations through which they were recruited were not age oriented.

Finally, another non-significant result which had been predicted to be significant was that of the relationship between identification with older people and political efficacy. Results showed that political efficacy was only related to aspects of the same concept, i.e. collective efficacy and physical self-efficacy.
Social representations of older people

The importance of social representations of older people in this study was evident at four main levels:

(i) Evaluative dimension of social representations in the study of collective action

Following results obtained in identification of sub-groups of older people in relation to social representations of older people using cluster analysis, an evaluative dimension of the content of social representations gained importance among older people in the context of collective action. This evaluative dimension contributed to the definition of older people in the context of collective action and directed older people's subjective meaning of their identity. This confirmed findings from the qualitative study, in which it was suggested that the evaluative dimension of social representations of older people comprised positive dimensions (resulted in positive ageing), whereas negative evaluations resulted in negative ageing or even encouraged some older people to re-interpret and negotiate new images of ageing. Thus, the need to consider social representations as products of a social process of evaluation of people was supported. In Di Giacomo’s (1980) words, “one can therefore define a social representation as the set of evaluative contents evoked by any object in a given population’s environment on the basis of its social evaluation criteria” (p. 341). Moreover, “the social foundation of representations must be sought in the emergence of a particular evaluative criterion (...) and in the fact that these criteria are specific or borrowed from a dominant group” (Di Giacomo, 1980, p. 341). Thus, within this study, the use of ‘positive’/‘negative’ rather than other criteria such as ‘older people and social change’/’older people and younger people’ may have resulted in response to existing societal attitudes, in which the majority would add and enhance a specific system of values to the group of older people. As a result, this would be incorporated in older people’s belief systems.

(ii) Identity factors and social representations of older people

As predicted, identity factors were positively related to positive social representations of older people and negatively related to negative social representations of older
people (in Table 10.29). In particular, positive evaluation of age, stronger identification with older people, high collective efficacy and high general self-efficacy were associated with positive social representations of older people and low collective efficacy, low general self-efficacy, low physical self-efficacy and low political efficacy were related to negative social representations of older people.

These results suggested that social representations of older people define and provide interpretation of both content and value of identity but that at the same time identity factors might affect older people’s willingness to accept and use a particular evaluational dimension of social representations of older people.

Results obtained with this analysis suggest an important new dimension in the study of older people. Direct evidence on social representations of older people has shown and enhanced that social representations of older people held by older people themselves are negative (Joulain, 1995). More specifically, it has been suggested that negative social representations of older people might be prevalent among older people. This would be due to accommodation of negative aspects of older people since a person is young and that then takes such notion as she/he grows older (Slater, 1995) and to the fact older people might feel that the experience of older people is not valued enough in the societal world (Hayden et al., 1999). Thus, this study not only provided evidence that older people also hold positive social representations of older people, but also that the acceptance, use and diffusion of both positive and negative social representations can be explained in terms of identity factors.

(iii) Collective efficacy as an important factor in discriminating between older people who share either positive or negative social representations of older people

Collective efficacy emerged as an important factor discriminating between the two clusters of social representations when identity factors were taken into account (as shown previously with the correlations run between positive and negative social representations and identity variables). Collective efficacy included an age-specific dimension, i.e. the belief that older people can co-operate together to successfully
bring about social change. Thus, this means that the most distinctive variable discriminating between social representations of older people is not only group related, but also age-specific. In particular, this incorporates two different aspects of the individual’s identity structure.

(iv) **Perception of barriers and social representations in relation to type of action**
Results obtained from a series of t-test between cluster membership and perception of barriers for each of the four types of action showed that barriers operating at the group level were significant across each of the actions (non-significant results had been obtained for any of the levels in the action of ‘writing to the MP’). In particular, it was shown that people who presented negative social representations of older people perceived those barriers to be stronger than those who presented positive social representations.

Further analyses confirmed that barriers at the intragroup and intergroup levels distinguished between the two clusters (this had already been suggested in the correlations run between levels of barriers and social representations factors). These results were conceptually consistent with the notion of social representations, since they address aspects of group processes and mechanisms through people collectively construct shared realities (Moscovici, 1961, 1984, 1988). In this study, these barriers included identity aspects of older people, in particular identification with older people and collective efficacy. Thus, when social representations of older people were considered in the context of collective action, identification with older people and collective efficacy seemed to operate as an important barrier that distinguished between the social representations.

**Individual vs. Group action**
The distinction between individual and group actions in the type of action dimension appeared to be more relevant than the one between collective expression-collective change. This might be due to the fact individuals give more importance to their involvement for bringing about social change. This was mainly shown in older
people's responses according to (i) degree of willingness (shown in Guttman scale on chapter nine); (ii) perceived effectiveness of collective action and (iii) number of applicable barriers:

(i) A higher degree of willingness to participate in the actions of 'writing to the MP' and 'explain to other people about the importance of the problem' was present for older people (both situated on an individual dimension). There was lower willingness to participate for the actions of 'join an informal discussion group' and 'join a group demonstrating'.

(ii) There were significant differences between perceived effectiveness of a specific action, i.e. 'writing to the MP' was perceived as more effective, followed by 'explain to other people about the importance of the problem', then 'join an informal discussion group'. The action of 'join a group demonstrating' was perceived to be less effective. Hence, those actions situated within an individual dimension (first 'write to the MP' and secondly 'explain to other people') were perceived to be more effective than those actions situated within a group dimension (first 'join an informal discussion group' and finally 'join a group demonstrating').

(iii) With the same order above, 'writing to the MP' was the action which participants perceived a lower number of applicable barriers whereas the action of 'join a group demonstrating' was the one which presented a higher number of applicable barriers.

As mentioned before, these results would account for why at the present older people are mostly involved in activities such as voting (situated on an individual level). However, this can be taken further: existing research measuring political involvement among older people has not paid attention to perception of collective action by older people; what they understand by collective action and how they engage on it. In other words, this research showed how an action such as 'explain to other people about the importance of the problem' was perceived to be effective, associated with a lower number of barriers and a high degree of willingness to opt for it was shown among older people. Future research may need to re-conceptualise what collective action means and involves. This thesis has shown that some of the actions older people consider have not been contemplated by previous research and therefore this may have
influenced their conclusions stating that either political participation decreases with age (e.g. Jennings & Markus, 1988) or that older people are mainly interested in political parties membership and voting as a way of bringing about social change (e.g. Jirovec & Erich, 1992; Park, 1995).

Willingness to participate in collective action

With regard to sub-groups of participants, it was shown that older people who belonged to social issue organisations showed more willingness to engage in collective action (as predicted). Since more willingness to participate conceptually included both individual and group types of actions, it can be stated individuals who belong to groups/organisations that value social change and it works as the norm of the group are more likely to manifest tendency to get involved in collective action. Contrarily, individuals who belong to groups/organisations that do not support a normative structure of social change, are more likely to consider engaging in individual action (Hogg & Turner, 1987b; Kelly, 1993).

As predicted, it was shown that older people in the sample presented higher involvement in social issue groups and political parties, in line with findings from previous research (Jirovec & Erich, 1992), which again emphasised the fact that age cannot be associated with lower levels of involvement in collective action. It was also shown, contrarily to what was predicted, that this would not necessarily imply they had to belong to age-oriented groups. Hence, participants who belonged to non age-oriented organisations presented more willingness to participate in collective action than those who were members of age-oriented organisations.

Finally, and consistent with previous research, it was confirmed that higher number of organisations people are members of (Marsh, 1977), and people who use active ways of involvement in them, are more likely to show willingness to participate than those who belong to fewer organisations and who are involved in more passive ways.
Importance of previous experience (e.g. Jirovec & Erich, 1995) and high perceived effectiveness of action (e.g. Wolfsfeld, 1986a) appeared as two pervasive factors accounting for more willingness to participate in collective action. And despite the prediction that men will be more likely to present higher willingness to participate in collective action, non significant results were shown. This may be due to the specific context in which participants were researched, in which the choice of collective action may not result in gender issues becoming salient. This might explain why when several cultures have been taken into account in the study of collective action, gender differences were found (e.g. Barnes et al., 1979).

With regard to identity factors, efficacy appeared to be the most relevant factor, in particular collective efficacy (e.g. Muller & Opp, 1986) and political efficacy (e.g. Marsh, 1977), although non-significant results were obtained for self and physical efficacy. Additionally, high collective orientation was also related to more willingness to engage in action (Kelly & Breinlinger, 1996). In relation to perception of barriers, it was shown that a higher number of perceived barriers were related to less willingness to take action (Oegema & Klandemans, 1994) and when specific attention was given at each of the levels, only barriers at the intrapersonal level appeared to be related to willingness, i.e. weak barriers (less applicability and more perceived permeability of barriers) were associated with more willingness to participate in collective action. Although Klandemans & Oegema (1987) research had not distinguished between levels of barriers, they also concluded that higher permeability of barriers is associated with more willingness to engage in collective action.

Moreover, the fact that unexpectedly political trust was not related to willingness to participate in collective action has to be interpreted with caution. When included together with political efficacy in a stepwise regression, it was revealed as an important predictor of collective action (as suggested by existing literature, e.g. Gamson, 1968). More specifically, it was confirmed that for people willing to participate in actions located at a group-collective change dimension, low political
trust was shown. This has also been suggested by previous literature (e.g. Zimmerman & Rappaport, 1988; Parry et al., 1992).

Individual aspects of older people’s identity structure were emphasised from these results obtained in perception of barriers and intentional behaviour of collective action, which in this particular study were not related to age-specific characteristics. This, together with results obtained with regard to non-significant correlations between willingness to participate in collective action and chronological age; importance and evaluation of age and age as a relevant group membership (‘older people’) and social representations of older people highlight and confirm that age as simply defined in relation to physical/cognitive abilities is not the most important factor explaining willingness to participate in collective action. However, it was shown how they operate as barriers, more specifically identification with the group of older people (barriers operating at the intragroup level) and that they were related to social representations of older people. Each of them would operate as barriers to collective action, which embodied both identity and representational aspects, being mostly age-specific in the context of this study.

In conclusion to this chapter it should be noted that results obtained in this study support the notion of subjective barriers - as including both identity and representational aspects - in explaining the generation of collective action. These were shown to be related to the way they give meaning to older people’s identity structure and social beliefs. It was also shown how older people distinguish between them, exemplified by particular levels of analysis being perceived as more or less applicable/permeable. As suggested before (Doise, 1986; Breakwell, 1996), the predictive power is bound to increase when studied constructs are based on different levels of analysis.

Besides, this chapter has shown the importance of taking into account processes operating and moulding the content and value dimensions of the structure of identity. In particular, efficacy has been proved to be an important factor operating in older
people's identity structure (specially collective efficacy, discriminating between the social representations shared by individuals and influencing willingness to participate in collective action).

The results made it possible to develop a model of collective action that could be tested.
Chapter Eleven

A Predictive Model of Collective Action

"Si estirem tots, ella caurà
i molt de temps no pot durar,
segur que tomba, tomba, tomba,
ben corcada deu ser ja.

Si jo l'estiro fort per a'quí
i tu l'estires fort per allà,
segur que tomba, tomba, tomba,
i ens podrem alliberar."

Lluis Llach (1968); L'Estaca.
(Catalan protest song against the franquist oppression).

11.1 Introduction

In this chapter a path analytic model will be proposed and tested, explaining willingness to participate in collective action. In doing this, interrelationships between each of the variables in the model will be elucidated.

Nested regression analysis\(^{24}\) is based on the progressive building of a model through different stages or blocks. Movement from one stage to another is expected to be dependent on the effects obtained at the previous stage. This analysis not only makes it possible to determine the most important predictors of the final research outcome (here willingness to participate in collective action) but also provides an understanding of each of the relationships between the variables at each stage of the model (Breakwell & Beardsell, 1992; Breakwell & Robertson, 2001).

\(^{24}\) In previous chapter non-parametric correlations were run between the variables in the study. It needs to be acknowledged that although regression analysis assumes normal distribution, results obtained in previous study were shown to equate the ones obtained with regression analysis. Therefore, there are grounds to confirm the validity of results obtained and presented in both chapters.
The model tested here was based on results obtained in previous studies of this thesis and findings from previous literature (chapters two, three, four). The model proposed enables to generate some testable hypotheses (see Figure 11.1 for a simplified version of the proposed model).

In this chapter, the various stages of the proposed model of collective action on different interrelationships between factors will be outlined and illustrated in a series of diagrams. Finally results will be presented and discussed.

Within the two socio-demographic variables, age was expected to have an effect on those identity and ideology factors which were age-specific (i.e. importance of age; evaluation of age; age as a relevant group membership (i.e. identification with older people); collective efficacy; positive and negative social representations of older people) and on physical self-efficacy - as suggested in results from chapter five and eight. In addition, chronological age will affect perception of the barriers at the intragroup level, in which direct references to chronological age were made (e.g. "people of my age..."). However, chronological age will not have an impact upon willingness to participate in collective action - as illustrated in empirical findings in this research presented until now.

The second social demographic factor taken into account in the proposed model here, sex, will affect perceived effectiveness; and perception of barriers at the different levels, as was suggested by qualitative results in this study. Although in the previous chapter sex was not related to willingness to participate in collective action, previous literature had proposed sex as a possible predictor of collective action. Thus it will also predict willingness to participate in collective action.

It will be expected that identity and ideology variables will precede experience after 65, utility of collective action ('perceived effectiveness of collective action'),

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"Perception of the barriers" refers to the new variable computed in chapter nine (section 9.3.2) which conflates applicability and permeability (i.e. a strong barrier equates with less permeability and more applicability; a weak barrier with more permeability and less applicability).
perceived barriers and willingness to participate in collective action. They will account for more experience after 65 (real behaviour). For instance, high political efficacy will explain for more actual behaviour, with the exception of political trust and negative social representations, in which low scores will relate to more experience in collective action. In the same way they will affect the perception of effectiveness of collective action.

In relation to perception of barriers a number of predictors can be derived from the results presented in chapter ten. Strong barriers at the intraindividual level will be predicted by high importance of age; low collective orientation; low general self-efficacy; and low political efficacy. Strong barriers at the interpersonal level will be predicted by low general self-efficacy and political efficacy. Strong barriers at the intragroup level will be affected by both positive and negative social representations of older people; low collective and political efficacy. With regard to perception of strong barriers at the intergroup level, these will be predicted by more identification with older people; low political efficacy; and negative social representations of older people. Finally, strong barriers at the societal level will be predicted by more identification with older people; negative social representations of older people; low political efficacy and political trust. Thus, it is expected that political efficacy will be the only variable predicting each of the five levels of perceived barriers.

As suggested in the previous chapter, it is also expected that collective orientation, collective efficacy, and political efficacy will be the most pervasive predictors of willingness to participate in collective action. Each of these embodies the dilemma implicit in the individual-social/group dimensions of one's identity structure.

Actual behaviour (previous experience after 65) will have a notable effect upon perceived effectiveness of collective action - as suggested from the qualitative study in this thesis. In addition, it is expected that actual behaviour will be linked to perception of barriers and that it will have a profound impact upon willingness to participate in collective action.
Willingness to participate in collective action will be strongly predicted by previous experience after 65 and perceived effectiveness of collective action, as suggested by previous findings in this research and existing literature.

Finally, since the previous study in this thesis suggested barriers may ultimately influence willingness to participate in collective action, it was expected that perceived barriers at each of the five levels will operate as moderator variables. That is, the differential effect of perceived effectiveness of collective action on willingness to participate in collective action is a function of perception of barriers. Moreover, it was expected that both previous experience after 65 and perceived effectiveness of collective action would be two important mediators of the effect of identity and ideology variables upon willingness to participate in collective action.

The form of moderation assumed was linear (Baron & Kenny, 1986). This was tested by conducting a series of five regressions between perceived effectiveness (as IV), barriers at one specific level (moderator) and the interaction of perceived effectiveness x barrier at the specific level on willingness to participate in collective action. For this, each of the variables were centred (mean of the variable= '0'), indicating that “the unstandardized regression coefficient for the independent variable reflects its influence on the dependent variable at the average value of the moderator variable” (Jaccard, Turrisi & Wan, 1990, p. 34).

11.2 Results
In the interest of clarity, patterns of relationships will be described by distinguishing between blocks, although path diagrams need to be seen as part of an integral whole. A series of nested stepwise regressions were performed. The resultant path diagrams are presented in figures 11.2-11.6, which were constructed by only using significant beta weights obtained from the regression analyses.
11.2.1 Predictors of identity and ideology variables

Figure 11.2 shows the predictions of identity and ideology variables, which were only accounted by age. The highest effect size of the variance accounted was for age as a relevant group membership, i.e. ‘older people’ and physical self-efficacy ($R^2 = .10$ for each); age was positively related to age as a relevant group membership ($\beta = .33$) and negatively related to physical self-efficacy ($\beta = - .32$), indicating that those who were older would present higher identification with ‘older people’ and perceive less physical self-efficacy. In addition, age accounted for 2% of variability in each of the variables of importance of age ($\beta = .15$) and collective efficacy ($\beta = -.14$), indicating that those who were older would perceive age to be more important and present lower collective efficacy, as predicted. Despite what had been predicted, no significant results were obtained either for evaluation of age or social representations of older people.

11.2.2 Predictors of actual behaviour (experience after 65)

Figure 11.3 shows that predictors of actual behaviour (‘experience after 65’) included both identity and ideology factors, explaining 7% of variance. In particular, less importance of age accounted for more participation in action ($\beta = -.16$), suggesting that importance of other aspects of older people’s identity structure rather than age are more likely to influence older people’s decisions on their actions taken. Besides, the path diagram (Figure 11.2) points to the possibility that importance of age mediated the effect of age upon experience after 65. High political efficacy ($\beta = .22$) and low political trust ($\beta = -.13$) were also predictive of actual behaviour. Unexpectedly, negative social representations positively related to experience after 65 ($\beta = .13$), suggesting they encourage participation in collective action. In order to explain this, one could make an analogy with negative identity, in which negativism would not involve avoiding social contacts but encourage direct confrontation against external sources (Breakwell, 1986).
11.2.3 Predictors of perceived effectiveness of collective action

Perceived effectiveness (Figure 11.4) was directly predicted by variables from each of the previous blocks, accounting for 30% of the variance: being female led to more perceived effectiveness (β= .15). Both identity and ideology variables predicted effectiveness. In particular, high collective orientation (β= .11), high political efficacy (β= .22) and positive social representations (β= .16) predicted more perceived effectiveness of collective action. Collective efficacy (β= .09, ns) was also selected by the model but was statistically insignificant and therefore could not be regarded as a significant predictor of perceived effectiveness. Political efficacy was the variable which on its own explained a higher percentage of the total variance of perceived effectiveness (8.8%) when compared to the remaining identity and ideology variables.

Finally, more experience in collective action (β= .38) led to more perceived effectiveness of collective action. Previous experience was shown to be an important predictor, since it alone explained 14% of the total variance of effectiveness of collective action, as was expected. Previous experience seemed to mediate the effect of four identity and ideology variables (i.e. political efficacy; political trust; importance of age and negative social representations).

11.2.4 Predictors of barriers

Figure 11.5a-e shows a network of relationships predicting perception of barriers at five levels. In the interest of clarity, each level is presented in a separate diagram. The different predictors had medium effect sizes for each level, i.e. intraindividual (R²= .20), interpersonal (R²= .10), intragroup (R²= .10), intergroup (R²= .15) and societal (R²= .18). As expected (Figure 11.5a), perceived barriers at the intraindividual level were predicted by sex, identity variables and previous experience: men (β= -.15) were more likely to perceive barriers at the intraindividual level as weaker; low levels of general self-efficacy (β= .20)\(^{26}\), political efficacy (β= .18) and collective efficacy (β= .11) predicted stronger barriers at the intraindividual level.

\(^{26}\)A positive beta weight indicates more permeability and less applicability (i.e. weak barriers). Thus, high levels of general self-efficacy are associated with more permeability and less applicability, i.e. weak barriers and low levels of general self-efficacy are associated with less permeability and more applicability (i.e. strong barriers). This logic applies to each of the variables.
Political trust ($\beta = -0.09$, ns) was also selected by the model but was statistically insignificant. Finally, previous experience also predicted perception of barriers at the intraindividual level ($\beta = 0.27$), i.e. less experience led to stronger barriers perceived at the mentioned level, and experience seemed to mediate the effect of importance of age, political efficacy, political trust and negative social representations. As was expected, prevalence of efficacy variables in the prediction of barriers at this level was confirmed, general self-efficacy and political efficacy each alone accounting for higher percentage of variance when compared to the other predictors (e.g. general self-efficacy explained 5.5% of the total variance), with the exception of previous experience which accounted for 6% of the total variance. However, neither importance of age nor collective orientation emerged as predictors of barriers at the intraindividual level.

As predicted (Figure 11.5b), perception of barriers at the interpersonal level were also predicted by sex, general self-efficacy, political efficacy and previous experience. Those being male ($\beta = -0.13$), presenting low general self-efficacy ($\beta = 0.23$), low political efficacy ($\beta = 0.14$) and less experience after 65 ($\beta = 0.11$) led to perceiving stronger barriers at the interpersonal level. Additionally, positive evaluation of age led to stronger barriers at the interpersonal level ($\beta = -0.10$). General self-efficacy appeared to be the most important predictor (alone it accounted for half the total variance of perceived barriers at the interpersonal level):

Figure 11.5c shows that perception of barriers at the intragroup level were predicted by age ($\beta = -0.12$), political efficacy ($\beta = 0.25$) and collective efficacy ($\beta = 0.15$) in the expected direction: being older, presenting low political efficacy and low collective efficacy led to perception of stronger barriers. Contrary to what was predicted, social representations of older people were not revealed as significant predictors of barriers at this level.

Figure 11.5d shows that barriers at the intergroup level were predicted by sex, political efficacy, negative social representations and age as relevant to group membership, as expected: being male ($\beta = -0.14$), low political efficacy ($\beta = 0.29$), more identification
with older people ($\beta = -0.13$) and negative social representations ($\beta = -0.14$) were associated with perception of stronger barriers.

Finally, in Figure 11.5e it is shown that perceived barriers at the societal level were only predicted by two identity variables: political efficacy and identification with older people, as predicted (although negative social representations of older people and political trust were not shown as predictors). High identification with ‘older people’ ($\beta = -0.13$) and low political efficacy ($\beta = 0.42$) led to perception of stronger barriers at the societal level. Like with each of the other group levels (i.e. intragroup and intergroup), political efficacy appeared to be an important predictor, the alpha value being higher for barriers at the societal level. Moreover, two variables appeared to be mediators of the relationship of age upon barriers at four different levels, i.e. collective efficacy seemed to mediate the effect of age upon perceived barriers at both intraindividual and intragroup levels; and identification with older people mediating the effect of age upon both intergroup and societal levels of perceived barriers.

Perception of barriers at each level did not operate as moderator variables. Results obtained from five regressions for each separate level of perceived barriers showed that the interaction of perceived effectiveness and perception of the barriers for each level on willingness to participate in collective action was not significant when entered together with perceived effectiveness and perceived barriers. The moderator hypothesis was not supported [moderator variables for each level: intraindividual level ($\beta = 0.07$, ns); interpersonal level ($\beta = 0.00$, ns); intragroup level ($\beta = 0.02$, ns); intergroup level ($\beta = 0.02$, ns); societal level ($\beta = 0.05$, ns)].

11.2.5 Predictors of willingness to participate in collective action

Finally, willingness to participate in collective action had 57% of variance accounted for (Figure 11.6), which can be considered as very satisfactory. It was directly predicted by five variables derived from each block, with the exception of demographic variables. They were political trust, previous experience after 65, perceived effectiveness of collective action and perceived barriers at the
intraindividual and intragroup levels. Low political trust ($\beta = .09$), more experience ($\beta = .43$) and higher perceived effectiveness ($\beta = .34$) predicted more willingness to participate in collective action, the latter two predictors being the most pervasive ones. Besides, perception of strong barriers at the intraindividual level ($\beta = .22$) predicted less willingness to participate in collective action, whereas perception of strong barriers at the intragroup level ($\beta = -.10$) predicted more willingness to engage in collective action. Both collective orientation ($\beta = .06$, ns) and political efficacy ($\beta = .01$, ns) were also selected by the model but were statistically insignificant. However, as described below, they acted indirectly on willingness to participate in collective action through other variables.

Experience after 65, perceived effectiveness of collective action and perceived barriers at the intraindividual and intragroup levels seemed to mediate the effect of sociodemographic, identity and ideology variables upon willingness to participate in collective action. The effect of political efficacy upon willingness was mediated by previous experience, perceived effectiveness and perceived barriers at both the intraindividual and intragroup levels. Political trust was mediated by experience after 65. Collective orientation was mediated by perceived effectiveness. Collective efficacy was mediated by perceived barriers at the intraindividual and intragroup level, being itself the mediator of the effect of age on perceived barriers at the intraindividual and intragroup levels. General self-efficacy was mediated by perceived barriers at the intraindividual level.
Table 11.1: Summary of sub-analyses for the path analyses of factors in the study of collective action.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome variable*</th>
<th>Adj R²</th>
<th>F Value</th>
<th>Significance</th>
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<td><strong>Identity and Ideology:</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Importance of age</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>7.90</td>
<td>&lt;.01</td>
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<tr>
<td>Age as a relevant group membership ('older people')</td>
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<td>40.64</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collective efficacy</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>7.07</td>
<td>&lt;.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical self-efficacy</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>38.29</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Actual behaviour:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Previous experience after 65</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>6.82</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Utility:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Perceived effectiveness of collective action</td>
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<td>24.88</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Barriers:</strong></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intraindividual level</td>
<td>.20</td>
<td>15.22</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
</tr>
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<td>Interpersonal level</td>
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<td>Intragroup level</td>
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<td>Societal level</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>38.26</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
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<tr>
<td>Willingness to participate in collective action</td>
<td>.57</td>
<td>63.63</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

* Only the outcome variables with the significant F-value are listed.

Previous experience after 65 also seemed to mediate the effect of negative social representations and importance of age, this latter being itself the mediator of the effect of age upon previous experience after 65. Additionally, sex was mediated by perceived effectiveness and barriers at the intraindividual level and experience after 65 was also mediated by perceived effectiveness and barriers at the intraindividual level. Finally, age seemed to be mediated by perceived barriers at the intragroup level and positive social representations by perceived effectiveness of collective action.

11.3 Discussion

Five key findings can be outlined:

- The path diagrams confirmed that willingness to participate in collective action is predicted by different social psychological factors, being directly predicted by political trust, previous experience of collective action, perceived effectiveness of collective action and perceived barriers at the intraindividual and intragroup levels; and indirectly predicted by socio-demographic, identity and ideology variables.
• The fact that perceived barriers operating at both the intraindividual and intragroup level emerged as direct predictors of collective action shows that the integration of both identity and social representational factors need to be taken into account in the explanation of collective action.

• The temporal dimension of one's identity and subjective interpretation of the utility of a specific collective action had an important role in the prediction of collective action: previous experience of collective action and perceived effectiveness resulted as two powerful predictors of willingness to engage in collective action. Together with perceived barriers at the intraindividual level, they were often mediators of socio-demographic, identity and ideology variables.

• Perceived barriers were explained by three types of predictor variables: socio-demographics, identity-ideology and previous experience of collective action. The concept of barriers, therefore, is not only related to physical aspects of older people's identity structure (i.e. age, sex) but also to the way older people give meaning to their identity, their belief systems and experiences. However, perceived barriers were not predicted with the fourth type of predictor, i.e. perceived effectiveness of collective action. This made it possible to conclude that perception of barriers and perceived effectiveness of collective action are independent of each other when predicting willingness to participate in collective action.

• Importance of processes operating and shaping the content and value dimensions of the structure of identity in the context of collective action was revealed. In particular, both individual and collective elements of the efficacy principle (self-efficacy and collective efficacy) were substantial predictors of perceived barriers at different levels.

Throughout this thesis, it has been emphasised that most of the previous social psychological studies that have attempted to explain collective action have failed to examine the nature of the complex interactions that would need to be encompassed by
a comprehensive model of collective action. For instance, those that emphasised
previous experience: e.g. Muller & Opp, 1986; Wolfsfeld, 1986a; perceived
effectiveness of collective action: e.g. Marsh, 1977; self-efficacy: e.g. Bandura &
Wood, 1989; group identification: e.g. Kawakami & Dion, 1993; Kelly & Kelly, 1994;
Kelly & Breinlinger, 1995; collective efficacy: e.g. Muller & Opp, 1986; Rodriguez et
al., 1993; political efficacy: e.g. Barnes et al., 1979; Wolf et al., 1986; political trust:
e.g. Zimmerman & Reppaport, 1988; Parry, et al., 1992; and collective orientation:
e.g. Kelly & Kelly, 1994). The work presented here was designed to allow for an
examination of the interactions and relationships between a number of these variables
which have been shown by others to be significant in explaining participation in
collective action.

The previous chapter had presented a series of relationships between each of
theoretical variables and this predictive model made it possible to build relationships
through different stages. Below are discussed findings obtained by distinguishing
between each of the stages in order to gain clarity of the results.

Predictors of identity and ideology variables
Age was the only predictor. It seemed to only affect identity variables which were age
specific, i.e. importance of age; collective efficacy; age as a relevant group
membership and physical self-efficacy. Age mostly accounted for the two latter
variables. However, it was expected that age would predict the evaluation of age and
social representations but no significant results were obtained for this prediction. The
fact that older people presented stronger identification with the group of older people
was in line with research by Bultena & Powers (1978). These authors, basing their
study on the concept of ‘denial of ageing’ (chapter two), showed that there was less
resistance to the identification with ‘old’ among the older people in the sample.

Predictors of actual behaviour (experience after 65)
Previous experience was mostly predicted by social beliefs, in particular by low
political trust and negative social representations of older people. However, the
direction obtained with the latter was not as expected. Negative social representations of older people related positively with more actual behaviour, which as pointed out before may account for negativism as encouraging direct confrontation with the outside world (Breakwell, 1986). In addition, the beta weight of political efficacy was rather high when compared with the other significant predictors, showing that it is a strong predictor of actual behaviour in collective action. Moreover, in line with results obtained in the previous chapter when both political efficacy and political trust were considered together in a regression analysis for intentional behaviour, it was confirmed their co-joint influence for actual behaviour, as well as future behaviour (e.g. Marsh, 1977, Muller 1982).

Finally, the fact that less importance of age predicted more participation in action showed how age may not necessarily be the most important aspect of older people's identity structure directing participation in collective action.

Predictors of perceived effectiveness of collective action

A substantial percentage of variance was accounted for by this factor. In particular, it was shown that women were more likely to predict higher perceived effectiveness of collective action. This may have implications for their potential for engaging in collective action when compared with men and to even empower themselves. In particular, in the UK there is evidence of a high number of organisations being mostly constituted by women (e.g. Walker & Naegele, 1999).

Also as predicted, previous experience had a remarkable effect upon perceived effectiveness, in line with results obtained in the qualitative study in this thesis. And again, political efficacy appeared to be a stronger predictor when compared with the rest of predictors. Others in the identity and ideology variables were high collective orientation and positive social representations of older people.
Chapter Eleven

Predictors of barriers
Perceived barriers overall were explained by socio-demographic, identity and ideology and previous experience of collective action. Political efficacy was the only predictor common to each of the five levels, being stronger for those levels situated at a group dimension (i.e. intragroup, intergroup, societal). More specifically, low political efficacy was related to stronger barriers at each of the levels. Overall, the remaining significant predictors of barriers among identity and ideology variables were shown to predict in similar ways as shown in correlations between these variables and barriers in chapter ten. For instance, identification with older people negatively predicted barriers at the intergroup and societal levels (as suggested by SIT; Turner 1999); high general efficacy was related to weaker barriers at the individual level.

With regard to socio-demographic factors, sex was shown to be an important predictor of perceived barriers. In particular, it was shown that men were more likely to predict barriers at the intraindividual, interpersonal and intergroup levels than women. Also, as expected, chronological age was related to barriers at the intragroup level, i.e. older people in the sample predicted for stronger barriers at the intragroup level.

Importance of efficacy variables was specially shown for intraindividual (collective efficacy, general self-efficacy, political efficacy), interpersonal (general self-efficacy, political efficacy) and intragroup levels (collective efficacy, political efficacy). Each on their own accounted for a high percentage of the variance of the barrier operating at the respective level. Thus, the importance of processes operating in the structure of older people’s identity was confirmed, as predicted by IPT.

Finally, previous experience was revealed as an important contributor of perception of barriers (especially at the intraindividual level): less experience led to stronger barriers perceived at the intraindividual and interpersonal levels. Its importance was enhanced by the fact it mediated the effect of some of the identity and ideology variables (i.e. importance of age, political efficacy, political trust, negative social representations).
Direct predictors of willingness to participate in collective action

Although among the identity and ideology variables political trust appeared as the best predictor of collective action, it was revealed that previous experience after 65, perceived effectiveness of the four actions and barriers at the intraindividual level were the strongest predictors. In the qualitative study of this research these latter ones had also emerged as important factors. Both previous experience and perceived effectiveness had also been regarded as powerful predictors of collective action by previous research (e.g. Marsh, 1977, Wolfsfeld, 1986a). However, this research made it possible to study them among a wider and more complex set of variables, in which as predicted it was also shown that both previous experience and perceived effectiveness mediated the effect of socio-demographic, identity and ideology variables upon willingness to participate in collective action.

In addition, the fact that perception of barriers at the intragroup level was a direct predictor of willingness to participate in collective action, i.e. strong barriers predicting more willingness, shows that when people are willing to engage in collective action they can still perceive barriers (in line with findings from chapter ten). Within this particular situation, this could be explained in terms of a negative identity as before with social representations and experience in behaviour. It needs to be acknowledged that barriers at the intragroup level did not have a strong effect on willingness to participate (low beta weight), as one might expect. In chapter ten it was shown barriers at the intragroup level and willingness to participate in collective action were not significantly correlated.

Furthermore, within this predictive model, the importance of variables such as political efficacy, collective efficacy and collective orientation acting indirectly on willingness to participate in collective action was revealed in comparison to other theoretical ones such as group identification with older people or age. Similarly, Miller, et al., (1980) demonstrated that the important determinants of participation among older people are political and not personal (i.e. political and collective efficacy) and that age identification is irrelevant in this prediction. This suggests that age
related factors alone do not prevent political involvement. More recently, the importance of collective efficacy in the study of collective action has already been pointed out (e.g. Reykowski, 1998). Mummendey et al. (1999) provided an integrated model of relative deprivation and social identity theories and it was suggested group efficacy to predict actual and intentional behaviour and to play a crucial role in theories attempting to explain collective action. Additionally, Duncan (1999) has also shown collective orientation is an important predictor of collective action.

Despite what was predicted, barriers did not operate as moderator variables, that is, the differential effect of perceived effectiveness of collective action on willingness to participate in collective action was not a function of perception of barriers. Instead, both perceived effectiveness and barriers predicted independently willingness to participate in collective action. This will be further discussed in the following chapter.

To conclude, the content of identification and value attached to several aspects of identity appeared to play an important role in predicting collective action. This accounted for identity as a dynamic identity, in which it was shown how other aspects embodied in the structure of identity not directly related to age also affect older people's choice for engaging in collective action (e.g. previous experience, political efficacy, political trust, collective orientation). Thus, the prediction of collective action encompasses an overall identity-structure.

Moreover, this study brought to light the fact that there are individual differences among older people, and these reside in the way older people interpret and give meaning to their identity and position within society (i.e. social representations), as well as the motivation to engage in collective action, ultimately predicted by barriers operating at different levels, including both identity and representational factors.
Figure 11.1: Proposed model of collective action.

- Block of variables which includes five levels: Intraindividual, interpersonal, intragroup, intergroup, societal.

-** Block of variables which includes: Importance of age, evaluation of age, age as a relevant group membership, collective orientation, collective efficacy, general self-efficacy, physical self-efficacy, political efficacy, political trust, positive social representations, negative social representations.

-*** Dashed line shows that variable is expected to predict or be predicted by some but not all of the variables in the block.

- Solid line shows that variable is expected to predict or be predicted by all of the variables in the block.
Figure 11.2: Predictors of Identity and Ideology*

**Socio-Demographics**

- **Age**
  - Importance of age
    - $R^2 = .02$
  - Evaluation of age
  - Age as a relevant group membership: “older people”
    - $R^2 = .10$
  - Collective Orientation
- **Sex**
  - Collective Efficacy
    - $R^2 = .02$
  - General Self-Efficacy
  - Physical Self-Efficacy
    - $R^2 = .10$
  - Political Efficacy
  - Political Trust
  - Positive Social Representations
  - Negative Social Representations

**Identity and Ideology**

- Experience after 65
- Effectiveness

**Barriers**

- Intraindividual
  - Willingness to participate in collective action
- Interpersonal
- Intragroup
- Intergroup
- Societal

* $R^2$ figures are adjusted
Figure 11.3: Predictors of Experience after 65

Socio-Demographics

Identity and Ideology

Barriers

- Age
- Sex

Importance of age
Evaluation of age
Age as a relevant group membership: “older people”
Collective Orientation
Collective Efficacy
General Self-Efficacy
Physical Self-Efficacy
Political Efficacy
Political Trust
Positive Social Representations
Negative Social Representations

Experience after 65
R² = 0.07

Effectiveness

Intraindividual
Interpersonal
Intragroup
Intergroup
Societal

Willingness to participate in collective action

*R² figures are adjusted
Figure 11.4: Predictors of perceived effectiveness of collective action

Socio-Demographics

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Identity and Ideology</th>
<th>Barriers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>Age</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Evaluation of age</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex</td>
<td>Experience after 65</td>
<td>Willingness to participate in collective action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Effectiveness</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>R² = .30</td>
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</table>

- Age as a relevant group membership: "older people"
- Collective Orientation
- Collective Efficacy
- General Self-Efficacy
- Physical Self-Efficacy
- Political Efficacy
- Political Trust
- Positive Social Representations
- Negative Social Representations

*R² figures are adjusted
Figure 11.5a-e: Predictors of perceived barriers*

**Figure 11.5a**

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>Identity and Ideology</th>
<th>Bars</th>
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**Figure 11.5b**

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<th>Bars</th>
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<td>Sex</td>
<td>Experience after 65</td>
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<td>Interpersonal R² = .10</td>
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**Figure 11.5c**

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<th>Bars</th>
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<td>Intragroup R² = .10</td>
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433
*R² figures are adjusted.
Figure 11.6: Predictors of willingness to participate in collective action*

Socio-Demographics  | Identity and Ideology  | Barriers

Age  | Importance of age  | R²=.02  
   | Evaluation of age  
   | Age as a relevant group membership: older people  
   | Collective Orientation  
   | Collective Efficacy  | R²=.02  
   | Sex    
   | General Self-Efficacy  
   | Physical Self-Efficacy  
   | Political Efficacy  
   | Political Trust  
   | Positive Social Representations  
   | Negative Social Representations  
   | Experience after 65  | R²=.07  
   | Effectiveness  | R²=.30  

Intraindividual  | R²=.20  
   | Interpersonal  
   | Intragroup  | R²=.10  
   | Intergroup  
   | Societal  

Willingness to participate in collective action  | R²=.57  

*R² figures are adjusted  
Note: Thicker lines show direct predictors.
Chapter Twelve

Discussion

"Always keep Ithaca fixed in your mind.
  To arrive there is your ultimate goal.
  But do not hurry the voyage at all.
  It is better to let it last for long years;
  and even to anchor at the isle when you are old,
  rich with all that you have gained on the way,
  not expecting that Ithaca will offer you riches."

C.P. Cavafy (Konstantinos P. Kabaphes); (1863-1933); Ithaca.

The current research was initiated to elucidate the processes involved in collective action among older people. It was suggested that previous social psychological studies that have attempted to explain collective action have failed to examine the nature of the complex interactions that would need to be encompassed by a comprehensive model of collective action. The model presented here allowed for an examination of the interactions and relationships between a number of social psychological factors which have been shown by previous research to be significant in explaining participation in collective action.

The research reported in this thesis mapped the complex relationships between identity and representational aspects among older people in the context of collective action. This was achieved by adopting an innovative approach which took into account perceived subjective barriers to participation in collective action. These conceptually embodied both identity and representational components.

The contribution this has made to existing research is twofold: (i) it has contributed towards the development of a social psychological theory on collective action and (ii) within the context of collective action extended the understanding of social
psychological processes operating in older people’s identity structure and belief systems. This research suggested a working model from which collective action could be studied.

In this chapter, the main points emerging from the study, both theoretical and methodological, and the benefits of the research are discussed. Following this discussion there are recommendations for future research.

12.1 The empirical findings and theoretical issues raised

This discussion examines insights gained from the data collected with older people in order to explain the generation of collective action and the contribution which this has made to the theoretical concepts discussed earlier. In this thesis, theoretical constructs adopted from existing research were used within a specific theoretical framework, i.e. Identity Process Theory (IPT) (Breakwell, 1986, 1988, 1992a, 1993) and Social Representations Theory (SRT) (Moscovici, 1961, 1984, 1988).

Weaknesses of some of the existing models of collective action were addressed by conceptual and methodological refinements. The process of refinement was reflected in each of the three studies conducted in this thesis, the earlier studies informing the development of later ones.

12.1.1 Phenomenology of collective action

In chapter three it was explicitly demonstrated how the concept of collective action has been conceptualised and operationalised in different ways under the influence of the reviewed theoretical traditions. The need for a robust concept of collective action which could integrate both the individual and group elements noted by previous research seemed necessary in order to proceed with theoretical development in this area. The first aim was to establish the extent to which older people engage in different types of collective action. As part of the above mentioned process of
refinement of the concept of collective action, this was firstly measured in a similar way to the one used by existing theories under a more rationalistic approach (e.g. Marsh, 1977; Barnes et al., 1979; Wolfsfeld et al., 1994). Within these theories, the conceptual and operational definition of collective action was obtained by the list of types of activities. In the first study participants were presented with a list of activities and asked about previous experience. This was used as the outcome variable when related to organisation membership (Trela, 1971; Marsh, 1977; Powell & Thorson, 1990; Jerrome, 1992; Jirovec & Erich, 1992; Park, 1995) and disability (e.g. Schur, 1998; Shields et al., 1998). From that study, older people were classified according to 'active' (more demanding and collective) and 'passive' (less demanding and individual). Previous research had also distinguished between typologies of individuals in relation to political participation (e.g. Barnes et al., 1979; Wolfsfeld, 1986a). Furthermore, both past and intentional behaviour were shown to be relevant for the study of collective action in the second study. This directed the way collective action was conceptualised for the final study of this research, in which an integrative predictive model of collective action was presented: previous experience was considered as an independent variable in order to predict willingness to participate in collective action (e.g. Fox & Schofield, 1989; Hinkle et al., 1996). Thus, in this thesis previous experience has been used as both an independent and dependent variable at the different stages of the process for obtaining a more sophisticated definition of the phenomenology of collective action.

In chapter seven (qualitative study) the meaning attached to different types of action among older people was identified. This led to the decision to include a measure of collective action which responded to the distinction between type of action (individual-group) and type of goal (collective change-collective expression). This highlighted the fact that there are other types of collective actions which are not contemplated by previous research but which are perceived to be collective action by older people. Hence, the need to take into account the subjective meaning a particular action has for the individual emerged as an important theoretical contribution to the conceptualisation of collective action. Moreover, some of the identified actions
highlight the fact that older people do not necessarily opt for the formal channels considered by most of the existing literature reporting on collective action amongst older people (e.g. Jirovec & Erich, 1992; Park, 1995). This was also confirmed in the last study of this thesis; it was shown how an action located at an individual-collective expression dimension (i.e. ‘explain to other people about the importance of a problem’) was associated with a high degree of willingness to participate on it amongst the participants. In addition, the distinction between individual and group actions seemed to be more powerful than the one between collective expression-collective change, since it allowed for explanation of the differences encountered for each of the actions in terms of degree of willingness, perceived effectiveness of the actions and number of perceived barriers to engaging in each of the actions. For example, it was revealed that more willingness to participate in collective action followed the order from individual to group actions, i.e. the actions of ‘writing to the MP’ and ‘explain to other people about the importance of a problem’ (located at an individual level) were mostly preferred than the actions of ‘join an informal discussion group’ and ‘join a group demonstrating’ (located at a group level).

The application of this new classification of types of collective action was demonstrated in the last study of this research: Guttman scaling measure on ‘willingness to participate in collective action’ proved to be a valid and reliable instrument to measure collective action. Thus, one of the significant contributions of this research is that the re-definition of the concept of collective action also permitted methodological development of the construct. This may have implications for the measurement of collective action in future larger scale research.

Moreover, results obtained from each of the studies within this thesis showed how some older people can opt for each of the different types of action interchangeably. This is supported by Olsen’s (1982) identification of six dimensions of political participation, claiming that they do not occur in isolation from one another. This was an important assumption underlying the conceptualisation and operational definition of types of collective action in this thesis.
Finally, it was clear from the last two studies conducted in this research programme that in the study of collective action one needs to take into account behaviour that takes place outside the domain of party politics and therefore move forward towards a natural ecology of political and economic behaviour (Breakwell, 1992b).

### 12.1.2 Social psychological determinants of collective action

The above theoretical distinction of types of collective action was an important contribution to existing theorisations of the construct. However, in this thesis, this consideration was not the aim, but the means by which possible relationships between social psychological variables could be explored and a model of collective action developed and tested.

This research programme commenced by making three basic assertions: (i) the need to study differences among older people and avoid any assumption which regards older people as an homogeneous group (e.g. supported by Baltes & Baltes' (1990) model of selective optimisation with compensation reviewed in chapter two), (ii) the importance of conceptualising identity and attitudes among older people as dynamic constructs and study how they can act as either facilitators or barriers of social change; (iii) that chronological age alone is not an influential factor in determining collective action (e.g. Peterson & Somit, 1992a), which was supported also from results obtained in study one (chapter five). In parallel, when existing research on collective action was reviewed, it was shown that the social psychological factors various theories had drawn attention to are situated at different levels, ranging from an individual to a societal level. The problem identified with those theories was that there was no explicit recognition of the potential role of factors other than the ones they were specifically concerned with and no explicit recognition of factors being situated at different levels and the way in which they may interact. This thesis intended to integrate some of the constructs in order to account for different levels (from individual to societal) in order to examine how they related to each other and predicted collective action.
Several aspects are worth mentioning, which are presented in separate sections below. These are referred to the innovative approach adopted here with the study of collective action by taking into account levels of analysis; identity and attitudinal aspects among older people as dynamic constructs; two possible routes for explaining the generation of collective action and a brief account with regard to instances of social change and types of actions.

12.1.2.1 Levels of analysis

The significance of the current research rests in the recognition of the need to differentiate between different levels of analysis when explaining the generation of collective action. In this research, an attempt was made to adopt more than one level of analysis in order to fully appreciate the nexus between the individual, the group and society. This was accomplished through the construct of barriers that are perceived to engaging in collective action. In study two (chapter eight) possible barriers perceived by older people to engaging in collective action were identified. These were classified in five levels, i.e. intraindividual, interpersonal, intragroup, intergroup and societal and it was shown how they included both identity and attitudinal aspects. The assumption of heterogeneity of older people was confirmed in this way of conceptualising barriers. For instance, in the qualitative study, perception of barriers appeared to differ in some occasions according to levels of political participation older people had (classified from the previous study in this thesis), e.g. participants using passive ways of political participation showed more direct references to their age as a barrier (intraindividual level). Another example can be mentioned in relation to the fact that different aspects of identity were enhanced and perceived to be barriers by different participants (e.g. nationality, gender) at the intragroup level. Besides, with regard to the relationship younger-older people identified as barriers at the intergroup level, younger non-accommodations were observed among some of the participants, whereas younger-accommodation was present among others. This latter aspect not only is relevant in terms of the assumption of heterogeneity claimed in this thesis, but also because it introduced the concept of permeability of perceived barriers. This was incorporated and tested in the final study of this research.
The importance of incorporating levels of analysis in the study of collective action was finally confirmed when a model of collective action was tested in chapter eleven. Perceived barriers at the intraindividual level and intragroup level were revealed as two direct predictors of collective action. These two levels reflected the importance of both individual and group levels in the study of collective action. These findings added to the existing literature the need to recognize the different factors in relation to the level they account for. In this way, it was shown how intraindividual and intragroup levels were both predicted by political efficacy and collective efficacy and how other factors were distinctive predictors for only one of them (age was a distinctive predictor of perceived barriers at the intragroup level and general self-efficacy was characteristic for perceived barriers at the intraindividual level). Moreover, each of the five levels of barriers showed how they were predicted by factors accounting for both individual (e.g., age, evaluation of age, general self-efficacy) and societal elements (e.g., negative social representations). Besides, existing literature has predicted that political efficacy is a good predictor of collective action (e.g., Marsh, 1977, Barnes et al., 1979; Wolf et al., 1986; Fiske, 1987), which was confirmed here. However, the model tested here allowed more information to be gained with the incorporation of levels of analysis: political efficacy was the only predictor common to each of the five levels of barriers, being stronger for those levels of barriers situated within a group dimension (low political efficacy was related to stronger barriers at each of the five levels).

Thus, the approach adopted here in terms of levels of analysis in the study of collective action has various theoretical implications. First, the incorporation of levels which included both identity and representational factors responded to the theoretical integration of both Identity Process Theory (Breakwell, 1986, 1988, 1992a, 1993) and the Social Representations Theory (Moscovici, 1961, 1984, 1988). The concept of barriers within this research accounted for the dynamic interaction of different aspects of the whole structure of identity (which is described in terms of both content and value dimensions and operating principles) and also to the dynamic nature of social representations of older people held by participants in the research. For instance, in
Chapter ten it was shown how identification with the group of older people was related to social representations of older people, and each of them would operate as barriers to collective action (since the concept of barriers included each of these identity and representational elements). Moreover, what is relevant in this study with regard to identity aspects, is that strength of identification (e.g. Kelly & Kelly, 1994; Simon et al., 1998) was shown to be only one aspect among others shaping and defining individual's identity. Thus, IPT enabled to account for this dynamicity, which deals with strength of identification but more importantly, also with other aspects (e.g. principle of efficacy; evaluative dimension of components). When the relationships between each of the identity and ideology factors and perception of barriers were examined, it was revealed not only that particular factors were associated with either stronger or weaker barriers, but also variability amongst individuals with regard to a determinate factor and perception of barriers was revealed (e.g. low collective orientation was related to stronger barriers at the intraindividual level). This again, supported heterogeneity among older people.

With regard to social representations of older people, in chapters seven (qualitative study) and ten (final study) an evaluative dimension of the content of social representations was revealed. In relation to perception of barriers it was shown how individuals who presented negative social representations of older people perceived barriers at a group level to be stronger than those who presented positive social representations. These barriers included elements of older people's identity, more specifically identification with older people and collective efficacy. This was a significant contribution to the integration of IPT and SRT: it was suggested that aspects of identity operated as an important barrier that distinguished between the social representations of older people held by participants in the study. In addition to this, the fact that barriers at the intraindividual and intragroup level seemed to operate as mediators of the effect of some identity factors (e.g. collective efficacy, general self-efficacy) enhanced again the conceptual relevance of barriers as integrators of both identity and representational elements.
Moreover, findings with regard to barriers demonstrated the need to re-define this complex construct and to account for subjective barriers. Existing models of collective action have either defined them in terms of personal costs and benefits (Klandermans & Oegema, 1987; Oegema & Klandermans, 1994) or used the group identity framework (Kelly & Breinlinger, 1996). In this research, the interrelationships between each of the levels of barriers with other social psychological factors were examined. Furthermore, the way in which perception of barriers was measured added also a new reformulation to the construct, since it took into account perceived permeability. It needs to be acknowledged, though, that another way of measuring perception of barriers would have been by not including barriers as a dichotomous variable and instead having asked respondents to indicate on a Likert-type scale how applicable they thought each of the barriers was. In this way, one could have been guaranteed more variability in responses and applicability could have been more easily studied independently of permeability in the model of collective action that was tested.

Finally, another methodological issue that needs to be mentioned is that, when interpreting the t-test results conducted in chapter ten, it should be borne in mind that statistical significance may not be psychologically significant. For example, when the means scores of the groups (positive and negative social representations) are 5.03 and 5.34 for perceived barriers at the interpersonal level (see Table 10.37, p. 388), it is unclear to what extent this is associated with for example either the operation of different psychological processes or a heightening of the same process.

12.1.2.2 Identity and attitudes among older people as dynamic constructs

The significance of the current research rests in the recognition of the need to differentiate between different aspects of identity within an identity structure and how the interactions between them will supply a meaning to older people’s identity structure. Collective action was found to be an important link to identity since it organises both the past experiences of individuals over time and their subjective interpretations. The temporal dimension of participants’ identity emerged as an
important aspect evolving in the context of social change. In particular, the notion of reminiscence was brought to light (chapter six). This included adaptive function (the past perceived as unique); negative reminiscence (memories were put into perspective) and social distance (participants in the research comparing themselves with other older people). This exemplifies how participants would re-define age-related aspects of their identity. Moreover, the assumption of temporal dimension in identity was brought forward throughout each of the three studies in the thesis with a common factor, i.e. previous experience, this also accounting for actual behaviour.

Findings from this research emphasised how identity encompasses a constellation of aspects that interact with each other, from group membership (studied in the first study in relation to organisation membership) and other general categories emerged in the second study (gender, being ‘British’). These various aspects confirmed that age is not the only definition of individuals’ identity and was another example of one of the assumptions with which this thesis commenced, i.e. heterogeneity among older people, since it was shown how some aspects were perceived as more important by some older people but not for others. Other important aspects addressing the subjective meaning of identity were revealed in the second study (e.g. identification with older people and evaluation of age; collective orientation, collective efficacy) which were studied in the third study. The whole identity structure was taken into account. It was demonstrated how several aspects of identity dynamically interact with each other (chapter ten). A relevant finding addressing IPT was that several aspects of the content of older people’s identity structure had a value attached to them, e.g. high importance of age was related to positive evaluations of age. This finding supported the process of accommodation to age, in which positive aspects of age are enhanced by participants who present strong identification with the group of older people (Furstenberg, 1994). In contrast, negative accommodation (Minichiello et al., 2000) was also observed through some interrelations: high importance of age was related to low collective efficacy and to general self-efficacy. When included in the model of collective action tested in the third study (chapter eleven) further interactions with other factors such as previous experience and perceived effectiveness of
collective action were revealed.

The dynamic nature of identity was also revealed in the current research in the fact that it can change across contexts. Identification with the group of older people was found to be more salient in the second study and very much related to participation in collective action. In the third study, it did not emerge as a significant predictor of willingness to participate in collective action (also, there was no significant relationship between identification with older people and collective efficacy). However, as observed before, its relevance was suggested to be mirrored through perceived barriers at the intragroup level, which were indeed revealed as significant predictors of participation in collective action. A possible explanation why in the second study the affect of group identification was more ‘visible’ may be due to the context in which it was conducted (Breakwell, 1986; Hogg & Turner, 1987a). The fact that each of the individuals taking part in the focus groups were ‘older’ might have been enough to have encouraged and prompted them to invoke identification with older people. This was shown to operate as a facilitator of collective action when older people express their desire to address and solve a wide range of social issues - not solely those that are age-specific.

Identity principles

In the second and third study the importance of processes operating and shaping the content and value dimensions of the structure of identity in the context of collective action was revealed. However, self-esteem was not specially salient within participants’ accounts when referring to the need to bring about social change (chapter six). The principles of efficacy and distinctiveness seemed to have a major impact on older people’s accounts of identity. These findings highlight the need in social psychology for examining the role of principles other than self-esteem in guiding identity processes and related behaviour, as suggested by IPT.
Importance of efficacy in the context of collective action

In particular, efficacy emerged as a significant principle. Both second and third studies suggest that a further factor needs to be considered when applying IPT in a specific context, i.e. the operation of identity principles within a dimension from the individual to the collective level. This was suggested more specifically for the principle of efficacy for the explanation of the generation of collective action amongst older people. In study two, it was suggested that collective efficacy could facilitate bringing about social change and when barriers to engaging in action were identified, self-efficacy emerged as a perceived barrier at the intraindividual level. When these factors were tested in the proposed model of collective action (chapter eleven), both individual and collective elements of the efficacy principle were seen to be substantial predictors of perceived barriers at different levels. It was shown both high collective and general self-efficacy were related to weaker barriers at the intraindividual level, this latter ones predicting more willingness to participate in collective action. Additionally, perceived barriers at the intragroup level seemed to mediate the effect of collective efficacy upon willingness to participate in collective action, i.e. low collective efficacy was related to perceived barriers at the intragroup level to be stronger, and these predicting more willingness to engage in action. Hence, this showed how efficacy could either facilitate or hinder willingness to participate in collective action depending on the effect of perceived barriers.

Similar findings in relation to the operation of identity principles within the dimension individual-collective have already been shown. This has been demonstrated in Speller’s (2000) study of place attachment and identity processes in the context of an enforced relocation. In particular, she found that the collective element of identity for each of the four principles was salient before people were relocated to a new place (i.e. collective distinctiveness, collective self-esteem, collective efficacy and collective continuity). After the relocation the personal element was more salient (i.e. individual distinctiveness, individual self-esteem, individual efficacy and individual continuity). This suggested that “not only do principles achieve priority according to the social context but also depending on whether the emphasis is on the personal or the social
Furthermore, when identity factors had been taken into account in order to distinguish the best discriminators between clusters of social representations in chapter ten, collective efficacy emerged as the most important factor. This not only has contributed to emphasise the importance of group-related aspects of identity through the principle of efficacy, but also about age-specific characteristics, since collective efficacy included references to the group of older people.

Finally, it needs to be remarked that the different elements of the efficacy principle considered in the last study of this research (chapter ten) were related to each other. A specific concern for future research will be to a further development of a measurement of efficacy in the context of collective action, as including several aspects (physical and general self-efficacy, collective efficacy, political efficacy).

Both content and processes of social representations of older people were suggested to have an impact on older people’s identity. Through the process of anchoring, individuals in the second study were shown to re-define the boundaries of the group of older people. New elements such as ‘being younger’, ‘more able for activity’ and ‘keeping intellectually stimulated’ were incorporated to the representations of older people into existing ways of thinking. Reviewed studies in chapter two had already acknowledged similar processes as a way to manage ageing (Furstenberg, 1994, Minichiello et al., 2000). Moreover, an evaluational dimension was shown to shape the content of social representations of older people, in which the importance and influence of the interactions with younger people was confirmed, as suggested by previous literature (Cai et al., 1998). Linked to this, in chapter ten it was shown how identity factors were positively related to positive social representations of older people and negatively related to negative social representations. It was suggested that there might be a dialectic relation between both identity and representational processes. However, further research is required in order to address this issue.
Thus, each of the studies in this thesis supported the notion that although chronological age is not a valid factor for explaining collective action, other age-related factors need to be taken into account, which refer to both identity and attitudinal aspects (e.g. importance and evaluation of age; collective efficacy, social representations of older people). Additionally, other aspects not directly referred to the process of ageing were also found important for explaining collective action (e.g. Trelfa, 1971; Bazargan et al., 1991; Peterson & Somit, 1992a; Jirovec & Erich, 1992, 1995; Rao, 1995). Examples of these were political efficacy and political trust. In conclusion, the prediction of collective action encompasses an overall identity-structure.

12.1.2.3 Two routes explaining the generation of collective action

It chapter eleven a failure of perceived barriers to act as moderators was revealed, i.e. the differential effect of perceived effectiveness of collective action on willingness to participate in collective action was not a function of perception of barriers. This has important theoretical and methodological implications.

Firstly, this was a crucial finding in the sense two alternative and independent routes in explaining the generation of collective action were confirmed. There was a lack of relationship between perceived barriers and perceived effectiveness of collective action.

One route was the one in which perceived effectiveness ultimately predicts willingness to participate in collective action. Theories reviewed in chapter three have accounted for the pervasive effect of this factor on the prediction of collective action (e.g. Marsh, 1977; Barnes et al., 1979; Wolfsfeld, 1986a; Schwartz & Paul, 1992). These theories have followed an individual and rationalistic approach, in which participation is seen as a rational choice; cost and benefits of participation are weighted by the individual. According to Klandermans’ model (e.g. Klandermans, 1984) expectations and values of selective costs and benefits directly influence willingness to participate, in which perceived effectiveness is addressed under the
‘collective motive’ construct.

The other route is the one in which barriers ultimately predict action. The significance of the current research rests in the recognition of the need to incorporate this route in the theorisation of collective action. This innovative alternative which incorporates levels of analysis in explaining the generation of collective action was shown to add new information to existing work in the study of collective action. Previous theorisations seem to have missed the fact that an action could be perceived as effective and predict more willingness, but still one should account for the effect of perceived barriers in explaining for this willingness (as suggested by Oegema & Klandermans, 1994), which presumably would be perceived to be weaker at the intraindividual level and stronger at the intragroup level, as shown in the tested model of collective action. Conversely, perceived ineffectiveness of collective action would be related to less willingness to participate in collective action but at the same time lack of intentional behaviour amongst participants would be related to stronger barriers at the intraindividual level and weaker barriers at the intragroup level.

Each of the three factors (perceived effectiveness, perceived barriers at the intraindividual level and perceived barriers at the intragroup level) were suggested to mediate the effect of other factors upon willingness to participate in collective action. One common factor appeared to be mediated by each of the three constructs, i.e. political efficacy. In addition, both sex and previous experience were mediated by both perceived effectiveness of collective action and perceived barriers at the intraindividual level; and collective efficacy was mediated by perceived barriers at both the intraindividual and intragroup levels. However, each of them distinctively mediated specific factors: collective orientation and positive social representations of older people were mediated by perceived effectiveness; general self-efficacy by perceived barriers at the intraindividual level and age by perceived barriers at the intragroup level. This again, emphasises how differently each of these constructs operate in the prediction of intentional participation and the need to take each of them into account as important predictors in the model of collective action.
In terms of methodological implications, in chapter ten it was suggested that perceived barriers at the intraindividual level might be more associated with old age than was intended, the stereotypes of older people being more strongly accessed at the intraindividual level. Additionally, the predictive model of collective action showed perceived barriers at the intraindividual level to be the strongest of any of the levels of barriers. These results suggest one possible limitation of the assessment of experimental demand characteristics introduced to the participants, in which they were asked whether the mention of age-related issues in the items of barriers led to overestimation of the magnitude of barriers. They were asked for an overall judgement, that is, the barriers were not considered in relation to the level at which they were situated. However, if the assessment of experimental demand characteristics had been conducted for each of the levels of barriers rather than for overall, one would have been able to assess whether the experimental demand characteristics varied across the different barriers, i.e. whether they were greater for some levels than for others. This other way of assessment might have been a strategy that potentially would have given some more information to account for the failure of perceived barriers to act as moderators. In this way also, one would have had more indication of why particular barriers triggered age-related issues.

12.1.2.4 Instances of social change and types of actions

A further implication of this work for the future development of theory in collective action is that attention should be paid not only to the context of instances of social change when collective action is measured, but also to the factors predicting different types of actions.

The need to consider the nature of type of action when studying several factors in the study of collective action was taken into account in several analyses conducted in chapter ten. An important innovation in those analyses presented in that chapter was the one in which profiles of barriers were explored in order to identify any commonalities and differences of perceived barriers across four types of actions. One of the interesting findings were that fewer barriers were perceived for individual
actions (i.e. ‘write to my MP’ and ‘explain to other people about the importance of the problem’) than for group actions (i.e. ‘join an informal discussion group’ and ‘join a group demonstrating’) and that perceived barriers at the group level (especially those at the intragroup level) were a common response pattern across each of the four types of actions. This latter finding suggests again that age as a relevant group membership (identification with older people) operates as a barrier for all types of actions among older people. This was also one example showing that age-related aspects can also hinder collective action together with other aspects that are not age-related (e.g. low political efficacy acting as an inhibitor for willingness to participate in collective action). Thus, the need to take into consideration each of the constellation of factors included in the model of collective action in this study was brought to light.

12.2 Critical reflections on methodological issues

12.2.1 Using a multi-methodological approach

The approach adopted in this thesis was to integrate qualitative and quantitative research. This was regarded as a fundamental methodological decision. Before discussing this integration, it seems pertinent to mention the principle of anything goes proposed by Feyerabend in his book “Against Method” (1975):

“It is clear, then, that the idea of a fixed method, or of a fixed theory of rationality, rests on too naïve a view of man and his social surroundings. To those who look at the rich material provided by history, and who are not intent on impoverishing it in order to please their lower instincts, their craving for intellectual security in the form of clarity, precision, ‘objectivity’, ‘truth’, it will become clear that there is only one principle that can be defended under all circumstances and in all stages of human development. It is the principle: anything goes.” (pp. 18-19).

Feyerabend’s words suggest that there is not a universal and fully truthful method and that we need to accept that all methodologies have their limits. Despite his much criticised anarchism in opposition to rationalism in the theory of knowledge, his postulations show always some kind of order, with clear aims which are exempt of any chaotic features. Moreover, the principle of “anything goes” can be argued to be a
good preface to the combination of both qualitative and quantitative methods when conducting research, leading towards an advancement in knowledge.

Several theorists have argued for a multi-methodological approach in the development of theory-testing in social psychology (e.g. Breakwell, 1992a, 1993; Reicher, 1994; Kelly & Breinlinger, 1996). This dialogue between qualitative and quantitative approaches has also been supported by several psychologists discussing specific qualitative methods within different disciplines such as health psychology (Smith, 1996b), feminist psychology (Griffin, 1995) and cognitive psychology (Green, 1995).

The position adopted in this thesis is that any existing strengths and limitations of both methods can complement each other and contribute to the advancement of knowledge and that neither method is superior to the other. The first study (quantitative) of this research facilitated the second study (qualitative) in both pragmatic terms (participants for the second study were screened from the first one) and theoretical terms (participants in the second study were classified according to results obtained from the first study, i.e. “active” and “passive” levels of political participation).

In addition, both the first and second studies of this thesis contributed to the development of the final quantitative study (e.g. providing a reliable instrument to measure collective action). At the same time, the three studies presented in this thesis provided different types of information, each of the studies complementing each other and being relevant at different stages in the research process (see Bryman, 1988). For instance, although the qualitative study was intended to be exploratory (e.g. identifying barriers to collective action), the analysis was intended to bring up some aspects which had been undiscovered or neglected in previous literature, giving rise to a new conceptual framework. Similarly, although some particular hypotheses were tested in the final quantitative study (e.g. association of perception of barriers with other theoretical variables such as collective efficacy), some of the statistical analyses explored patterns in the data (e.g. profiles of perceived barriers). Thus the thesis followed iterative cycles of exploration and testing. This has been advocated by
theorists such as Bryman (1988) and Hammersley (1996), in the sense that quantitative and qualitative researchers wrongly assume a single model of the research process and its products (e.g. assuming that quantitative research only pays attention to hypothesis testing). An example of the “methodological eclecticism” advocated by Hammersley can be found in a study by Reicher & Emmer (1986), in which a quantitative phase preceded qualitative research.

Another important issue to mention is the role of interpretation within each of the studies in this thesis. It cannot be denied that subjectivity is always present in the research process (e.g. Feyerabend, 1975; Hedges, 1985) and the researcher’s views consist of more than philosophical stance, school of thought, methodological strategies, theoretical interests, experiences, values and priorities. This applies to both quantitative and qualitative studies within this thesis. Reicher (1994) has argued that “interpretation is an inescapable part of any form of enquiry - quantitative as well as qualitative” (p. 300). Linked to this issue, it should be acknowledged that the researcher was in her mid twenties when the research was conducted and this might have affected the set of research questions which were formulated, as well as the answers obtained from a sample uniquely constituted by people who were older. Similarly, this might have affected the researcher’s interpretations of the data.

12.2.2 Researching with older people

The need from Social Psychology to pay attention to social context (e.g. Kressel, 1993) and to develop theory which is both relevant and valid in real life situations has already been urged (e.g. Lyons & Breakwell, 1996). Artificiality of research has been often attributed to existing research which relies on a very high percentage of social psychology’s subject pool. Sears (1986) suggests that many elements of the emerging social psychology concept of human nature may be artefacts of the field’s overuse of college student samples, specially in laboratory settings.

This research with older people was intended to contribute to the improvement of the ecological validity of social psychology. As Durkin (1995) points out, it draws the
researcher out of the laboratory (being easier as it is to study this particular section of the population in their natural context) and because it promotes to the generation of questions of practical import (e.g. retirement, widowhood) and facilitates the examination of diversity among older people.

Furthermore, in response to the need to study older people's views - claimed already by some social psychologists (e.g. Hansson, 1989; Coleman, 1993a; Pratt & Norris, 1994) and as shown in reviewed studies in chapter two, this thesis contributed to broaden this existing lacuna. Additionally, the position adopted was that older people are an heterogeneous section of the population and this was investigated for a particular section of older people by focusing on identity and attitudinal aspects in the context of collective action and intended to provide evidence to invalidate existing pre-conceptions and prototypes of older people portrayed as submissive and uninvolved with the community. However, it needs to be acknowledged that any research will always be implicitly impregnated by existing power relationships, specially when minority issues are involved with the samples one deals with. Thus, we need to bear in mind this question when drawing conclusions with this kind of research: “Does empirical research and theory effectively function to justify the status quo, or might it contribute to social change? (...) even research that purports to enable social change may unwittingly restate and function to cement control relationships” (Reid & Ng, 1999).

Finally, it needs to be acknowledged that the claim in this thesis that older people are heterogeneous in no way leads to the assumption that they are more heterogeneous than other age groups. Rather it contrasts with the majority of existing literature which treats older people as a homogeneous group. This thesis focused on older people's views of collective action and identified social psychological processes and factors involved in explaining the generation of collective action for this particular section of society.
12.2.2.1 Methodological implications

Literature bearing directly on potential errors in surveys with older people is sparse. When researching with older people, previous literature points out that: "...questions referring to personal topics such as family and work yield lower proportions of missing data than questions on political and social topics" (Herzog & Rodgers, 1992, p.71) and that the age-related increase in number of missing data is larger for questions that deal with attitudes (Herzog & Rodgers, 1992).

However, within this research missing data were not high, which questions and challenges the remarks posited by previous literature on how to do research with older people. In particular, it needs to be acknowledged that the administration of the questionnaire used within the last study was very time consuming - both for the researcher and participants, due to its length and complexity (specially for the section of barriers). However, not only was the response rate high but also there were hardly any missing data. The procedure used for administering the questionnaire indeed contributed to the success of such a large sample but still it does tell about older people as research participants. Their willingness to co-operate with the research, commitment and shown understanding in how to fill in the questionnaire is very encouraging for future research with older people, and it was particularly shown within this last study. This study was found to be a challenge to the above mentioned previous methodological recommendations in how to do research with older people. These type of arguments may underestimate older people's real and potential abilities to participate in surveys of diverse nature and complexity. However, it needs to be acknowledged that most of the participants of this research were from a medium-high social class background and were involved in different ways in a wide range of organisations, which have affected the conclusions drawn above. This latter aspect might have also affected conclusions drawn on the meaning of age, since they were better positioned to recognise and react to ageism and negative stereotypes of older people (Minichiello et al., 2000).
In order to guarantee that a good response rate was obtained, a few aspects were taken into account for researching with this specific section of the population, such as the font format in the questionnaires being large enough, try to keep simple wording and avoiding double-negative questions, as suggested by Herzog & Rodgers (1992).

This research, and consistent with remarks from existing literature (as discussed in chapter two) suggested that the way the researcher addresses them is a very sensitive issue and special care needs to be taken. This was confirmed in the last study when participants wrote spontaneous comments at the end of the questionnaire, which was prompted by the fact some of the items included the word 'old' instead of 'older' (reasons for this decision were acknowledged in chapter nine, section 9.2.1):

"I am concerned with the use of the term 'old'. I believe it can easily pre­empt the answering of any questions and it also tends to reinforce - even amongst 'older' people themselves - stereotypical images - and therefore liable to produce stereotypical answers (...) it overlooks the fact that ageing is a life-long process, hence this United Nations preference for the term 'older' (...) It further reinforces the generally held view of people over 65 as a monolithic group."

(Participant no. 20 from the 'British Pensioners')

"I am older, but not elderly!!!!"
(Participant no. 114 from the 'National Pensioners' Convention')

"The word 'old' implies in common definition infirm, useless, passed sell date or just plain useless. Most of us are not in this category and softer descriptive terms like older persons, mature citizens or even third age people would I am sure be more acceptable."

(Participant no. 147 from a walking group organised by 'Age Concern')

"The great majority strongly dislike being called old!"
(Participant no. 230 from 'World Wide Fund for Nature')

In addition, given the increased assistance that was required for the completion of the questionnaires used in this research and evidence that higher interviewer effects have been observed for older adults (Hoinville, 1983), the researcher was aware of possible effects of questions being answered differently than would normally be the case. However, a conscious effort was always made in order to try to keep as much of a distance in the process of filling in the questionnaires.
12.3 Transferability of findings

All of the findings presented here were based on studies conducted among older people. One should bear in mind three different types of questions when addressing the issue of transferability of findings in this study, i.e. (i) are these findings transferable across different types of collective actions?; (ii) can these findings be transferred to other age groups?; and (iii) how representative are the findings of the whole population of older people?

With regard to transferability of findings across different types of actions, reliability was shown to be very satisfactory when a scale was constructed including the four types of action in this study (encompassing both individual-group and collective expression-collective change dimensions). However, it needs to be acknowledged that these results may interact with age-related aspects and may not be necessarily valid for other age groups.

In order to address the issue of transferability of results to other age groups, social psychological determinants of willingness to participate in collective action might be transferable, however, the point here is to question whether the content of these determinants might differ across age groups. For instance, previous experience of collective action will mean different things for an older person than for a younger one: it might be the case that an older person gave a negative answer to previous experience and this imply that he/she might have had the opportunity to participate but did not opt for it. However, a much younger person providing a negative answer to previous experience, opportunity for choosing whether to engage or not might not have arisen yet and thus would not be comparable to the meaning previous experience would have for an older person. Additionally, the way variables relate to each other in the model of collective action developed in this thesis may differ among a sample constituted by younger people. A clear example can be found in findings presented in chapter ten, in particular when associations between identity variables were examined. One of the significant relationships was the one between age as a relevant group membership and physical self-efficacy. It was found that stronger identification with the group of older
people was related to low physical self-efficacy. Among younger people physical self-efficacy would not be expected to mean the same as for the sample used in this study. Previous literature on physical self-efficacy emphasises that perceptions of efficacy as related to physical status and functioning are specially significant for older people because of the ageing process and chronic illness (Davis-Berman, 1990). As one gets older, the issue of physical self-efficacy assumes more relevance for the individuals and gets associated with poorer evaluations of their physical self-efficacy, which might be partly influenced by the belief that being old is characterised by a decline in physical performance (Parkatti et al., 1998).

In relation to transferability of findings to the whole population of older people, since older people that constituted the sample on each of the three studies were mostly from a similar background, it cannot be confidently claimed that results can be transferable to the whole population of older people (e.g. other differences such as social class and ethnicity may lead to different results). This overrepresentation might also affect the issue of transferability of findings to other age groups, since derived relevant factors might only be transferable to age groups with a similar background to the participants' in this study. Additionally, in order to claim that results obtained in this thesis are specific to older people from a similar context, one should have a comparison group to operate as a control group (e.g. younger people; middle-aged).

It is suggested that the measurement of collective action, the conceptualisation of barriers, as encompassing both identity and social representational elements, are applicable to a much wider sample of different age groups. However, the meaning of age and social representations of older people were understood to be specific to older people in the research.

Hence, one limitation of having an older sample in this research is that it cannot be confidently claimed that the content and meaning of the determinants of willingness to participate in collective action and the way in which they relate to each other are also transferable to other age groups. Also, the present research does not allow us to
determine whether this particular model of collective action is unique to older people.

By studying a younger and middle age sample one could (i) examine whether the identified social psychological factors are similar; (ii) determine whether, when identifying ways to bring about social change, comparisons with older people are made and (iii) the extent to which social representations of older people are shared. This would be an interesting question to address, since comparisons made by older people in this study with younger people were very strong and were even included in the measurement of perceived barriers for the final study. Furthermore, the sample to study should ideally be large enough to cover different age groups (e.g. adolescents, middle aged). Thus, a life-span approach (Coyle, 1997; Davis, 1997) would be useful in order to tackle the above mentioned limitations.

12.4 Practical implications

This work was suggested to be beneficial to the participants themselves and to older people in general. Also, it is suggested that this research may have implications for policy makers and counselling services. Moreover, this research will contribute to prevent the diffusion of existing prejudices and preconceptions about older people and complete the knowledge of the socio-cognitive effects of ageing and, as stated previously, have implications for existing theories in social psychology.

12.4.1 Participants themselves

Reports have been received from the participants in which they express their satisfaction with the study in which they took part, explaining that the research topic prompted them to think about the issues of social change and older people and how they benefited from the experience of sharing their opinions with other people (in the focus groups) and/or felt stimulated by the questions presented in the questionnaires.
This research prompted some of the participants to get together in groups: some participants in the second study acknowledged they would meet on a regular basis to extend and continue with further discussions; others approached the researcher individually and asked information about particular groups/organisations they could join, and in another situation (in the data collection process of the third study), the researcher was asked to run a series of workshops in which issues related to old age were discussed (e.g. in one of the workshops participants were presented with a selection of articles from the media which referred to older people and they were analysed in sub-groups and then an oral presentation was made by each team). This research made them aware of the potential they have for empowering themselves and bringing about change as senior citizens.

12.4.2 Social awareness

This research has increased awareness that the process of ageing is not only an individual issue to be addressed by individual choice, but also a collective issue to be addressed by the larger society. It was shown that independently of level of political participation among older people, their active role in helping to build the moral and social fabric of all areas of society was brought to light. Thus, the concept of “active” goes further than the concept of political participation.

In relation to the latter aspect, results emerged in the studies carried out in this research revealed that older people are very much interested in both local participation and wider spheres. This will pose some major challenges to the existing political systems and the organisations that are involved in representing older people. Local, national and European political systems will have to adjust to this reality. This has previously noted by policy makers (Walker, 1999):

"The more likely course in Europe is the continued growth of older people's participation in local politics. Also the politics of old age will become increasingly feminized. All of which poses some major challenges to the existing political systems of Europe - local, national and European - and the organizations that are involved in the representation of older people." (p. 24).
12.4.3 Policy makers

Policy makers could benefit from this research, in particular, for the measurement of political participation and the information about social issues which mobilise older people to engage in collective action.

The need for a re-definition of old age which takes into account individual variability in the course of ageing for future policy and practice was reflected from results obtained in this research. Support was provided for the fact that older people need to be involved more than ever in discussions and plans affecting issues such as their quality of life, by taking into account the heterogeneous nature of this section of the population. This has already been pointed by two authors working in the area of social policy, i.e. Naegele & Walker (1999):

“*In the future, old age policy must increasingly try to reach a just balance of interests between all sectors of the population in a country, region and town. In this process of negotiation too, the interests of some older people - as a group of current consumers of welfare rather than contributors - must be taken more into account.*” (p. 206)

“The interests of the underprivileged, the ‘powerless’ and/or the ‘voiceless’ (such as the poor, infirm or migrant older people) must also be expressed in the existing and planned representative bodies which claim to speak ‘for everyone’.” (p. 207).

Furthermore, this thesis supports the claim that older people are interested and concerned with several social issues which are not ‘age-specific’ (e.g. environment; law and order), which would apply to various social groups at a local, national and European level. Thus, in terms of social policy decisions, this would raise the question of appropriate partners for co-operation, which depending on the topic and context, these could be “the trade unions or other political parties, charities and welfare organizations, other non-governmental organizations, consumer protection groups, citizens’ initiatives and so on” (Naegele & Walker, 1999, p. 209).

This thesis has contributed to the meaning of old age, understood to be subject to continuous changes. Together with the representativeness of democratic institutions and the maintenance of intergenerational solidarity these may lead to further political
developments for all of the societal interests and needs. Having acknowledged this, the central role of social and economic policies would be to create the conditions for older people to achieve social integration by becoming “fully participating senior citizens” (Walker & Maltby, 1997, p. 125). Examples of this would be combating age discrimination in several areas such as access to employment (not only paid activities but also others such as voluntary work); the facilitation and provision of new technologies in order to enable people with health problems to participate in collective action and the provision of an adequate income for all older people. This latter aspect has finally been an issue considered by the British Government, in which lobbying by older people’s pressure groups has had major influence. Although the permanent restoration of the earnings link for pensioners has not yet been established, Gordon Brown, the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced several arrangements for pensioners as part of the Pre-Budget Report on the 8-11-2000 (e.g. basic state pension to rise next year by £5 for single older people pensioners and £8 for couples; a winter fuel allowance rise for pensioners by £50 to £200; a minimum income guarantee of £92.15 a week by 2001 for all pensioners).

In terms of the planning for providing leisure services for the older people, this research showed how the distinction young/old in terms of organisations is not suitable for all, since a majority of the participants in the qualitative study expressed their desire to get involved in organisations/groups constituted by people of a wide range of ages. This should be taken into account especially in existing adult education centres or in the design and creation of new institutions, so that several options could be left open to older people.

12.4.4 Counselling older people

Participants in the focus groups study showed specific strategies for negotiating and preserving a new and positive meaning of old age. Participants accepted themselves and identified with ‘older people’ by incorporating aspects such as being ‘more able for activity’, ‘presenting social awareness’, ‘existing good relations between them and younger people’, and also showed how by recalling previous generations of older
people, they reconstructed the past and maintained or altered the content and value of their identity structure. These aspects could be enforced in several therapeutic contexts among some older people in order to achieve positive ageing. For instance, participating in ‘reminiscence groups’ (Scrutton, 1999) in order to support good mental health among older people could be one possible application. In the third study several interactions between identity predictors of collective action were shown. For instance, feelings of self-efficacy were related to more collective orientation. It was suggested that older people who feel personally efficacious are more likely to conceive older people as a social group and legitimate collective action taken by older people. As discussed in chapter ten, this could have implications for cognitive therapy for those older people who present low levels of efficacy and/or self-esteem (e.g. being instigated to get involved in tasks requiring the co-operation with other peers) and thus encourage a sense of control over their lives.

12.5 Suggestions for further work

Data obtained from the second and third studies in this research could be used as a basis to direct a number of future studies. There are also some suggestions for future empirical work related to findings of this thesis.

12.5.1 Further use of the second study and third studies

In the second study, data suggested that men and women presented different types of discourse when referring to collective action. A discourse analysis could be carried out in order to study how the concept of collective action is constructed by taking into consideration gender differences. In addition, and in response to the claimed theoretical sampling by Henwood & Pidgeon (1992), data strongly suggested that a similar study could be conducted among a sample constituted by younger people and compare whether similar theoretical conclusions could be drawn.

At the end of the questionnaire in the last study of this research (study three), participants were invited to write down any further comments they would like to add.
Spontaneous comments were provided by a considerable number of respondents (n=102; 30% of the sample), which illustrates the enthusiasm of these participants with the research topic, specially considering they provided extensive explanations after having completed a very long questionnaire. Each of the comments were fully transcribed (fifty pages). Broadly, respondents focused on the issues which had been presented at the beginning of the questionnaire, on whether they felt old or not and related this to perceived barriers to action and how permeable they perceived these to be. This is a very interesting material, since it provides additional information with regard to participants’ awareness of barriers to collective action and ways of overcoming them. This rich material could be content analysed in order to permit the generation of ideas for future research.

12.5.2 Future empirical research

Reactions to failure to bring about social change

The affective component was reflected in some of the quotations presented in study two of this research when participants showed they were not able to act in the way they want and/or wish. Further research could take into account emotions, in particular the following research questions need yet to be addressed: to determine reactions to failure to collective action, i.e. perceptions of inefficacy and to investigate the extent to which identified barriers (alternatively measured and tested in terms of emotional reactions) at different levels of analysis are perceived to be a threat to individuals and examine how barriers and threat relate with each other.

Conception of time: how older people perceive the future

A striking point which emerged from the qualitative study was that older people bring the past when they refer to issues of social change, but not the future. Moreover, it was shown that their conception of time is not particularly age-related. They made no references to aspects of time limitations with regard to old age when perceived barriers to action were explored. In contrast, other research conducted among a group of African Caribbean older people who were asked about how life might be different in five years time self-awareness of time limitations were revealed (Storey, 2000,
personal communication). These responded that this was too far ahead for them to consider and manifested not being sure how much longer they had to live. This gap showed a highly developed sense of their own mortality which was not found in participants in this research. This may suggest cultural differences relating to the taboo nature of the discussion of death. Future research could investigate perception of time (past-present-future) among samples constituted by older people from different cultural backgrounds and contribute to further the understanding of identity processes operating among older people in the context of social change.

12.6 Conclusion

The contribution of the present research has been divided into two main aspects. Firstly, it has provided a new framework for studying collective action by integrating two main theories from social psychology, i.e. Identity Process Theory (IPT) (Breakwell, 1986, 1988, 1992a, 1993) and Social Representations Theory (SRT) (Moscovici, 1961, 1984, 1988). This has been provided through the incorporation of an innovative model which included the study of perception of subjective barriers. These included both identity and representational aspects and operated at different levels - from intraindividual to societal. The way in which collective action was measured also provided a new phenomenological definition of the term. In the future, more sophisticated definitions and explanations of participation in collective action should be conducted, and doing so by taking into account possible individual differences within a particular context. In this case, older people were studied in order to predict collective action and it was shown how social psychological factors determining participation varied in context.

Secondly, the study of collective action among this specific section of the population enhanced the importance of the subjective meaning and value of older people's identity and social representations held by older people. These were shown to be crucial in understanding the social psychological processes and socio-cognitive effects of ageing.
The approach taken here by studying collective action among older people could be also applied for other social groups and encourage further research in social psychology to further our understanding of the processes operating in the generation of collective action.
References


References


References


References


References


477


References


496
References


APPENDIX ONE

Organisations in this Research
**List of organisations participating in this research.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME OF ORGANISATION</th>
<th>CAT.</th>
<th>AIMS</th>
<th>MAIN ACTIVITIES</th>
<th>MEMBERS</th>
<th>LOCATION OF MEETINGS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National Pensioners' Convention (NPC)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>To co-ordinate national and regional pensioner associations and groups; to seek improvement in basic retirement pensions, occupational pensions and the health and welfare of senior citizens, plus the right and consultation.</td>
<td>Campaigning: Meetings; rallies and demonstrations; lobbying of parliament, government ministers and local authorities; educational and training activities.</td>
<td>1,500,000</td>
<td>London</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British Pensioners and Trade Unions Action Association</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>To ensure a retirement for all with decency and dignity; to enhance the living standards of pensioners and create understanding among all age groups of the problems associated with ageing.</td>
<td>Campaigning for implementation of British pensioners' charter; currently campaigning against means-testing of state pension, for continuation of universal benefits and for a state equal retirement age of 60. National and local newsletters.</td>
<td>400 affiliated branches</td>
<td>Woking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Association of Retired Persons (ARP050)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>To change the attitude of individuals and society as a whole towards age, so as to enhance the quality of life for over 50's both now and in the future.</td>
<td>Providing comprehensive advice and other services; magazine and newspaper; political lobbying and holding local monthly meetings.</td>
<td>120 district centres; 13,000 members (UK)</td>
<td>Guildford Woking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PARITY - Equal Rights for Men and Women</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>To achieve equal treatment of men and women in social security provisions, including equal state pension ages and equal survivors' benefits.</td>
<td>Lobbying MP's and MEP's; supporting legal actions where unequal qualifying ages for men and women apply; joint action with Trades Unions Congress and other organisations; submissions to government.</td>
<td>1,200</td>
<td>London</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**CAT.**

Category 1: SOCIAL ISSUE / AGE ORIENTED  
Category 2: SOCIAL ISSUE / NOT AGE ORIENTED  
Category 3: NOT SOCIAL ISSUE / AGE ORIENTED  
Category 4: NOT SOCIAL ISSUE / NOT AGE ORIENTED
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Members</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Older Feminist Network (OFN)</td>
<td>To counter the negative stereotypes of older women; to challenge the combined ageism and sexism which older women suffer; to provide mutual support; contacts and exchanges of ideas and information and form links with older women in other groups and countries.</td>
<td>Production and distribution of newsletters; organising monthly meetings and promoting public awareness and change.</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>London</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pensioners for Peace International (PPI)</td>
<td>To try to provide opportunities for pensioners having regard to their special needs and circumstances, to contribute to the quest for peace, disarmament and international understanding.</td>
<td>Briefing members through newsletter encouraging them to lobby politicians and take part in peace campaigns.</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>Advertised in newsletter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends of the Earth</td>
<td>It campaigns locally, nationally and internationally for policies which protect the natural environment.</td>
<td>Campaigning; lobbying; mobilising public opinion on environmental issues; undertaking research and promoting information and education, specially to the younger people through its youth wing Earth Action.</td>
<td>250 local groups; 92,000 members</td>
<td>Guildford</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charter 88</td>
<td>To work for political constitutional reform. In particular, for a bill of rights; a freedom of information Act; decentralisation of power; reform of Parliament to make government more accountable; reform of the voting system (introducing a system of proportional representation); a written constitution and encouragement of a culture of citizenship and participation.</td>
<td>Meetings; campaigning and lobbying as a non party political pressure group. Besides, they publish a quarterly magazine and a newsletter to local groups every two months.</td>
<td>65 local groups (average of 10 members per group) and 80,000 supporters</td>
<td>London, Norwich</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF)</td>
<td>To conserve the world’s flora, fauna, habitats, natural resources and environment.</td>
<td>Funding projects world wide and promoting public awareness; encouraging educational activities and liaising and working in partnership with governments, other</td>
<td>120,000</td>
<td>Godalming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisation</td>
<td>Type</td>
<td>Goals</td>
<td>Activities</td>
<td>Details</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amnesty International</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>To secure the immediate and unconditional release of all prisoners of conscience; ensure fair and prompt trials for all political prisoners; abolish torture and execution or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment of all prisoners without reservation.</td>
<td>World-wide action by local members; joined campaigns; urgent action networks; observers sent for trials, missions, interview prisoners and hold talks with government officials; international week; publishing monthly newsletter and annual report; country reports and background briefing papers on a range of countries in all regions.</td>
<td>320 local groups; 147,000 members (UK)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of the Third Age (U3A)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>To advance education, drawing on the experience and knowledge shared by its members (self-help shared-learning principles).</td>
<td>Study and recreational groups which meet every week and at the same time organising monthly general meetings when a speaker is invited; with international links; travel-studies; national interest networks; interpreters and translators network and a national newspaper.</td>
<td>250 local groups; 30,000 members (UK)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age Concern - Go50</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Under the logo Go50, Age Concern Surrey aims to introduce people in the fifty plus age range to a healthier lifestyle and to the benefits that can be gained by taking regular exercise and offering the chance to socialise.</td>
<td>With the help of volunteers, walks are organised in East and West Surrey; several weekly free courses about 'remaining active for life' (promoting a healthier lifestyle and keeping fit) and a computer drop-in centre where older people can go to learn computing skills.</td>
<td>Guildford Godalming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Red Cross - Over sixties club</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>To promote fit exercise and socialising; to learn from other's people's experiences.</td>
<td>Weekly meetings; fit exercise; monthly conference meetings.</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riverside - Drop-in centre</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>To provide a meeting point for pensioners.</td>
<td>Open daily; providing drinks and cakes.</td>
<td>Guildford</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisation</td>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Weekly Activities</td>
<td>Number of Participants</td>
<td>Location</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stoke &amp; District - Autumn club</td>
<td>To provide a meeting point for pensioners.</td>
<td>Weekly meetings by organising bingo, raffles and trips.</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>Guildford</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Place</td>
<td>Drop in centre funded by the Council to provide a meeting point for pensioners.</td>
<td>Provides lunch, entertainment and coach trips.</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>Guildford</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Salvation Army</td>
<td>Provides meeting point and religious comfort to pensioners.</td>
<td>Provide homes and support for the elderly.</td>
<td>11,000 (UK)</td>
<td>Guildford</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women's Corona Society</td>
<td>Friendship group for those women who have lived and worked overseas.</td>
<td>Weekly meetings for wives and/or students.</td>
<td>15 branches (UK); 70 members-Guildford</td>
<td>Guildford</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guildford Institute</td>
<td>Education centre of the University of Surrey.</td>
<td>Organising several educational courses and talks.</td>
<td>450</td>
<td>Guildford</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bowling Greens</td>
<td>Leisure club.</td>
<td>Training; competitive matches; social events.</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>Guildford</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Peter's Church</td>
<td>Meetings held in church</td>
<td>Religious meetings.</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>Guildford</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dray Court*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Millmead Court*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Martha's Court*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Palmer's Lodge*</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

* all provide sheltered housing (see Table 5.1, Chapter 5).
APPENDIX TWO

Letter to Organisations and Questionnaire

(Study One)
Dear Mr./Mrs.

Following our telephone conversation a few days ago about my inquiry as to whether I might be able to visit your centre in order to ask your retired members to take part in my research, I enclose a copy of the questionnaire as promised.

As I mentioned to you before, I am a postgraduate student in Psychology at the University of Surrey carrying out research into old age and collective action. In my first study of this area I am going to explore the issues older people feel strongly about and the ways they may use to make their views heard or bring about change.

The present study comprises two stages. The first stage involves administering a short questionnaire to retired/older people in order to obtain information about areas relating to health, membership of groups/organisations and political involvement. Subsequently, some of the people who participated in the first stage will be involved in group discussions. These will explore their opinions regarding organisations that want to bring about change. They will also examine the obstacles encountered in belonging to these organisations and bringing about some sort of change.

I would be very grateful if you would be able to give me access to about fifty of the members who come to the centre and whose age is 60 or over. If possible, the ideal situation would be to have some particular time available (it should not take longer than fifteen minutes) that they could use to complete the questionnaire. This would enable me to briefly explain what the aim of the research is and answer any sort of doubts the respondents may have. However, if it is not possible I would fit in with whatever would be most convenient from your point of view.

I would be glad if you could let me know as soon as possible whether this access is possible and whether I can use your centre as the venue so that the respondents should not move to another place.

I look forward to hearing from you. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you need further information by phone on (01483) 300800 ext. 2898.

With many thanks in anticipation,
"How Strongly Do You Feel About ...?"

Judit Pont-Boix
SPERI
University of Surrey
Guildford

Social psychology
European research institute
Introduction

This is a short questionnaire for a research project being carried out at the Department of Psychology at the University of Surrey. We are interested in the issues you feel strongly about and the ways in which you might try to make your views heard or bring about change.

Those who are interested in taking part in a later stage of this research may have the opportunity to be involved in a discussion group.

Thank you very much for agreeing to fill in this questionnaire. The information you give is extremely important for the progress of the research. The confidentiality of all your answers is guaranteed.

Judit Pont Boix
Postgraduate student
Social Psychology European Research Institute
Department of Psychology
University of Surrey
PERSONAL DETAILS

- Are you male or female? *(please tick one box)*
  - Male □
  - Female □

- What is your age? __________ years

- What is your marital status?
  *(please tick the most appropriate to your present situation)*
  - Single □
  - Married □
  - Divorced □
  - Separated □
  - Widow/Widower □
A. Some people have difficulties due to long-term health problems or disabilities. To help us find out whether you have these sort of difficulties, please answer ‘Yes’ or ‘No’ to the following questions:

1) Can you walk 400 yards without stopping or severe discomfort?
   - [ ] Yes  [ ] No

2) Can you walk up and down a flight of 12 stairs?
   - [ ] Yes  [ ] No

3) Can you see well enough to recognise a friend across the road, even if glasses or contact lenses are worn?
   - [ ] Yes  [ ] No

4) Do you have any difficulty reading ordinary newspaper print, even if glasses or contact lenses are worn?
   - [ ] Yes  [ ] No

5) Do you have any difficulty hearing someone talking in a normal voice in a quiet room?
   - [ ] Yes  [ ] No

6) Do you have any difficulty following a conversation if there is background noise, for example, a TV, radio or children playing?
   - [ ] Yes  [ ] No

7) Do you find it quite difficult being understood by other people?
   - [ ] Yes  [ ] No

8) Do you have some difficulty understanding what others say or what they mean?
   - [ ] Yes  [ ] No

- Are you registered as a disabled person?
  - [ ] Yes  [ ] No
B. Are you a member of...? (please tick the appropriate box)

1) any political party (e.g. Conservative/Liberal Democrats/Labour)
   - Yes □  No □

2) any environmental group (e.g. Greenpeace; Friends of the Earth)
   - Yes □  No □

3) any Voluntary organisation (e.g. Women’s Institute; The Round Table; The Red Cross)
   - Yes □  No □

4) any association concerned with the retired people (e.g. “ARP050”: Association of Retired Persons over 50)
   - Yes □  No □

5) any group which is concerned with your hobbies or leisure activities (e.g. Golf; Bridge)
   - Yes □  No □

6) any groups associated with your Church or religion
   - Yes □  No □

7) If you belong to other types of groups which have not been mentioned above, please write them in the space provided:

   Which?
C. Below there is a list of activities. I would like you to indicate how often you have done each of the following things during the last 10 years. Next to each activity you will see a series of boxes. Please tick the appropriate box to indicate how often you have done each activity.

For example, a person who has never discussed politics with friends would tick the box under “Never”.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Hardly ever</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Very often</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Discussing politics with friends</td>
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<td>2) Signing petitions</td>
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<td>3) Taking part in a boycott</td>
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<td>4) Discussing politics with your family</td>
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<td>5) Contacting public officials or politicians</td>
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<td>6) Watching party political broadcasts</td>
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<td>7) Trying to persuade friends to vote the same way as yourself</td>
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<td>8) Attending a political meeting or rally or march or demonstration</td>
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<td>9) Picketing</td>
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<td>10) Helping to organise any public meeting or event</td>
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<tr>
<td>11) Choosing to read about politics in the papers</td>
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<tr>
<td>12) Handing out political, union, or campaign leaflets</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
• We are hoping to continue this study with a few people that had completed this questionnaire. The project will involve another stage where we will be holding some discussion groups in your local area. Each group will include about 6 people. Are you willing to participate in a discussion group in the near future?

Yes  No
□  □

• If so, please provide your name and telephone number (Your response will be treated in complete confidence. We comply with the Data Protection Act):

Name:  ________________
Tel:  ________________

THIS IS THE END OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

THANK YOU FOR TAKING YOUR TIME TO HELP WITH THIS STUDY
APPENDIX THREE

Schedule of Questions for Focus Groups

(Study Two)
Study 2: Schedule of questions for Focus Groups

Introduction

As you know, I am Judit from the Department of Psychology at the University of Surrey and I am carrying out research as a PhD student in Social Psychology.

I want to thank you again for having answered the questionnaires I gave to you a couple of months ago. I am again very pleased you came here to participate in the discussion group. To make things easier I am going to give you a badge for your name.

**************************

It is very important that you feel free to express whatever you want and discuss everything you think. The discussion will not last more than one hour and your answers will be taped in order to analyse and draw some conclusions. I will treat this information with absolute confidentiality. During the discussion I may have to introduce some issues. But because of my Catalan background, please excuse me if some expressions sound strange or unpleasant. A very polite way of saying something in Catalan could seem too strong in English. Please bear with me.

My research is concerned with different social issues or different things that people or some people may feel that they want to change in society and ways of going about changing them. Today I would like in particular to find out more about issues -if there are any- that concern you that have anything to do with your lives or in society in general and I would like to hear about the different ways that you would consider in bringing about any changes or changing anything in society or in your life.
The questions are the following:

1. ("Perhaps we could start by you telling me some of the issues that you are concerned with that you either feel strongly about or you think that there are things that if you could you would do something to change or that you feel that other people should do something to change them. So, does anybody want to start?"). Cover the following questions:

- Do you think other people have the same opinion as you?
- Do you think there are any problems with these particular issues?
  (If NO):
  - Then does it mean that nothing needs to be changed?
  (if YES):
  - Do you think that these problems are common with other people?
  - Do you believe these problems need to be changed?
  - Which do you think are the ways (anything you could do) you can use to bring about change?
  (Summarise the different issues they have mentioned and link it with the next questions).

2. ("For most of the issues we talked about, I can think about several groups which are formed to either campaign against or whatever. Have you considered joining any of these groups? If yes, why did you choose to join the groups rather than doing something individually?; do you think that your group wants to bring a sort of change?").

a/
- In what way are you involved in those groups?
- And how often are you involved in those groups?

b/
- Do you enjoy being involved?
- In what ways do you enjoy being involved with these groups?
c/  
-What do you think are the good things about being involved with these groups?  
-Are there any bad things?  
  * If Yes, which ones are they?

3.  
a/ What groups or organisations do you know of that want to bring about change?  
What do you think are the reasons for (not) belonging to any of them?  
  * If they ask for clarification, we say:  
    -Well, for example groups that do not like the way some particular things are and  
      want to alter them. For that, they put on pressure and they act in different ways.  
  * If they still do not show knowledge of any group, give an example of a specific  
    group (e.g. Greenpeace).

b/ Do you belong to any of these groups or organisations that want to change things?  
(if they say NO we will ask the reasons why they do not belong to them. If obstacles do  
not come up, the following questions will be asked in order to prompt them to start  
some discussion):  
(Do not forget to ask and repeat 'do you not belong because...' in the following  
questions, as the participants may forget about what we are asking):  
  b1/ Is it because you do not know enough about them?  
  b2/ Is it because you do not feel strongly enough about the importance of change? (mention at levels of citizenship, national, European, international).  
  b3/ Is it because you do not feel your health is good enough to be involved?  
  b4/ Is it because you think people who belong to these groups are different  
    from you?  
  * If Yes: In what way?  
  b5/ Is it because you feel these groups are irrelevant to you and your own  
    interests?  
  b6/ Is it because you do not like meeting and talking to new people? And  
    because you do not want to make a commitment to them?
b7/ If your family situation was different, do you think you would belong to these sort of groups?
b8/ Is it because none of your friends are involved with these groups?
b9/ Is it because you feel that these official organisations can manage without your participation?
b10/ Is it because you think the work of professional people such as doctors, lawyers cover your main interests and problems?
b11/ Is it because you think society would not listen to you? *(if they show that they do not understand this question, we proceed by asking: if you do not belong to any of these groups, do you think it will not make a difference?)*
b12/ Is it because you think that for improvement you don’t have to join a group?
b13/ Do you believe that as an individual you can have an impact on the outcome of a problem affecting several people?

*(If YES, the following questions will be asked:)*
b1/ What kind of change do you want to bring in ‘x’ group? *(either mention one from their examples or include a new one).* What are the goals?
b2/ Why do you want to bring about change? *(mention e.g. changing your personal life, family, society, on behalf of yourself or the others... if necessary).*
b3/ In what ways are you involved?
*(e.g. just voting, attending meetings, demonstrating, being a delegate, speaking at meetings, helping with campaigns... at national, European or international level).*
-How did you start being involved? Has it changed during the years?
b4/ What factors have influenced you when you considered whether to join this group and what factors will influence how active you will be in the group?
b5/ Do you think it is necessary to join the group in order to bring about change in society? Is that enough?
b6/ Do you believe that as an individual you can have an impact on the outcome of a particular problem involving several people? To what extent?
4. I have got some examples of particular groups and what they do (also mention the groups which may have been considered from the participants in question no. 2). Is there any obstacle that would stop you in belonging to them? What do you think encourages these people to join this kind of groups? (If NO: What kind of change would you want to bring?; why would you belong to them?; in what ways would you participate?; what would make you decide to join it?).

(They will be asked to talk about the obstacles they find in each example and to compare them. For that we will refer to the original list of questions in no. 2).

5. ('There are issues all the time that one could do things about. I just wonder whether at different stages of your life you will have more or less difficulties in joining a group or taking part in collective action').

-Did you ever feel like being involved in any sort of action in order to bring about change?
-Did you join any groups?
* If Yes:
-What was the group?
-Did you have any particular reasons for being interested in that group?
* If Yes, which ones were they?
* If No:
-Did you ever think about one in particular?
-Why didn’t you join one?
-What were the obstacles that had an influence on not joining one?

6.

-Did you ever expect you would be involved in an organised group that aims to bring about change?
* If Yes:
-What sort of group did you think about?
-For what reasons do you think you had in mind that group?
* If No:
- Why do you think you never thought about being involved in a group of those characteristics?
- Did you expect that there would be difficulties in getting involved within a group like this?
* If Yes:
- What were the obstacles you expected there would be?

7. The obstacles you find now, are they new ones? Are there any obstacles you identify now?
* If Yes:
- Which ones are they?

8. 'Another way that some people may bring about change is via voting/political': (Refer to national, European and international levels).
- Do you think political parties are interested in your opinions?
- What about local politicians? Do you think there any differences?
- European level: Do you think that any decisions which are made reflect your interests; are they addressing your concerns?
- Do you think they do anything to benefit you?
- Do you think politicians care enough about what you think?
- Do you agree when we say that politicians are in politics for the benefit of the community?
- Do you think the Government is concerned about you when taking decisions and applying its policies?
- Then do you think it is important to vote at elections?
- And what about lobbying your politicians? Do you think it is important and that it makes a difference? (clarify it is referred to trying to persuade decision makers on behalf of a particular interest). Have you ever lobbied? Have you ever considered doing it? Why?
-Have you always thought in the same way? (ask in the different questions).

9. End of the session:

They will be thanked for their collaboration and the obstacles appeared during the session will be mentioned. After this, it will be asked ‘Is there anything else you would like to tell me?’/‘Have I missed something?’, which will allow the participants to add whatever they think necessary and to come back again if they do not agree with some particular aspects of the discussion.

At the end we will also use information from other groups (e.g. ‘In the discussion group held yesterday, ‘x’ issue was seen as relevant by the participants, and today it has not come up. What do you think about that one?’). This will provide us with complementary information that will be directly compared between the groups.
APPENDIX FOUR

Selection of Two Transcripts

(Study Two)
Focus group n.1

Sex:F

Political Participation: 'Active'

Venue: Guildford Institute

Date: 1-10-96

My research is concerned with different social issues or different things that people or some people may feel that they want to change in society and ways of going about changing them. Today I would like in particular to find out more about issues - if there are any - that concern you, that you feel strongly about or that you feel that you would like to change them. I would also like to hear about the different ways that you would consider bringing a sort of change, either in your life or in society in general. So, both of them are valid; just to talk about issues that concern you...

-So perhaps we could start by you telling me what sort of issues you are concerned with, that you either feel strongly about or you think that there are things that if you could you would like to do something to change that and you feel that other people should do something about that. Not only you, also if you think that other people would share the same opinions of yours.

And so, does anybody want to start talking about these things?

1: Hospitals.../Hospitals?/Mmm... That is a big issue, isn't it? Hospitals. They've been ruined, haven't they? As they were years ago started. Now there is nothing left of as they were.

2: Aren't they good?

1: Good?

2: Yes. I have been in out of hospital quite a lot and have no grumble at all.

1: I am not talking about the service when you get into nurses. I am talking the rundown actually of the admissions and all that sort of thing in hospital (Common agreement). Too many managers and not enough nurses (Common agreement). Too many indians and not enough chiefs... (people agreeing and laughing).

4: I had some work for the visually impaired society. The number of people who ring up and say: "can you help me? I am being registered partly sighted and I need to go to a low vision aid clinic and I have been given an appointment for November 97.

1: Really, November 97?

4: If you're having problems seeing and you know your sight is deteriorating everyday... Never mind every month, it is vital because you want to keep what sight you have for as long as you can. And if you can't use your residual sight for those many months, by the time you are going you have lost even more of it. (Common agreement) And I feel very strongly that the things that are being done are cosmetic rather than useful.
59: 3: I think as well... I was in the Royal Surrey Hospital because of a serious road accident when I was badly smashed up by a drunk driver... And so I was in the orthopaedic ward for 12 weeks with multiple fractures and whilst the treatment I received was absolutely excellent, I did see elderly people coming to that ward - particularly elderly - and being discharged too soon because there was such a pressure for beds. They were discharged before they were well and they were back again! Very shortly afterwards, I saw one person come back twice in the same ward who had been sent out. And I was there one night when a doctor came round and she looked really very, very desperate. She was trying to find an empty bed... (Common agreement)
70: 1: And you have got all these empty wards as nurses are leaving because they are so dissatisfied with their lifestyle... It is a sin, down at the Royal Surrey that build that new section and part has never been used... because they have not got the staff.
77: 2: When I said how good they were, I was thinking in my mother's day, if I'd been there, I'd have been in a wheelchair without a new hip; I'd have been blind without a cataract operation and when you think back to what things were, now it is absolutely magnificent... 1: Oh, yes. We are so lucky... 2: Yes, but it could be better... Of course.
84: 1: Do you think then that for what concerns hospitals your opinion has changed during the years?
86: 1: Oh yes...
87: 2: We had so much, we expect so much more... The more you have, the more you think "well, why can't everything be that little bit better?"
90: 1: I think the beginning of the health service, at the very beginning, they were accepting people coming from all sorts of countries, coming over here, getting in the hospital, getting all their treatment free, and then they go back to their country. I think that is wrong, because we can't get a treatment in other countries without paying. We never had been able to. And that's why I think they went downhill, and made things short of money.
98: 3: Well, I think it stems from the reorganisation and the introduction as you mentioned earlier of the managers...
100: 1: The managers. You've got everyone...
101: 3: Management and the business of cost effectiveness, of measuring the cost and then reducing what is allowed. You know, in my experience the people who came in on nights were from the agency, they were much worst as nurses than the regular employees. So I think it has been this business of costing everything and cutting back on everything and putting people in as managers; increasing the bureaucracy incredibly. And this has happened in education as well... Increasing bureaucracy and reducing the effectiveness of the professionals because they have taken this route.
111: 4: I used to be a teacher and before the introduction of the national curriculum I went on a few courses which were an introduction to it. One of the people who spoke at one of those courses said that he remembered from a long time ago when something like this was tried before. And it produced so much paper work that it collapsed under its own weight.
Because people were writing reports, doing all sorts of statistics and there were no people to cope with it. So, they had to employ more people simply to cope with all of the statistics and reports that were being produced. Nothing ever came of it and then you have all these people who are just there, just reading the statistics and the reports and nothing is actually being done where it is needed in schools, colleges and universities.

For all these sort of things you are telling me, do you think you could do something to change the situation?

No. That's why we feel so badly about it.

No. I don't agree...

What do you think?

Because I think that about schools, about Social Services, about the Health Service... the philosophy has been a political philosophy. And I think you shouldn't say "I can do nothing". Perhaps individually it is very difficult to do something but I think collectively we will do something by choosing a political system that would address these problems.

We would help and then if it doesn't, you vote them out again.

I think part of the problem is that it's gone so far along the road in the direction that we don't like that any political party coming in and trying to alter things is going to have a very uphill struggle. They can't privatize the bus services, for start. And they can't privatize what they've already done with the railways. And I think the same will be the problem with the Health Service and education. I think to redress the balance now, it is almost impossible. They can start, but...

They can try...

That is so defeatist... I think that you have to be more optimistic. You must start where you are, however that the situation. You must start where you are, however bad the situation. And we are where we are because, democratically, the present government was reelected... But if we want to change it, it is in our hands, collectively...

Yes, but I think that possibly it is a bit of cynicism about what will happen... Because before the last election I read numerous articles and saw enormous discussions where people were saying "please, tax us more highly. We prefer to pay taxes and have the services". And then the pre-election propaganda said "you are going to be taxed to the hilt".

Everybody took fright and voted for a government they thought wouldn't tax them. I think it is a lot of "I am all right Jack" and although there is a will to change, when it actually comes to the point everybody is looking out for themselves.

Oh yes... I think we are a very selfish society.

Look at the shortage of money in the Health Service; and yet look at the rises in pay these MP's...not hundreds, they take thousands, don't they? Every so often, up their money.

however much they paid the nurses it wouldn't be enough.

No, and I don't think this big ones above are worth it.

For what you say, I can see that to change things some of you say that you can change it individually or collectively, e.g.

joining a group. So, ...

You can change it by voting but if you don't vote for anybody you are just doing nothing.
175: - You've got to do something. You have to try....
176: (background)
177: - So, have you ever considered of joining any sort of group in
178: order to change the situation?
179: 5: Well, I think that a lot of us do belong to groups. In some
180: way we have a small part that you play, no doubt. So you
181: might belong or have belonged to the Women's Institute. They
182: have a little bit of clout. They've had quite a bit of
183: success. The over 60's and Help the Aged, they have their
184: say. But I think a lot of this has got to start with the
185: youngsters. This is very often a family problem. Youngsters
186: have been brought up that whatever they want they can have.
187: They are not restrained in any way whatsoever. And I think
188: this is where it's got to start. Right from the day they were
189: born and I think that parents have got to restrain their
190: children. I don't mean give them a good old clout, although
191: sometimes that has gone on. There is a saying, 'spare the rod
192: and spoil the child' and that is very very true. And once you
193: get the basis of the youngsters coming through, who don't
194: expect the world at their feet and that they can have every
195: single thing they want without doing anything for it, then I
196: think you will get a change. Until that takes place, I don't
197: think there will be much change....
198: 2: Everything has to be answerable to somebody higher up.
199: There was a day when a policeman found a kid scrumping apples,
200: he could give him a spank on the bottom and send him home. He
201: can't touch him now and nor can the parents.... If there is, you
202: can go to law! Why do all the youngsters in the schools want
203: to become lawyers? Because everybody's going to law of wanting
204: money out of it!
205: 5: This is what I am saying. This is got to come from the
206: very beginning if you can't have everything. Why should
207: children take their parents to court because Dad's told them
208: off for doing something outrageous.... (Common agreement)
209: -So, is it something to do with politicians or you could do
210: something on that....
211: 1: I think this is family (Common agreement)
212: 3: The nature of the family has changed. There are so many
213: single parents now; there are so many people who cohabit....
214: Marriage is in decline and divorce is on the increase. And so,
215: there are many problems in society caused by that breakdown of
216: the old structure. And the new structure is not as effective
217: as it used to be. That's one thing. The other thing is that
218: there's also been a tremendous revolution technologically -as
219: we all know- which has altered the work place; has brought in
220: the last twenty years this change over to everything being
221: dependent upon technology, which very often breaks down -like
222: the computerised ambulance service in London -that totally
223: broke down.... And so, it's created a huge amount of
224: unemployment; a huge amount of insecurity. Because very few
225: people now get permanent contracts of work. They're taken on
226: part-time; they're taken for just a short period; they have no
227: security. And then there's enormous insecurity.... In
228: management as well.... Because reviews are everywhere; and
229: reviews means taking people out of the work place. So there's
230: tremendous problems of unemployment, insecurity. When I hear
231: talk of getting people back to work what alarms me is that
232: many people have never even been in work. I know many young
233: graduates; you once thought that's fire-proofing, but they're
234: not fire-proof! They cannot get work... And so, it is a really
235: complex thing this... It is not just families. That's part of
236: it, the change in family. It is the changing work place, the
237: insecurity that's become endemic. And so, we don't manufacture
238: as we used to, we don't expect as we used to, we have so many
239: service industries. How can all these shops, this incredible
240: number of shops keep going? Look at Debenhams, they are
241: forever having sales, House of Krazer, Ten House of Krazer
242: shops to close with thousands out of work. This is a big
243: problem.
244: 6: We've got one food shop and we've got three or four
245: photograph shops... you know, and things that are not that
246: important... You have got to walk right up to the hill, right
247: up to the top to get the food. I mean, newspapers shops are
248: closing,...
249: 3: Because the supermarkets do everything...
250: 4: The sad thing is that this problem was foreseen because I
251: can remember years ago when people were saying about the
252: technological revolution and that things had to be changed,
253: and people had to be trained, and get used to using their
254: leisure time productively. But it hasn't worked like that...
255: Because all that's happened is that the people who are in work
256: are working longer hours; are protecting their jobs very
257: carefully and the people who haven't got jobs are not very
258: likely to get any...Because instead of work sharing, what's
259: happening is that fewer and fewer people have got work and
260: more and more people are desperate to try to get it.
261: -What I see from what you say there is a part which is
262: economic -concerned with bureaucracy (as we mentioned in
263: hospitals); all the shops and how it works and how the work is
264: affected. And the other thing would be something like the
265: family, which is more intrinsic. So, do you think the ways of
266: changing that are the same or do you think there are different
267: solutions to both of them?
268: 1: Children are not brought up to respect older people these
269: days.
270: 2: I think there is a great feeling now that we've all got
271: rights, everybody knows their rights. That's why again they go
272: to law because they've got their rights. But they don't know
273: enough about their duties. And if you've got a right, you've
274: got a duty. (Common agreement). And you've got to balance the
275: one against the other.
276: 4: Yes, and it is very young people even who think they have
277: rights. (Common agreement) Obviously they have... But I was
278: told a story about a teacher who was walking along the school
279: corridor and saw a child who wasn't wearing the tie and the
280: school all said that the children should wear ties. He put his
281: hand on the little boy's shoulder and said to him "now then,
282: why aren't you wearing a tie?". And the child just turned
283: round and said "take your hands off me!" "My solicitor is...
284: and he told him the name of his solicitor and said that you
285: will be hearing from him!" And he would obviously be primed by
286: his parents who had obviously said to him "if a teacher lays a
287: finger on you that's what you do..." So it is happening at
288: very, very young ages... (Common agreement)
289: 5:So we come back to the family again... (Common agreement)
290: 3: Yes... There is a cautionary tale in relation to that. I'm
the retired Head of a comprehensive school - an ex-
comprehensive school in Surrey - with a very mixed in-take of
all cultures, faiths, nationalities. The last count before I
retired we had nineteen languages represented there. Now, I'm
also - or was - quite a prominent person in the National Union
Teachers and I'm very aware of the law and education. And
there are some horrific cases, just the same as you mentioned,
where for instance a teacher once got a child by the arm and was
had up for attempting to struggle him. And this case went to
law. Now I would stand by my teachers whatever they did, but I
said "until you lay a finger on a child"; because I think one
can control children without laying finger on them... You
know, in anger... It is absolutely out of order to lay a
finger on a child in anger, and I support that. However
provoked one is and one has to be terribly careful because
there have been all these stories that we hear of child abuse,
and there is a great deal of child abuse and
child neglect. Neglect is not often mentioned but there is a
great deal of child neglect. Now we can put it at various
doors, you know... You can say well, mothers used to be at
home looking after the children and so on; or they made
adequate child care preparations. Adequate child care is not
there. And a lot of people who are driven to go out to work to
support their families - they have to whether they want to work
or not, and many people who want to work. People I know,
people who can employ nowadays, who can employ good child
minders... But there is not adequate support for children and
care of children. And children who are put into homes because
of the situation can face neglect. So, I'm entirely in favour
of not laying a finger on a child (Common agreement). One has
to be terribly careful because you know that teacher can say
to me "I just put my hand on his shoulder". But how?
I heard of a case somewhere that a friend went and helped
at a guide camp. I think the person who took the guides was
her daughter or daughter-in-law... And normally the daughter-
in-law or daughter's husband used to go and help, but no way
would he go. Because if a child got homesick and cried, the
natural reaction is to put your arm round and say there
... You can't do that now! And he didn't feel that he
could restrain himself from helping a child... because if
you're going to do that...
Sorry, and do you think you could do something for that...
Because you have thought also there is a lot of selfishness,
there is a crisis in right... Do you think you could be a
sort of involved on that and try to change the present
situation of all these problems you mention?
Well, I think it will change itself in due course. If you
look back over the centuries, you will see that you've had a
very puritanical section and everybody is "I'm fed up with all
these laws and I'm going to do what I want"... so you get a lot
of loose morals. Then after a while people say "well, we don't
like this very much anymore". They start improving again and I
think we are in one of the back patches... I wouldn't like to
go back to the absolutely strict puritanical episode (Common
agreement). But I do think that you've got to go back to law an
order...
But don't you think a lot of the lowering of standards is
due to the media? They go around like vacuum cleaners and they
suck up of all the dirt and they pervade. So the young people
reading the papers think this is the norm, this is what people
do (Common agreement) And we go and we get drunk, and we have
sex, and we have drugs... And that's what everybody does...
And we all know in a lot of decent life it isn't what
everybody does.
I think it should be kept to those people and not to
broadcast for everyone else... Because very often people see
their name in print and say well, you know, we are in the
newspapers. And it's the glory that's there because their name
is in print!
Oh yes... But yesterday what horrified me... We have The
Times and the supplement... Did you see it? For youngsters
going to University... And because I've got a granddaughter
going in October I thought I needed to read this... I was
horrified! It was just telling them the pubs to go to get
thoroughly drunk and what day was 'binge night' and it did
list all the various drugs and the effects of it. And there
was a slight warning. But really and truly, I was so
horrified... And I was shocked.
Yes, I think there's a huge amount on this... Our media...
We have some of the best newspapers in the world (Common
agreement) and some of the worst, absolutely appalling and
people buy them! And the television, you know, if they are not
reporting death, murder and mayhem in reality, that publish
they are putting it on fiction! You know, we are surrounded
all day long by this violence in our culture and it incites
violence...
Of course it does...
And it makes people think what you say, it makes people
think that drugs are OK, drinking is the thing to be doing.
You know, as you say. I speak as one... you know, I came so
close to death... it was incredible, that I am alive. At the
hands of a drunk driver on a Saturday afternoon... and it is
throughout our society, there's appalling stuff from our
newspapers...
And from youngsters... They learn to do these computer games
at five, six years old... What is there in front of them...
People hitting each other, battle, fight, kill...
We come back to the same question. What can we do about it?
Those of us who are here, that you mention the the
newspapers... Okay, we probably won't go out to buy these
rubbishy newspapers... But how can we stop others from doing
it? How can we stop the newspapers from printing such rubbish?
The main reason would be "don't buy them!" (Common agreement)
But how are you going to stop the people from buying them?
Then do you think you could get together with the people or
just individually? Do you think that as a person, an
individual you can change that? Is that enough your attitude
by deciding "I'm not going to buy it..."....
Well, this is the sort of thing I would like. But you can't
do it...
Why?
Because you've got to go to the top for that... And I don't
think at the moment those at the top are prepared to listen...
We've given up having a Sunday or even a Saturday newspaper
because it's stacked full of all this rubbish and it's not
worth sitting down to look at it... And we tell other
people...You know, well we don't have one...

It's not compulsory....

So, do you think that the media make it easier or more difficult for you to put your views across?

It's not compulsory, right?

- (Common agreement): More difficult...

- More difficult?

1: You've got to remember that some of the people that are heads of these printing papers are also MPs... And they are after the money, aren't they?

5: I think you're going back to it; people just want money...

(Common agreement)

1: and there was quite a wealthy man, but he's still after more money... selling everything off to any old Tom Dick and Harry and making himself millions out of it...

6: I mean, you pick up the paper and all they print is sex, violence, everything like that... Now you stop that and you print something nice, like this lady here helped somebody over the road... But that doesn't sell, it doesn't sell...

3: That's always been the case...

2: And as long as these dreadful things are in the paper...

You know that they are the unusual. That's how they get into the paper... Once despair becomes universal it won't be news anymore... Well, I think it goes back very much... You can't serve God and Mammon and we are all serving Mammon... and where is God? Somewhere outside the door, gone! in a lot of cases.

I found it quite strange this week, you know, we are in the Salvation Army... My grandchild didn't know the Lord's prayer... He's nine! And I thought 'I can't believe that he doesn't even know the Lord's prayer...'. They don't do it in schools anymore. Did you do it?

3: Certainly...

6: Yes, you did...

5: Although then again, like your school, you had a lot of different faiths... (Common agreement) Not every faith wants their child to learn the Lord's prayer, which is making things very difficult...

2: There's a lot that can be put across that no faith could object to. I was thinking of the 15th Psalm. I don't know if you're familiar with it, but it's such a list of ethical truths that no faith, certainly not Islam or Hinduism could object to... (Common agreement) And I often think that was taught to every child coming into a secondary school, so they knew it absolutely by heart and once every week for all their school life it had to be said collectively, they'd go out into the world knowing that every other contemporary of theirs had that same ethical; they may not believe it but it was there...

and if it did be there for the rest of their lives. That they couldn't quite shed it off. And I think that 15th Psalm would do a lot of good if only we could make it a universally comprehended.

The tragic thing is - and I speak as one who would call myself a practising Christian... The tragic thing is that if you look at the world at large, religion has a lot to answer...
for... (Common agreement) Look at Northern Ireland, and the Catholics and the Protestants. And the most terrifying thing of all this business at the moment to me, anyway, apart from Israel and the Jews and the Palestinians... is this Afghanistan, you know the Talibans and this fundamental Islam stuff which is terrifying. I feel terribly strong about the poor women in Afghanistan who are now going to be taken back to middle ages or even further back, medieval towns... They are all going to have to go about in -you know- big cloaks and just look out through little visors and be confined to home... No education, they are not to work and 75% of the teachers in the old Afghanistan are women. So, there will not be education for the boys either because of this... They are not to work and they are to be confined to their homes; they are to be subervient to the men and the men are going to practise this you know- hanging, flogging, amputation. I think that is -you know- a concern to all of us because the world is very small... It's a small world. We can get around it easily. And we went to Brodnic in May and met people whose lives are ruined by this conflict, which was civil war. And it's conflagrations around the world that concern me, as well as our own -you know- small corner. The things we've been talking about are our own little small corner of the world. But the world is interrelated/ Don't you think a lot of the trouble, when you get onto global trouble, it's overpopulation! And we are exploding! The whole world is exploding in population. For so many of us, that we are simply fighting each other... China is trying to do something about that! China is trying...// India tried the wrong way. I am sure. And in China is very hard... But there is no appreciable result yet, is it? (Common agreement) Well, in China yes, but not in the world... One is told how many millions per year, per minute! You can lay this at the door of the Roman Catholic Church in some ways! I would indeed! -And for all of that you mentioned, all this sort of issues that are always during all the life, do you belong to any sort of group that wants to improve the situation? At the present moment, just to know about... Any of you? Not an aggressive group... I belong to all sorts of groups. Lots and lots of groups... The ones you belong to, do they want to bring a sort of change? Yes... Concerned with the issues we have been talking about... Yes, I think. I mean, I'm a Christian socialist; I'm a National Union Teacher's persons, still in a life member of Surrey Division and there are many of us in the National Trust, which does something, cares about the environment and little things like Wisley -you know- I mean we all belong... I mean, lots of people here will belong to... I belong to too many things...// Right... And what sort of involvement do you have? I mean, what sort of things do you do in those groups? Me personal?
523: -Yes, just the ways//
524: 3: Well, I'm secretary of the Fabians, North West Surrey
525: Fabians... I'm organising a service in Guildford Cathedral on
526: the 13th of October, which is an annual education service and
527: I'm chairman of the committee that organises that. And last
528: year we run out of orders of service and then we run out of
529: the seats... Over two hundred standing...
530: 2: What's the theme of this service?
531: 3: It's an education... It's a thanksgiving for education
532: service that is held once a year and it's sponsored by the
533: annual NUT. We pay all the Cathedral expenses... And all the
534: expenses we pay and we send the proceeds of the collection to
535: the teacher's benevolent fund which helps teachers in need
536: regardless of affiliation.
537: 5: I belong to the Age Concern through the over sixties and
538: we've got a service at the cathedral next Monday... I'm also a
539: secretary of the residents' association, which keeps an eye on
540: various things that happen in the local area in which I live (5
541: ) PCC member, standing committee, you know,... All sorts of
542: various things.
543: 2: We all have a little sphere of influence... (Common
544: agreement) Maybe very small but there are lots of us dotted
545: about. ()
546: - And do you think that during all the different stages of
547: your life you will have more or less difficulties in joining
548: the group or taking part in collective action? Do you think
549: it's more difficult for you, now looking backwards your life?
550: Do you think it's different?
551: 2: We have more leisure now! ()
552: 4: I think that's one of the wonderful things about retirement
553: now. I can think back to when my grandparents were the same
554: age as I am and they seemed dreadfully old! (Common agreement)
555: They didn't do anything or go anywhere! It was just accepted
556: that once you finished work you sat there in front of the fire
557: knitting or doing a bit of gardening. That was your sphere of
558: life! I think the wonderful thing is now that pensioners are
559: able to do so many things and I think that pensioners now -
560: maybe because I get older- but I don't think they seem old!
561: I'm constantly amazed that how//
562: 6: Now we are younger... Definitely younger... I mean, I'm -as
563: I said- with the Salvation Army... I've been up to Whitechapel
564: and I took on a lady who was a battered wife and -you know-
565: brought her down here and had her at my house and then went
566: back up to Stratford and spent time over there. You know, I
567: think to spend my time the Lord sends me -you know-... I don't
568: know where I'm going... I mean, the other week it was
569: Windermere. I've never been there in my life. But, you know,
570: this just comes with the Salvation Army... and it's only since
571: I've retired that the Lord has sent me here and everywhere...
572: 4: When you are working your concerns have to be with your job
573: and your family//
574: 6: Yes...
575: 4: And the wonderful thing about retirement is that then the
576: world is your oyster in some ways. I couldn't maybe have the
577: money to do certain things, but...//
578: -So you feel more free or more able to change things?
579: (Common agreement)
580: 2: And so much more to keep us in touch with everything, I
think. Lectures and I mean the ones that happen here. There's the U3A we can all try and study anything.

Like my grandmother. She was an old lady... (Common agreement)

But some people are imprisoned by poverty (Common agreement) and I think Barbara Castle and Jack Jones are doing a good thing saying to the Labour party conference and to everybody else if you get back into power you must do something about poverty in old age. I mean, you know, I'm sure we are not suffering as many people are who are imprisoned by not having the money to do the things... A lot of things I've mentioned might be free but a lot of things cost. I mean, the things you can enjoy in your leisure time. The things that, I mean, we all have different things that we enjoy. For me it's things... theater and music and walking is free, I know... But how to get there? You know, I'm liberated by having a car... That's a liberation, you know... It's an emancipation having a car.

But you haven't got the money to go anywhere//

Yes...

But you haven't got the money to enjoy yourself//

You want to go to the theatre, down here...

That's right.

I used to go to the Thursday afternoon matinees, and now they have increased the price. I think that I have to think twice before I go... And I haven't got a car. I can't afford a car. I rely on public transport and that's not very good. So that's a limiting thing.

If you've got the right attitude of mind then you can find plenty of things that you can do...

You can get books for free; we have got wonderful libraries, we've got mostly thank goodness got radios, televisions... There's an awful lot we can stimulate ourselves... (Common agreement)

Yes, but when I think about the things that I enjoy most, I could not do them, like the three art exhibitions I've been to fairly recently... Can't do it without having the money! And I know a lot of people who would enjoy these things and benefit by these things if they were not imprisoned by their poverty.

And I think that I am not asking the -you know- any political power to make pensioners overnight as rich as these fat cats you hear about but just to have enough to enjoy life! When you have the time.../

And how do you think it could change? Could you do something to change that?

Well, it's political priorities! You know, politics makes the world goes round! It is the way things at society is organised... I mean, you know, we have different priorities...

I would not spend money on nuclear weapons!

-So, have you ever considered, now we are in the political
time, of lobbying-for example-your politicians?

Oh, they have done, haven't they? Age Concern did; they had a big thing last year in London, didn't they?

Lots of pensioners marched for us two weeks ago.

Pensioners and people with disabilities have tried a great deal of lobbying and maybe they have got some benefits from it but it's a very slow long process... I think again the 'I'm all right Jack' attitude is the thing that is the greatest
639: problem because until people themselves are affected by these
640: problems I don't really think it's a great importance.
641: 1: You get your money or mine did -anyway- went up about
642: eighteen months ago a pound, one pound increased, but my rent
643: went up, my council tax went up, the gas, the electric and it
644: all seems to come in more, more and more... But you are just
645: about get your money straight, but sometimes you rob Peter to
646: pay Paul. And that's how you live! But you haven't got a lot
647: of money to go here, there and where you would like to go...
648: 4: I don't live in poverty/
649: 1: I belong to a pensioners club, a local one. And I go once a
650: week and we play bingo. We have raffles and people can take
651: clothes or anything that they want to get rid of and they sell
652: them and the money goes towards taking us out for the summer.
653: We usually have four different outings to the coast, which we
654: enjoy. And it just costs us one pound. Because the rest is
655: from funds and the raffles and things like that. And, I mean,
656: I know there are some cheap things about but then it's not
657: everybody's -well- cup of tea, really... You know, everything
658: you go to... I mean, I have a letter from my electric because
659: I was a bit late paying my bill and they want me to pay
660: instead of, what was it? Fifteen pounds a month they wanted me
661: to put it up to twenty-two pounds a month and I said 'I can't
662: do it!' And that's all there is to it! You only get certain
663: amount...
664: 3: That's what I mean, that's what we were saying. People can
665: only have choice... You know, it's all right saying everybody
666: has choice and freedom, fine! We are all free to sleep under
667: the arches. But that's not what we want. We want to be free to
668: enjoy the good things of life. We don't want the anxiety...
669: 1: That's right.
670: 3: The anxiety brought about by, you know, poverty. It's
671: really very severe...
672: 1: I mean, every so often your bus fares go up. Either you
673: don't go anywhere or you've got to pay the increase!
674: -So, do you think that for that is it worth voting? Do you
675: think it is important to vote?
676: (Common agreement)
677: 3: It's terribly important! If you think what the women of
678: this country did to get the vote....
679: 1: I mean, if you don't use your vote, I think it's dreadful.
680: I think back when the older days when you read about women
681: getting the vote and then not to use your vote you've got now
682: is dreadful. Really...
683: 4: I think anybody who doesn't use their vote has absolutely
684: no leg to stand on by complaining!
685: 2: But very often is the young people who'll say that. They
686: say 'look at the world we're in. It's such a mess... I'm not
687: going to vote'. And I've heard that said and I think that is
688: terrible! But it is a lack of instilling into them again their
689: duties. They want the rights but what about their duties?
690: 1: It's just a small incidence we are now. We had the old blue
691: and white bus used to come from the town and down to Stoke
692: Roundabout and used to go up to end up at the Hospital and
693: Tesco's, right? Suddenly out of the blue... Two weeks ago the
694: bus company decided 'we are not going to come in to that part
695: anymore... Cross it right out'. Instead of coming down Stoke
696: road, the big roundabout and then into Bellfields and then
697: just straight up the hill, pass the cemetery and then turn
698: into a Grange Road and that's where they go. Instead they've
699: cut us out. They still run the bus but they go along
700: Woodbridge road, round about under the arch, up to Woodbridge
701: hill, turn up Manor Road and then up Grange Road. So, they are
702: still doing the round but they've cut both Bellfields
703: altogether. We've made petitions about that...
704: 4: Yes, we are doing the petition...
705: 1: I think it's disgusting... Because if you've got to go to
706: hospital, you've got to take a bus into town, another bus from
707: town up to the hospital and then you've got to get two buses
708: there and back...
709: 2: I think a lot of voluntary people step in.
710: 1: Yes, they do... But they are a bit choosy sometimes. I
711: think they are getting so many requests that they are cutting
712: back a bit.
713: 3: But you can't rely on other people's charity! You have a
714: right... You feel so obliged!
715: 1: Yes, you've got to ask, almost beg for a lift to the
716: hospital.
717: 3: That's right... And people have their pride and their self-
718: respect and they want to be independent as long as they can.
719: And you can't be independent if you've no bus service and
720: you've got to get to hospital. That's dreadful!
721: 1: Because if you say 'oh, I'll go by taxi', it costs you at
722: least five to six pounds one way!/
723: -Going back on what you were discussing on politics, do you
724: think that for you it is more important to be concerned about
725: your local politicians rather than the European level? I
726: wanted to ask if you think that any decisions that are made
727: in the European level reflect your own interests? Or are you
728: more concerned about the local politicians? For what you said
729: now, transport, poverty...//
730: 5: I'd rather not be associated to Europe. Quite frankly...
731: 4: They don't give you any choice! We can't be isolationists!
732: 2: No...
733: 4: The world isn't like that anymore... (Common agreement)
734: 4: We've got to go on from where we are...
735: 2: We've got to learn that the European are very nice
736: people...
737: 3: Yes... We had a lot of gains from being in the European
738: market as well as losses and things like the BSE problem...
739: 9: But I think that we have much more to gain than to lose...
740: 2: And a certain amount to give!
741: 3: Absolutely yes... And I would like to see one world one
742: day... Not the world divided. I don't want to be a little
744: 2: And we do complain about our political system but you look
745: round the world and can you find a better one?
746: 3: Possibly the Scandinavians... They set us a good example...
747: -Some of you think it could be better to be in the European
748: level or no?
749: 2: I think we can learn and we can give.
750: 1: I don't know why we gave up when we went into the common
751: market, we give up getting lots of food from Australia and New
752: Zealand! Because that caused bad feeling between them and
753: us...
754: 5: Now we are expected to have everything from the European in
the way of food, and our own food fruit orchards are all being scrubbed up and we're expected to have foreign apples!
I don't think...You have some element of choice about that, too, because I personally will not buy French apples.
I neither do I... I won't buy them.
I mean, sometimes it's very difficult because our apples are in such a short season. I think you can't boycott them. I find them absolutely tasteless...
The farmers in France, we read in the paper they grow so many lettuces they are burning them!
But we are still paying a high price.
It's a matter of choice. I think that if enough people do boycott things that/
And we are buying more Australian wine and it's very good, we've learned that... I always buy the New Zealand butter.
It's very good and I always have had it.
So, I think we can exercise our choice... Like when South Africa was in the dog House. Some of us said 'no, nothing South African!' And others said we must keep a rapport. It is not good cutting people off entirely/
So I do think you have some influence.../
We've all got a choice!/
You might not see immediately that something wonderful is happening but I do think that it's like water on a stone; the drip down effect is very good...
So, to finish I just want you to be aware of what has been going on. I would like to summarise the issues you were more concerned about. You have talked about transport, about hospitals, management and that there are not enough professionals - specially nurses-/
There are enough. I'm sorry... There are enough... They are not employed. There are enough, there are enough...
Right... not proper charge of old people; the increasing bureaucracy; you have talked about poverty in old age... Then how the nature of the family has changed and that there is a neglect and abuse at the present moment; the revolution in technology which is affecting also unemployment, insecurity in people... Also the economic system which brings for example the homogeneity of shops and the impersonality, which means a sort of impersonality in society; the media and how they influence people's views; international issues; overpopulation... So, is there something that is missing? Is there something else you would like to add, when talking about that and trying to bring a sort of change? To change all these issues, is there something you would like to add?
I bring God back into life... Yes... Not in any stereotyped way in particular but we all have this sort of search; something beyond ourselves and we're shutting the door and becoming less and less aware of it...
Whether we might be Hindus or Islamic/
Exactly... We all know there is something/
It gives you a higher thing to look to, and getting back to law and order, it stems from that.
I bring it's unfashionable.
Yes... It's very difficult to change other people's ideas, although you may have a great conviction yourself. And I would hate to come to the fanaticism that at the moment is the Islam fundamentalist (Common agreement). Who believes that they have to change everybody and make them believe what they believe. I really... Although I would like it that more people were Christians and followed the Christian ethic, or not particularly a Christian but followed the sort of Christian ethic which is common to a lot of the religions... I would hate to be in a position where I said everybody has to do that because I don't think we should impose on other people our own ideas.

-But do you think there are other people who share the same opinions like you?

I'm sure. But... I would like it that everybody had those opinions but I would hate to be in a position like the fundamentalist Islam who are trying to impose it on other people. Because that's where a lot of the trouble is...

I think extremes are dangerous... Extremes of any sort are dangerous! Like the extremes of right and left wing; the extremes in religion when becomes fundamentalist and totalitarian... I think that we are saying -together we are saying- what someone said a long time ago: ‘worship the light and not the lamp’. There is light... And we should be more..., more together and the extremes of all sorts are dangerous, like the extremes of poverty and riches... Extremes bring all sorts of problems...

Sorry, you were trying to say something...

Yes... I was going to say about schools, specially youngsters. You get these different countries coming over here and they send their children to our schools but they expect our schools to change their regulations and teach just what they want their children to learn! They don't want their children to sort of blend in and learn a little bit of our ways and our Christians and all sorts of...

They didn't do that at my place.

Particularly the younger ones, don't they? I mean, that instance last Christmas when some—I forget what religion—was kicking up a hell-of-a-do because they were learning about our Christmas! Well it does their kids good to learn about ours as much as it does our kids good to learn about theirs!

-When you are talking about that you are worried... you see it as an obstacle, that if you join a group then can be a sort of fanaticism...

Yes... I don't think anybody has the right to tell anybody else what to think, what to do.../

And even if it is a small group?

Whatever size, I don't think anybody has the right to tell anybody else... You can try to effect a change in your own way and try to influence things but I don't think anybody has the right to make somebody, to try to make somebody to change/

(Common agreement)

In other words...The Freedoms, the Five Freedoms that were enunciated by the United Nations should be put into practice.

-But even if there are things that you don't agree with/

Even if you don't agree with them, I don't think you should try to impose your ideas on other people.
871: -Right.
872: 5: I think you, like people to accept your point of view in
873: the way that you live and I think you are going to have to
874: accept how other people live. You don't always agree with it.
875: But I think by your own way of living you can show other
876: people that perhaps it might be a little better than their own
877: way. That sounds a bit pompous perhaps but, no... I think that
878: is really the Christian teaching, that you do it by love and
879: sharing and example. And then perhaps all the nasty things
880: that other people encompas in their lives on/
881: 2: But certain amount you've got to have imposed discipline
882: else you get anarchy/
883: 4: I'm not talking about/
884: 2: If you've got laws, and laws have been made, you've got to
885: obey them/
886: 4: I'm not talking about discipline. I'm talking about beliefs
887: and ways of life and cultures. I think the more disparity
888: there is in those, probably the richer the world is! But I'm
889: talking about not imposing those. Not discipline... I think
890: discipline has to be imposed because some people just haven't
891: got it in the self-discipline...
892: -So, it seems to me that for when deciding whether to act in a
893: group to bring a sort of change there is the problem of
894: fanaticism... Also it was mentioned here that the top is not
895: prepared to listen; there is a selfishness in society; a
896: crisis in the rights as well in the whole society in general.
897: Is there anything you don't agree with.../
898: 2: You've done very well... I hope we've been of use to you!
899: - Thank you very much... It has been very helpful!
900:
1. My research is concerned about the different social issues or different things that people or some people may feel that they want to change in society or they want to change in their lives.
2. And also, in order to explore the ways that people would use to bring a sort of change in the different issues. So, today in particular, I would like to find out about issues - if there are any - that concern you and that have anything to do with your life or with society in general. Also, I would like to hear about the different ways that you would consider in bringing about a sort of change or changing anything in society. So, issues you are concerned with, ways of changing them, if there are any problems with those issues and changing it. So, perhaps we could start by you telling me if there are some issues you are concerned with, that you either feel strongly about or you think that there are things that you could do something about changing them, or that you feel that other people should do something about changing them... So, do you understand what I want you to talk about?
3. (Common agreement) So, does anybody want to start?

1: I feel that the way our general culture has been moving of late has been moving far too much in the direction of individualism. There's been the suggestion that society does not exist, to quote one person, and I think that as a result of that, our society is becoming increasingly selfish. I think for instance the attitude to taxes, regardless of political, no... the two main parties, seem afraid of using the word tax following the American example 'read my lips'. I remember seeing over a state building in Washington some years ago - I don't know who said this or who wrote it, but I think it's very true - taxes are the price we pay for a civilised society... And I think until we recognise the fact that it is the responsibility of government to see that wealth is adequately distributed and used on behalf of society in general, then I think increasingly we're going to go on developing a more and more selfish individualistic society. This is one of the things that worries me very much.

2: Right... And is there another issue you would consider apart from this one, individualism and selfishness...?

3: I would certainly agree with that expression too... There are a number of things that are disturbing - the sort of obsession nowadays of getting compensation because something's happened - you know, that you are entitled to get compensation a) from the national health service because you've been told you are going to die and you didn't. There was a case of that... And the other thing I do find very difficult is the role of the press (common agreement) which has changed the obsession with revealing private matters which in the past have gone on - you know - But now they are being publicised. I think that society has got into a nasty stick, and I do blame the editorial irresponsibility occurring at
59: the moment as it seems to be.
60: 2: I think that it all comes back -as I was going to mention
61: before the other gentlemen brought it up-. We are suffering from
62: a lack of morality... and that affects both your
63: comments...Perhaps the root cause of it all -what he's just said
64: it is true, about the press.
65: 4: Can I address that, because I believe the trouble is that the
66: people that the public used to look up to, no longer practise
67: those high values of beliefs. Maybe they weren't in society but
68: we expected people to have integrity if they were in a public
69: service. But I mean what gets me at the moment is really the
70: sleaze and the lack of integrity that I see in the people that
71: are governing us. I mean, everyday we are hearing about the
72: activities of different MP's... I think the problem is, I think
73: these values are not taught to our children either. My concern is
74: the way young people grow up in this country. And my belief is
75: that education is more than just teaching subjects and skills...
76: I know that the family should provide the moral fibre and the
77: moral values, but I think a lot more needs to be done in schools
78: and I think a lot more needs to be done in getting young people
79: to understand how to set goals and ambitions. Because the other
80: problem I see with young people is that they do, so many of them
81: do not believe that they have a future... A future life which is
82: worthwhile.
83: 5: I think we are being over pessimistic really, aren't we?
84: Because we've always had this sort of sleaze in society if we go
85: back to days of William Pitt. He had to raise money by going
86: around to pay his gambling debts. That was known; it was
87: published... Disraeli had affairs; Parminton had affairs... These
88: things were all published in those days. There is little
89: difference nowadays, except that we have a stronger press, a
90: freer press, and a more distinctive press and more of it.
91: 2: And more widely read.
92: 5: And more widely read because we have people who can read and
93: write, whereas in those days a lot of people couldn't read and
94: write. And so the information wasn't disseminated in the same
95: way. So, I don't believe that we are quite as bad as the things
96: are tending to be made up. In fact, I think that in my own view,
97: is that life today is much better than ever was in the past. I
98: remember many years ago struggling hard with public transport;
99: now I have a motor car. I can get around. Struggling hard, my
100: mother cleaning grates with black lead and goodness knows what...
101: My wife doesn't have to do that. My father had to do things which
102: I don't have to do. Life is much better... Now, we are greedy,
103: yes. Every human being is greedy. Our society is based on this
104: curious thing called capitalism, which has produced the goods
105: that people want, that people like. And it is those people -the
106: private enterprise ones- and I am not a great believer in private
107: enterprise versus state enterprise, but unless you have that
108: private enterprise, people do not produce the wealth that is
109: necessary for you to have the taxes. And if you don't have the
110: wealth, you don't get the taxes. Now, it is true that you need to
111: tax people and you need to tax individuals; you need to tax
112: companies in order to provide the wealth for those people who are
113: at -can I use the term?- the bottom of the pile. Because society
114: as it exists, and it does exist -despite what people say-,
115: consists unfortunately of people who are not well equipped to
116: cope with it; people who are reasonably well equipped; people who
are extremely well equipped and extremely greedy. And those who are greedy at the top can always make much more than those at the bottom. And our society should surely be trying to equate those two and bring them a little closer together, that is what I feel.

But how we do this is another matter. And this is where I think governments always fail because governments by their very nature are spendthrift. Governments do not behave in the way in which private enterprise company which has the discipline of bankruptcy behind it has to perform to produce its goods.

Can I just talk about companies? I mean, the first thing is that the issue you've talked about, I agree has occurred throughout the ages but it's still not acceptable! What is happening today that we are tending to accept. I mean for example, the way people run companies today in order to extract as much money as they can for their own purpose, not for the purposes of the shareholders. I mean if you are a shareholder of a company, what say you have? Is the institutions... but mainly it's the directors of the companies who do it. And my belief is the way industry is going -industry and commerce- is going in this country is unacceptable and the way the government is also going is also unacceptable. Whether it's something that will always be in society is not-as far as I am concerned- is not the issue. It's whether it is acceptable. And I am very concerned about this. I see these things and I say to myself 'really, why doesn't somebody do anything about it?'. We're accepting situations, the lack of morals, and the other thing I would say is this: my parents also worked very hard but they didn't have a problem about worrying who is coming to the door... My father, who is eighty-seven, has all sort of locks on the door because he is worried about what may happen to him... Now, that never happened years ago...You could leave your doors open... We didn't have the problems we've got today...

We stayed with a lady near Chichester once in 1953 or thereabouts and she left her front door open and went off to work. And the postman came in, helped himself some tea and then tootle off about his business.

-I think you wanted to say something/ Yes, I agree with Mr. (5) who's on the fact that we should not condemn politicians who have mistresses and all the rest of it from doing the job. Why shouldn't the foreign minister have a mistress? They always have. I don't think we should eliminate them from their proper job because of their private life. Of course there are some things that are quite unacceptable, like offences against children, this is quite unacceptable. Otherwise I think we should leave them alone...And there ought to be a standard of journalism and it ought to be laid down and these people who write these terrible articles should be condemned! I feel quite strongly about that. We've gone too far in this business.

-So, if I can interrupt you, I will summarise what we have been talking about. We talked about individualism and selfishness in society, the role of the press and the irresponsibility in the editorials; the lack of integrity -specially in government -; the way the young people are growing -so we could say concerns about education, especially in setting goals and ambitions-, also the companies and their own interests; the unacceptability of industry and commerce and also it has been pointed out that it has been always been like that and maybe now it's better...
...; also violence as well. So, with all this sort of different issues we have been talking about, do you think is there any way you could do to change it? Do you think you could do something to change the situation?

6: I think the solution lies in education and schools. I suppose I would also like to mention the fact I was in the Services for six years- and what I picked up then would destroy society. It was very loose. And I think many of our morals today they come from that.

6: Sony, I didn't quite comprehend that.

6: The idea that any sort of property is yours if it belongs to big society. Not personal, of course... But completely immoral or amoral. Anything could be had for the lacking that didn't exist before the war, mind you I was a school boy before the war. I feel the Services did a great deal of harm in that way, in bringing together quite honourable people much weaker in their ideas than those who helped themselves....I think there should be a greater teaching in schools. It used to be theological, and no greater harm in that, providing you have a strong theology I think there should be more of this teaching of morals in schools.

3: It may be unacceptable in Disraeli's day after all there was corruption from top to bottom. I mean, people bought their seats and so on. Surely we're not suggesting because it was okay in Disraeli's day and before that, that it is accepted today, in a society which is supposed to be educated and democratic. Similarly, the suggestion that we're supposed to be reducing the gap between rich and poor, in fact the opposite is taking place!

4: Absolutely.

3: The gap between the rich and poor in this country has increased tremendously. Not only that, in a sense it is increasing on a world's scale. So, the poor nations are becoming poorer and the richer are becoming richer to some extent at their expense...So, you know, we can't accept that leave it to private enterprise and so on and everything will be okay because that is not the way it happens. And sadly, from my point of view, let me say first of all I have many friends in America (delightful people and so on) but I think the American ethos is taking over in this country and I think we are going to be a lot worse for that and I think we have to take upon ourselves as individuals; in our role as citizens, through our children and through education as you variously say. In all sort of ways we've tried to try to remedy a situation which I think is in the last twenty years generally, sadly deteriorated.

8: Is there anybody who can think of some ways of changing it...?/

2: We had a comment that we should look to the members of parliament a bit more for setting a better example and they never have done... I can tell you that their failure to do so has had such a dramatic effect on the nation's morality. In the olden days, simply through the lack of television and the lack of the circulation of media. People didn't know about it and the people... who did know about it swept it under the carpet because that's not the sort of thing you do... And they don't want to let their side down; the rest of them didn't know; now we do... But the morality surely should be led very much by education but the family won't take its part unless that is led by the Church and by the monarchy people say. The particular, I think by the Church, which has come up against a period in people's lives or whatever you like to call it... Whereas the whole idea of the
Church has come into question, you know, with science and all the rest of it, you know Genesis and all that. Unfortunately just as they are doing that they have led the side down dramatically by their own misbehaviour. They have set a bad example, people in the Church. And that has blown the Church out of the window very much. And therefore, the people have nobody to look to within the family to set a proper example. And the people who are in the family, the same people as the people who are in the schools doing the teaching! So they don't set a good example...

I don't think anyone will disagree with what you said there...

I think the Church has many, many failings. But we, as ordinary people, if we take the second table of the Ten Commandments then apply those to our life, we are surely setting the example that is necessary for society to become a decent society.

That is true, but the Church by making...

We don't have to worry about the Church! Just think of it has Ten Commandments. Forget the Church for a minute...

You do forget the Ten Commandments if you forget the Church!

No, you don't... Many people who are not Churchgoers who form their lives upon the Ten Commandments. They came from Judaism; there's part of Islam and there's part of Christianity. Now, we don't have to sort of say it is the Church. We used to do it ourselves. Let's try and do it ourselves - it's what I'm saying.

But the Church is the membership. I mean, there isn't something up there the Church and individuals. The members are the Church! And if as I think you were suggesting the so-called leaders of the Church do themselves not set a correct example...

The effect on other people some of whom may be wavering, anyway... I mean, people - you know-, are probably convinced as you said. They probably don't need the Church or anything else, they just read the Bible and live their own lives. But there are many people who are either not convinced or on the fence, need to be convinced and if they see the people who are supposed to be in authority - if you like - and supposed to set an example then as you say I think it's weakening the moral fibre of the people!

I just said it's not simply the politicians who should be setting the example...

What Lord Acton said many years ago power corrupts, and absolute power corrupts absolutely. This is the story that is coming out from what we're saying at the moment; that if you give people power they will turn and become corrupted!

Not necessarily, I mean Acton said 'tends to corrupt'...

Doesn't necessarily corrupt but it tends to...

So, for what you say to me as an individual do you think you can do something or do you feel like you should put your interests in a group in order to change all these sort of things you are talking about? Do you think as an individual, as a person, can you change things or you need to be with other people...

You can by setting an example but it's far better in a group and frankly I mean, looking at ourselves here we are the people who are really the silent majority. Gradually, what is happening is that the older generation are becoming the greater percentage of the population. And in fact we are not doing enough at this stage to make it better for young people coming through. I was listening to a program the other day and I was thinking about the role of grandparents and elders in our societies. For example, in Africa it's the elders who bring up the young children. And it's they who, because they are with them all day, that they are...
291: developing the moral basis and the moral fibre of the young
292: people in the tribe. This also happens in certain European
293: countries. I think to an extent it does happen in Spain. And I
294: think that we need to do more. I think what is happening is that
295: we have said 'look, we are now retired, we are comfortable with
296: what we've got. I don't want to get involved anymore'. But I
297: think we should be involved. If we really are concerned about
298: these issues we should do something about it.
299: 3: I think the trouble... Sorry/
300: 6: No, it's all right... I wanted to say I think to some extent we
301: have to look back to where we've probably failed in our
302: responsibility of what you are saying. Earlier when we were
303: parents and allowed our children to be brought up in ways which
304: they have now relaxed their attitude to their own children. And
305: this is really what is happening. I think we must accept that we
306: have to bear some responsibility for what has gone on. And it's
307: probably too late for us to do a great deal about it but we
308: shouldn't blame perhaps the younger generation. I have a great
309: sympathy for some of the younger men and in business at the
310: moment who I'm talking about the mid forty year age-who have to
311: struggle very hard to hold a job... They may be doing a perfectly
312: good job and the company would be taken over by another company
313: and they're declared redundant and at forty-five now it seems to
314: be you're almost unemployable. This is one of the problems, I
315: think. And to that extent I think our government has failed, and
316: our failing to look forward and after to what the future is. I
317: mean, we talk about unemployment nowadays... The future for
318: unemployment is that there aren't, will not be enough employment
319: opportunities for the population of the country... with the high
320: technology and the technology that is going on. And to some
321: extent this requires something to be done about two salaries
322: going in to one family! I am not suggesting an anti-feminist view
323: but there is a case-I think- for deciding who's going to be
324: responsible for whom, the keeper of the family may be a woman or
325: a man, but not both!
326: 1: The trouble it seems to me with the point you are making is
327: that society today is so much more mobile-you know- if I think
328: of my own family... Some of them live in the North, some live
329: abroad, and whereas in the days you are talking about
330: particularly, the family was cohesive, it tended to be on its own
331: village or its own, part of the town. Now, they scatter to get
332: jobs all over the-piece only over the country-but all over the
333: world! It is very hard to maintain contact!
334: 2: Very difficult for grandparents to actually be grandparents
335: when your grandson actually to be in Canada or in my case in
336: Australia! You know, that is a very true factor.
337: 4: I wasn't thinking about our own grandchildren... I was
338: saying that as elders, as grandparents... There was a program on
339: the other night I suddenly switched on Esther Rantzen talking
340: about grandparents! And something which came out of this was -and
341: I thought a very useful statement... They've already started
342: programs where older people can meet young children and help
343: them... And I think there are plenty of opportunities in that
344: area. I am not certain that is exactly what I want to do but my
345: feeling is this. But, yes... I am concerned about the issues and
346: I think we should be doing a lot more. We older people should be
347: doing a lot more about helping society, probably change. And you
348: are quite right. You need to do it with the young people. Mmmm...
I do quite a bit of work with unemployed. So, I know the problems there and I know that the situation is that there is no security in jobs anymore... Not that there ever was before but it wasn't as fierce?

It wasn't as fierce?

I think what is going to happen is that gradually they'll understand as many companies have is that when you get rid of the older people you lose the experience in the organisation. And so I think that is changing. But I do believe we can do a lot more in helping change a lot of things in this country if we put our minds to it! If we are saying 'well, I had my time and I really want to look after the garden and do this, that and the other... Then I think we are turning our back on the issues we are concerned about. If we are concerned, we should be doing something.

And for that, have you considered of joining a group that wants to bring a sort of change? Have you ever considered to join any?

No, I joined a group in trying to help the unemployed people change their mind about their worth in society.

So, my question is if you don't have a group like that and you think there are things to do...

I belong to such a group actually. I joined it deliberately with that in mind. I grew up in a terrible childhood and ended up with no philosophy whatsoever, dragged through the services, and joined a society of philosophers who in fact try to steer a straight course. And they are extremely moral, there are no penalties and there's no such thing as sin, but they do lay down certain principles which you would like to discuss. I think it's a bit like a Church; more like a Church than Church is. I do think we are afraid of being moral because I have a word processor, I type a lot of letters for the medical profession.

And for instance two deaf people who have a succession of children, they don't want to look after them any more, so now they're on the state. But apart from that business, there are the legal problems that run to about a hundred thousand pounds before they can actually take this children in to care. This I think is totally wrong! We should not waste all this money on what is a moral problem, really...

And for those which is is absolutely driving me up the wall, is for instance two deaf people who have a succession of children, they don't want to look after them any more, so now they're on the state. But apart from that business, there are the legal problems that run to about a hundred thousand pounds before they can actually take this children in to care. This I think is totally wrong! We should not waste all this money on what is a moral problem, really...

I think in fact, there is quite a problem to get people join... Now, I was a Parish Councillor in East Horsley for fifteen years and one of the biggest problems I found was to get people interested in their own affairs in the Parish. They would complain if something was wrong... If you wanted them to give you support to get something done 'oh well, I'm terribly sorry but I've got something else to do'... It went on like this. And it was always a problem to get a number of people together to come and make a petition or do something. You could in the end but my goodness it's jolly hard work! I became eventually Chairman of the Parish Council and I found this very, very aggravating in not only the parishioners, the ordinary villagers but some of the councillors were exactly the same! If you gave them a job to do and say 'look, we want this done. Can you get on and do it?' There were great excuses given as to why it was impossible because they've got something else to do. And this is the great problem to get people motivated. This way...

So, here we would say motivation as one thing which stops us on joining a group like that...
So, is there another let's say obstacle or difficulty you see in getting involved in a group in order to change and improve things?

It's very difficult to get people today to take on chairmanship, secretaryship, treasurership... I'm a member of various groups and quite apart from getting decent numbers to attend meetings and if you -you know- if you can't get a reasonable number, you hesitate to invite a speaker of some standing. And so, unless you can get people who are prepared to take on secretaryship, chairmanship, treasurership and so forth, it's very difficult to get these groups going. Mmm... We had a meeting... I'm a member of the Christian Socialist movement...

And we had a meeting recently specifically designed to try to rally support for people who -as you say, they are supposed to be members and what-not. But when it comes to contributing, they don't! Our chairman wrote to all the membership in the area. I think probably a hundred or more. As it turned out, the appeal was reasonably successful. We got about forty there, which is pretty good. But to keep this people attending...Well, I think it's to some extent what I'm saying -you know- people are interested in their own selves. Not so much interested in what they can do for the community. And from my point of view, one of the sad things that's happening nowadays is that local government is being undermined! Terribly undermined! I mean, education has been largely taken out of the hands of the local authorities, for instance...

And undermined by central government...//

By central government. Instead of having accountable councils, we've got dozens of these quangos who are accountable to nobody! Certainly not to local people! Where they ought to be accountable to and so on... And so, I think if we are going to improve the sense of community and so on in our society, we've got to rebuild local government; not destroy it! And at the moment we are destroying it.

Right... And is there any other difficulty you see apart from these ones?

There's a certain lack of civic responsibility and people don't want to involve themselves any more.

Why don't they do something about it?

This is the problem we always suffer from.

In the questionnaires you filled in for me a few months ago, I observed each of you had been during the last ten years -there were some items you had to tick- you had been quite active in some activities like meeting and organising meetings, contacting politicians, petitions, attending meetings... Things like that... Do you think these things are strong enough to bring about change? And also my other question is have you changed your opinion about that? Do you think now it's not so necessary or was it during the different stages of your life... was it more necessary to do these sort of activities, as you mentioned?

You mean in our past earlier.../

In your past... earlier... Yes.//

It was more important to do things than it is now!!

Yes, that's my question. Do you think it's more difficult now
465: or more important before... What do you think?
466: 3: Well, old age gets hold of you. That's all I can say...
467: (People laughing)
468: 5: And it gets much more difficult simply because of age! And
469: lack of energy!
470: 3: Not only that, I think there is a sort of resentment, or at
471: least I've experienced. Some resentment in fact because... I have
472: been doing a particular job because no one else would do it for a
473: number of years and the younger people who suddenly come on the
474: scene are still not prepared to do anything, they're just
475: prepared to sit back and criticise!
476: 2: Why do you assume that to be so?
477: 3: Well, I think it's a reflection of the conditions in which
478: these younger people live and work! They are sort of impatient.
479: They are obliged to be impatient at the work and they expect us
480: to sort of keep up the same standards as the businesses require
481: us to do. I'm talking now about the domestic, sort of - you know-
482: the area, the small area in which you live. I happen to be
483: Chairman of a residential company that owns blocks of something
484: like fifty-four flats... with gardens and all these sort of things
485: that somebody has to look after! We have a committee and the two
486: younger people sort of have different ideas about. They want to
487: spend money, spend money, spend money to improve it! Whereas we,
488: who are on a single income, have pensions which have been
489: settled years ago, start on a simple base and get the index
490: linkup don't necessarily equate with our ideas, that's badly
491: expressed, but I think it is difficult for us. If there is this
492: opposition as - you know - we are all 'fuddy-duddies'. You know,
493: what are they going on like that for?
494: 2: Wrinklies.
495: 3: Mmm...
496: 2: Wrinklies!
497: 3: Yes, yes...
498: 2: I said that because I think one of the age problems is this
499: usage of words! I find nowadays the young people are using words
500: that I don't comprehend! I was very grateful to Panorama
501: yesterday for telling me what a spin doctor is!
502: (People laughing)
503: - For that, there are different groups. Ones which are for
504: example like Greenpeace - they are a mixture of different ages-
505: and others are like Campaigns for Pensions - as you mentioned
506: about pensions - Do you think it's more difficult to get involved
507: in a group where there are young people than being in a group
508: where most of them are let's say aged or over sixty, sixty-five?
509: 4: I think it's a challenge if you are involved with young people
510: but it's an exciting challenge.
511: 6: I'm ashamed to say I join all groups which are solely old
512: people like myself!
513: 1: I try to join groups... I join anybody which has a complete
514: mixture and with luck I do! I think, whatever they think of me I
515: just put up with!
516: 5: I think I would concur with that. I tend to avoid, if I may
517: say so (?) (People laughing)
518: 4: You don't know what you are missing, do you?
519: 5: Exactly...
520: (People laughing)
521: 5: You get... I find with elderly people... All I seem to get
522: from them is a lot of complaints about their health; a lot of
523: complaints that life isn't what it used to be, and life never was
524: what it used to be and that becomes rather boring! Whereas if I'm
525: talking with younger people, I don't understand a lot of it - I
526: must admit because the language they use - as you said - is
527: sometimes incomprehensible. But I make an effort /
528: 2: There's a lot of computer jargon /
529: 5: I go away and I look it up or I talk to my son or my daughters
530: and say 'someone used this term. You tell me what it was.' It
531: goes in there, and I'm afraid it comes out there... That's the
532: trouble. And three weeks later I have to go back and say 'you
533: told me whatever was. Can you tell me again? Because this is
534: not...' This is one of the problems that I think that we have
535: with age that your short term memory comes very bad. Your long
536: term memory is very good. I can tell you what happened in 1921
537: just like that, but 1991... But don't ask me about yesterday!
538: (People laughing)
539: 5: or what we were talking about five minutes ago!
540: 2: This memory thing, and I accept that entirely... But I think
541: that the modern - the young people I should say - or modern young
542: people do use a different language. Now I think a lot is borrowed
543: from the computer. But I think due to the computer, things are
544: changing more rapidly in communications and industry and the ways
545: things are achieved. Achievement which is much more rapid than it
546: used to be when we were their age. Because we didn't have this
547: sort of speedy business going on all the time. It's more
548: difficult for the older people to keep in touch with what the
549: younger people are thinking, as well as doing.
550: 4: I agree with you that - you know - we shouldn't look back on
551: yesterday. We do live a better life today and the opportunities
552: are greater today. But there are some real issues out there that
553: we are concerned with and somebody should be doing something
554: about it! And I am saying to myself 'Well, frankly shouldn't we?'
555: ' We have the opportunity as much as we've got the time. I think
556: our problem is apathy ( ) I agree with what you say as soon as
557: you join an organisation. Suddenly you develop committees and you
558: have meetings and then you have individuals who are looking for
559: their own personal satisfaction - who are not always the case - but
560: one of the problems I find about committees the people use this
561: as an opportunity to impose their own views. And I think one of
562: the things that we need to do at this, in our period of life is
563: to listen to others. I don't think we listen enough to what
564: others are actually saying... I mean, I can listen to my children
565: as much as I should. I'm learning to because in actual fact what
566: I found is that my reactions to certain things don't give me any
567: satisfaction because it appears that we are not on the same wave
568: length.
569: 2: Do they listen to you?
570: 4: They do! They come to me now because what's happened over the
571: last five years I had... As I said, I've been involved in helping
572: unemployed who look for opportunities because of the work
573: situation. And, so, instead of telling people 'look, my problem
574: was that I ran companies, I lived overseas for a long time, and I
575: ran companies, I was managing director and whether you like it or
576: not I ran a company as a dictator'. I loved it when there was a
577: problem because I could lead from the front without any problems.
578: But I know that really in society we need to listen more. We need
579: to cooperate more, and things are better done as a team rather
580: than one man and others trying to follow. And I think I've
learned over the last few years that listening is far more important than making statements. But to get back to what I'm saying, is that I think that we are apathetic... We should be doing more than we are at the moment. I must admit I'm looking for more opportunities but I'm looking for more opportunities in the area of education. I believe that I can help people, not by something, some magic formula that I have, but by helping people to understand more about themselves. And then setting some goals. Because what I see today - and I see this even with so-called successful people - they really don't know what they want out of life! And they don't seem to be setting goals and working towards achieving those goals. So yes, I think we ought to do more and I am looking for ways and means of doing more. Because I feel that I have a contribution to make.

I think, to some extent, we have let young people down, I know they will always say - you know - it's your fault. But I think we have. I don't think we've provided sufficient facilities for them. When we do... I mean, for instance I'm on the Committee of the Henley Fort Camp here in Guildford. And when we've provided them with an interesting program, then our numbers have increased tremendously in the last few years. Because we've set about meeting the needs of this young people and they're coming in increasing quantities. I compare, for instance, what happens into some other countries... In my younger days, I was involved in amateur soccer. In fact, I played with a professional club as an amateur. Now, we have these highly successful and highly paid professional footballers in accommodation grounds where their training is almost non-existing - quite frankly - compared with some of our foreign sporting competitors... And these clubs; the playing field, all the accommodation so forth, the gym, is used almost exclusively by the club. The surrounding youth has no entrance to this sort of thing. Now, in the situation - for instance- in the former Checzoslovakia, they have stadia, where yes, they play soccer but they also have excellent gymnasia! They have swimming pools; they have running tracks around the ground! And this a the centre for the youth of the country - of the city and what not to get involved. We have sadly neglected our young people when it comes to providing for them. And in recent years, the money available was being cut back radically. When it comes to youth clubs and so on...

So you feel a sort of responsible for all of that, specially for educating the younger generation in order that there is not such a big gap between old aged people and young people... Yes, I think a lot of the facilities we should have provided for them, we haven't. And we need to provide if we are going to get them to cooperate and not waste their lives! And a lot of them are! I mean, I was just talking to a group the other night and - you know - why are you hanging around 'well, we are trying to get work' and one of them said 'well, I couldn't get work, so I am taking a course'. Now, I said to the other bloke 'well, what about you? Have you left school; have you; what do you do? Are you following a course?' 'No...' Why haven't the Esher Council provided facilities for us such as the have in Molesey for instance and so on. And, to some extent they are right. To some extent, they are unemployed; facilities are not available for them in many places and I think we have a job as you said, to listen to them and to try to meet their needs!
639: going to cost money and that's not easy to come by these days,
640: unfortunately.
641: 2: We suffer from a problem of taxes. The concept is that the
642: people in the nation don't want to pay taxes and any government
643: that introduced taxes never had it welcomed. That's true! But I
644: think that people now; I think there is not that relationship we
645: don't want to be taxed! I think people do know that if you want
646: to have services out of the government you've got to accept
647: taxes. I think that is better accepted than the two major parties
648: (or all three parties I suppose) actually conceive. I think that
649: they think that they can't tax us and there'll be an uproar if
650: they tax us. There probably will be. But I think people do accept
651: the taxes have to be paid and things have to be provided.
652: That's an interesting point because I wanted to ask to all of
653: you `do you think that local politicians do enough to benefit
654: you? Do you feel that they take care of your interests?
655: 3: I think there should be very much stricter control. For
656: instance, the poll tax. What a devastating tax that would have
657: been for the poor. Actually, I don't want to go into politics but
658: my goodness! Was there ever anything more destructive for society
659: from that! I do think the only controls we have are taxes, that
660: these people who award themselves another quarter of a million
661: every year... should be taxed, I think. The only way to stop this
662: terrible... I became a consultant after a while and if there was
663: one place I could not find truth, it was in the Courts. That, I
664: think could be corrected via consultative bodies and taxes. The
665: waste of money is unbelievable! I made something out of it, of
666: course. I'm ashamed to say what else can I do? But it does seem
667: devastating to me, it was the last place to look for the truth,
668: you could twist anything. That I think it is a very bad system.
669: - And then, do you think it's worthwhile voting? Is it important
670: to vote at elections?
671: 4: It's essential, yes...
672: 5: Otherwise you get the government...
673: 1: ...you deserve!
674: 2: We had examples of that people complaining of that, didn't we?
675: The social services place a great drain on taxation.
676: 3: This hesitancy about imposing a means-test in a social service
677: arrangement... It's quite nonsense, I think. Alright, we have
678: paid over the years a social service tax or insurance and we do
679: get benefit from it; we get a pension whether we need it or not.
680: I don't know if that's sensible. I think I would regard the
681: national health insurance as a national health tax rather, we pay
682: for it and we get benefit from it. And I think it is nonsense
683: that at the age when you retire if you can afford it, you would
684: do not continue to pay national insurance. Because at that age,
685: any other insurance operation increases the contribution you
686: demand. So, you know, there are great weaknesses in our country
687: attitudes to some of these things, which can't be changed!
688: 6: Are you advocating that people who are retired should still
689: pay national health insurance?
690: 3: This is what I am suggesting. Yes... Unless on a means-test,
691: or a question of their earnings they can be proved, that they are
692: unable to do it!
693: 2: Well, the problem is that if you do that -and I am just
694: speaking off the top of my head I must admit it- If you have a
695: means-test system to save this ill distributed tax- the means-
696: test system employs bureaucrats and therefore the money gets
697: wasted again!
698: 3: No... In a sort of sphere where employment opportunities are
699: diminishing, is it wrong perhaps or is it right to abolish all
700: this bureaucracy? And why not employ some, provide employment by
701: having some more bureaucrats?
702: 1: We can use the money take the national health service as an
703: example. I mean, the bureaucracy in the national service has
704: rocketed. The money that's been spent on then could be used to
705: keep the hospital beds open and to employ more nurses!
706: 6: Three managers of the national health who have actually been
707: fined and made redundant.
708: 4: Coming back to Judit's question 'can we influence politicians
709: at all?.../
710: - Yes... I was going to ask about lobbying. Have you ever
711: considered lobbying?
712: 5: Well, I was going to say. I know that you can because I have
713: lobbied two of our MP's... Personally as an individual and then
714: from the Parish Council point of view. On different subjects: one
715: in which I was terribly interested as an individual and the other
716: was a subject which the local Parish Council were interested in.
717: And we got the local MP support in the case of the Parish
718: Council. I could not get a local MP support in respect to what I
719: wanted individually. But nevertheless, that I accept, because he
720: was taking a broader view... But in the case of the Parish
721: Council we wanted a speed limit imposed upon a somewhat dangerous
722: stretch of road. And the local district Council said 'no, no...
723: It's going to cause us a lot of trouble and so forth and so
724: on... And we got our MP to take the matter to the Department of
725: Transport. And we got their experts to come and look at it. And
726: they said 'yes, we think there is a very good case here we will
727: make out a case' and we kept on lobbying. We had to keep going at
728: it. This is the thing: you can't just do it once. We kept
729: lobbying and I am very glad to say that at the end we got a 30
730: mile per hour speed limit imposed on this road and what is more
731: important, the police are now enforcing it.
732: 2: Before you lobbied your MP, did you have to get a number of
733: people go out with note books checking the number of cars going
734: down the road and that sort of thing?
735: 5: We did. Yes, oh yes...That brings me to another point because
736: I was going to say if you want something and you can actually set
737: up a project, then you will find people will come and you can go
738: and ask them face to face to help you. If you send out a circular
739: and ask them face to face to help you. If you send out a circular
740: on a face to face -personal basis-, it's surprising how much they
741: will respond. A few people say 'no... They will come; some of
742: whom will be very good; some of whom will be quite useless -as
743: we know- But this, I would say, is the way in which it can work
744: but it's jolly hard work and you've got to keep at it. And it
745: won't happen by just -you know- sitting around the table doing
746: nothing. And saying 'wouldn't it be lovely?' we've got to go out
747: and get out to the field and do it.
748: 2: Can I say something about MP's?
749: - Yes.
750: 2: I live in a borough which has a conservative MP and I'm a
751: member of the Borough Conservative Association. So, they have a
752: meeting, the MP comes down gives a talk -good or bad, it's
753: neither here nor there - You've got an opportunity if you attend
754: the meeting of lobbying. And you could raise issues at that
755: weren't part of his discussion, which is the best thing to do -
756: because you get him off his favourite subject - But if you don't
757: happen to be a conservative in that part, then you don't happen
758: to be invited at that meeting and then the opportunity to meeting
759: your MP may be lost.
760: 4: But you can get a surgery.
761: 2: Can you?
762: 4: Oh yes! (and the rest agree)
763: 2: But how do you find out? I mean, nobody actually told me or
764: I've never seen it in the local press or anything that my MP is
765: having a surgery... How do you find out about them? And if it is
766: an MP and then EP, the situation becomes more bazaar.
767: 4: You can find out from the local association.
768: 1: And you can go and talk to him.
769: 2: If you can go there at the right time, how often they have
770: these things? I mean, this is the practical question. I've never
771: known it happen.
772: 4: I think Cranleigh -Onslow has it once a month in Woking.
773: 1: That's right. They mention it, and they publish it in the
774: local press. I mean, an MP is an MP for all the people in the
775: constituency, and therefore, anybody can attend the surgery and
776: make their points, and lobby and whatever.
777: 5: So you think it's a good way of changing things?
778: 2: If you can go there at the right time, how often they have
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809: these things? I mean, this is the practical question. I've never
810: known it happen.
812: have been discussing, I would like to summarise the difficulties
813: you have found when joining a group and bringing a sort of  
814: change. What we have find out is the apathy in people; the  
815: memory; the difference with the younger people and the language  
816; and as a result you can say 'I am not going to join that sort of  
817: things because maybe there is a big gap between them and me'; the  
818: lack of energy; the lack of civic responsibility; the selfishness  
819: in people; the difficulty of getting people interests together;  
820: the lack of motivation; not listening enough to the others -  
821: people do not like listening to the others because of this  
822: selfishness you mentioned- and it's better for all of that to use  
823: the face to face to change things and get people interest to get  
824: together. And there are a lot of things that have to change and  
825: there is a need to do more. From all of that, is there something  
826: you don't agree with or would like to add when thinking of what  
827: stops people in joining this sort of groups?  
828: 2: It sounds a very unhappy picture... It's probably all right. I  
829: think on the positive side there is an immense awareness in the  
830: nation of the problems we've been discussing. I think at all  
831: levels there's an immense awareness that something needs to be  
832: done about it. I don't think it's the apathy, that's the  
833: problem... The apathy, right, exists yet. The awareness of the  
834: problem exists also I think.  
835: 1: It is a matter of the way in which human nature has developed  
836: or evolved I'm feeling human instinct is becoming more and more  
837: selfish!  
838: 6: You've got a fairly prosperous group here, I think. You could  
839: consult also some of those who perhaps live in door ways; people  
840: who are really having a very rough time or just unemployed,  
841: perhaps...//  
842: - Yes, thank you for your point. That is important to consider...  
843: Do you think these difficulties are new in your life experience?  
844: Have you always considered them like that? Or do you think they are new things?  
845: 6: I think it's new. It's only now that you get stimulated... We  
846: start thinking about it. There is a lot more time to think and  
847: more worry. Because we feel helpless and not able to do much  
848: about it.  
849: 4: To a certain extent I've experienced and been concerned about  
850: these things most of my life. But, obviously I was much more  
851: concerned with making a living, bringing my family up. But now, I  
852: get a lot more bitter about these things than I used to...  
853: Because I've got more time to think about it (Common agreement)  
854: 6: I think I was very concerned in governing my own life and  
855: making as clear as I could to show my children follow a moral  
856: code. This I thought was extremely important. I couldn't  
857: influence anybody else, but at least I could lead a straight  
858: course.  
859: 1: I think one of the to be as fair as one can be to young  
860: people... They have, they've faced with problems I didn't face as  
861: a youngster. For instance, the drinks situation. We didn't have  
862: the money that these young people have! They spend on anything  
863: from smoking to liquor. I remember twenty old years ago I went to  
864: the states. Teachers used to say to me 'well, presumably you've  
865: got this drug problem in your own school that we haven't'. You  
866: know, I felt awful saying 'no, I'm afraid we haven't got this  
867: problem'. But within ten years we have it. And I think our young  
868: people are confronted now with drugs, with liquor and they've got  
869: the money to buy... With television, what I believe is absolutely  
870: shocking, deplorable...Video stuff...
It seems to me that that pressure is much greater now. The kids these days...

Oh, yes... And education.

I think that the impression was very, very strong in my childhood. And I also now, I mean, I was brought up in the East of London and one of the things I knew was that you could get drugs in those days. I'm talking about the late forties. I mean, in forty-eight I used to go to the Ronny Scott Chelsea Club. And you could always get drugs there. I mean, I was terrified of drugs, but I smoked cigarettes and I drank, when I was eighteen and still at school, and I used to get blotto on Saturday night on Saturday night.

So, following what you mentioned before, one of the points I have to stress also is in those days did you ever feel like joining a group that wanted to change things?

No...

Why do you think you never thought about that?

Yes, I did... I was a communist at seventeen because I read Ruskii and I felt that communism really was the answer for the world. But I mean, like "who was it?" George Bernard Shaw said: "if you are not a liberal at eighteen you haven't a heart and if you are still a liberal at thirty you haven't a head" (People laughing)

I haven't considered joining those for making lots of money. To want to join any group whatever might not produce such a result.

I never saw any group to join. Then I didn't think I would have if I had. I was too busy being educated, and fighting wars, and starting my job, and then bringing up my family...

So, you didn't consider that... But do you think there were some groups that had your interests?

Well, Round Table. I don't know if any of you ever got involved in Round Table or Rotary, but Round Table I found probably the finest organisation that I could have joined at that point of time.

Why?

Because we were concerned for others. Our concern of being involved was fellowship. And the way you get fellowship is by doing projects together. And the big thing about Round Table is although you have a chairman, it's only for one year and it's rotated. So, people do rotate and I found Round Table excellent when I was twenty-seven, twenty-eight... And I think it was also an education coming through Round Table. I joined Rotary and I didn't like it; I joined Lions and I didn't like it and then I decided that I wouldn't join any more clubs... But Round Table was absolutely ideal.

But did somebody ask you to join it? They introduced you to it?

Oh yes!

Round Table you do things to help people; Rotary I found was a chequebook club, where you went along and you signed a cheque...

And Lions is not an active thing?

Yes, Lions was active. But again, a little bit more like Rotary. The thing was that we didn't - when we joined Round Table - we didn't have a chequebook. I mean, not that we could offer to other people. We worked damn hard but we got an enormous amount
And the other thing about it was it wasn't just for the men it was for our family.

Well, you can join from twenty until you're forty.

And you joined it at what age?

I was twenty-eight. ( ) But I would recommend Round Table. For young people...

I think lots of people either join movements when they're students, or later at work... For instance, in Manchester a number of us, the University students, we formed a group which went out into the really poor quarters of Manchester. And we used to teach them soccer skills, help them in their activities in the gymnasium, we would take them to camp at Easter time... Kids who had never seen the countryside before... You know, never seen a sheep in their lives. And I think that many people not just students, workers... All kinds of people in those days and probably still do get together to be of service to their community. And I think that is one of the creditable aspects of the life in this country that there are still people who will undertake that sort of work, and responsibility.

And what I think is there is a tremendous amount of voluntary work (Common agreement) that does go on, and is not shouted about. It goes on in all strata of society. As an instance, my wife once a week goes and meets two children in the library. There's no society for this, it just it happens. It's voluntary work and I think a lot of people do this because each week someone does it. At least three other people doing it. And I think this is part of our general life. It doesn't matter what your age is because she is getting on a bit, but I do know some of the people who go are quite young. And they get together occasionally because they happen to meet each other sometimes. But this is the type of thing that goes on. I don't like shouting about it, but I do a certain amount of voluntary work for 'King Georges'?

And did you ever expect that you would do this sort of things once you would be retired?

Well, some people do; some people want to put their feet up, but others, you know, want to be active. The extraordinary thing I've noticed this, that those who put their feet up die at about sixty-six (People laughing) They really do! I don't mean physically die but... I'm eighty, and I keep going because I can do things.

And last thing is what do you think are the reasons of people after retirement for what they want to be active in that way?

It makes life worth living.

Worth living?

It makes life worth living...

But I think a lot depends on what you've started doing earlier in your life. If you've been active and a member of various societies - or whatever- involved in all sorts of activities then you tend to continue them, even developing them further when you are retired. But some people have not developed those interests when they were younger/

So you think that if you have not developed that before, once you are retired you will not develop that.

(Comment agreement)

And also I think you tend to vegetate...
987: 
988: Well, thank you very much for having participated in today's 
989: discussion group...
APPENDIX FIVE

Perceived Locus of Responsibility for Identified Instances of Social Change

(Study Two)
## Instances of social change and locus of responsibility

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ISSUES</th>
<th>Derived issues</th>
<th>Problems</th>
<th>Perceived responsibility for causes</th>
<th>Perceived potential for contribution to causes or maintenance of the problem</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1: Health | • Inefficacy to have paid for the National Health Service  
• Privatisation of Health Services  
• Drawbacks in hospitals | - Long term health care  
- Lack of care philosophy  
- Problems with admissions: bureaucracy, waiting lists  
- Management and cost effectiveness  
- Lack of proper equipment and staff (all ages being affected; not enough nursing homes) | - Government | - Participants (identification with 'older people') |
| 2: Family  | • Breakdown traditional structure - lack of family life | - Increase in divorces, unmarried couples and single mothers = child neglect  
- Mobility: lack of love, crisis standards of behaviour  
- Emancipation of women | - Parents | - Participants = role as grandparents  
- Parents |
| 3: Standard of living | • Lowering of standards  
• Media  
• Education | - Violence  
- Negative effects on young people  
- Present bad use of the education in younger people = | - Media: Editorials | - Parents |
| 4: Law and order | • Code and rules  
• Liberty and justice  
• Wrong law for children  
• Violence | -Government. Bad examples are settled. Lack of continuity with reference to the past  
-Starting with young age = other ages' mistrust  
-Insecurity/Fears: bring people to use the car more often than necessary = this brings environmental problems; cuts chance for social relation; indiscriminate use of arms  
-Uniformity: all social groups being affected | -Government  
-Media  
-Participants (identification with 'older people') |

| 5: Rights and values | • Lack of discipline and respect  
• Younger generation | -Lack of integrity spread in the different spheres of society  
-Lack of future orientation  
-Overuse of rights and values = -Diffused responsibility (difficult to be solved)  
-Wrong education provided by parents and schools  
-System  
-Diffused responsibility | -Participants (identification with 'older people')  
-Participants (identification with 'older people'). Proposed |
| 6: Older people | • Lack of morality | extended to the whole society | -Some responsibility derived from the past |
|                | • Standard of living | -Media | -Responsibility in the past (negative influence) |
|                | • Discrimination     | -Present responsibility has been brought up by the business and economic system |
|                |                      | -Government | -Other people's attitudes |
|                |                      | -Insurance companies | -Government |
|                |                      | -Participants (identification with 'older people') | -Participants (identification with 'older people') |

7: International issues

- Increasing problems in:
  - Overpopulation - problems with immigration
  - Religions - provoking wars

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1 References to younger people who are believed to care about social issues and to have proper values and principles
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Issues</th>
<th>Key Responsible Party</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Need of changes in the</td>
<td>- Need to change the present situation of politicians in the government (low political trust)</td>
<td>The Government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>- National politicians less reliable than local ones</td>
<td>The Government (e.g., propositions about the need to create central organisations to co-ordinate boroughs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Economical profits</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Break of promises</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Victims of the system penalisation (e.g., single mothers)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Politicians' power interests</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Lack of integrity and oligarchy oriented</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>European Union</td>
<td>- Distinctiveness</td>
<td>Government/EU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Comparison with other countries; Perception that cultural differences are not respected; loss of sovereignty</td>
<td>Government/EU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Perceived neglect from the EU</td>
<td>Government/EU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Threats to education standards</td>
<td>Government/EU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Increase of cost of living</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Media influence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Lack of information</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Lack of channelling system from local to national problems within Europe</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Media</td>
<td>- Diffusion of false and wrong news</td>
<td>Media/Editorials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Morbidness interests</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Sex/Violence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Encouraging discrimination</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Wrong values diffusion = bad influence to younger</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Instilling negative stereotypes of younger people</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 11: Environment | -Need to hear about the 'good' news  
|                 | -People's lack of privacy  
|                 | -Wasted time  
|                 | -Car abuse  
|                 | -Pollution/noise  
|                 | -Treatment of animals  
|                 | -Government  
|                 | -Religion  
|                 | -Participants' (identification with 'older people')  

Responsibility to be transferred at the same time to an individual basis was mentioned in the following issues:

- Older people: Problems with insurance companies
- Rights and values: Present crisis among the younger generation
- Media
- EC
- Environment
APPENDIX SIX

Letter to Organisations and Questionnaire

(Study Three)
Dear Mr/Mrs.

Following our telephone conversation a few days ago, I enclose herewith a copy of the questionnaire.

My PhD in Social Psychology broadly relates to collective action and people over 65. In particular I am trying to investigate which factors determine collective action within this group. I am at the final stage of my research and from that I have designed a questionnaire. The project is being funded by two of the most prestigious scholarships, the Marie Curie Fellowship (European Commission) and the 'Economic and Social Research Council'. For that reason I am contacting organisations which attend to different issues, such as the environment, pensioners and human rights and I ask to each member willing to participate to fill in a questionnaire for me (see the enclosed).

I would be very grateful if I could come to one of your next meetings in order to gain access to those people who are over 65. I would then explain my research and distribute the questionnaire to each member present. Because the questionnaire is a long one, the ideal situation would be for everyone to complete the first ten pages of the questionnaire during or immediately after the meeting. This would enable me to deal with any doubts or difficulties which the respondents may have. I will also provide freepost envelopes for everyone who requires them.
Your help and co-operation is very important to me and is very much appreciated; it will enable me to complete my study. I believe that this area of research with an older population is a very important one, and one of the benefits from my work will be that the research findings will enter the public domain in the form of journal articles and so on. I hope that it will attract wide publicity for this section of society.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you need further information or if you think it might be helpful to discuss matters further.

With many thanks in anticipation,

Yours sincerely,

Judit Pont Boix
THE COLLECTIVE ACTION QUESTIONNAIRE

Judit Pont Boix
Postgraduate Student
Social Psychology European Research Institute
School of Human Sciences
University of Surrey
Guildford
Surrey
GU2 5XH
Tel. No. 01483-876899
If you are aged 65 or over, I would appreciate it very much if you could spend some time filling in this questionnaire.

This questionnaire is part of a research project being carried out at the Department of Psychology at the University of Surrey. We are interested in the issues you feel strongly about and the ways in which you might try to make your views heard or bring about changes in society. The information you provide will be extremely valuable for the progress of the research. Your answers will make an important contribution to our understanding of the ways in which people act to bring about change.

There are no right or wrong answers to any of the questions. I am interested in what YOU think. All the information that you give is absolutely confidential.

THIS QUESTIONNAIRE IS IN FOUR PARTS:

Part One deals first with a number of social issues, then it focuses on one particular issue and four possible ways of helping to solve it.

In Part Two you are asked to give your views on several statements concerned with politics, group action and older people.

Finally, Part Three and Four seek your views about yourself, about other people’s opinions of older people and also some personal details.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR AGREEING TO FILL IN THIS QUESTIONNAIRE
PART I

1. In this section, you are presented with a list of ten social issues which concern many people. Please read each issue, decide how likely you think it is that each issue could be solved if an effort was made and enter the appropriate number in the box, using the following rating scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Not likely at all</th>
<th>Unlikely</th>
<th>Neither likely nor unlikely</th>
<th>Likely</th>
<th>Very likely indeed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For example, for the first issue presented below, if you think that it is 'likely' that the issue could be solved if an effort was made, you would enter the number '4' in the box:

1. Failure of the National Health Service to provide an efficient service

4

• Here is the list of social issues. If an effort was made, how likely is it that each one of them could be solved?

Please enter numbers 1-5

1. Failure of the National Health Service to provide an efficient service
2. Inadequate pensions for old people
3. Lack of policies favouring the traditional structure of the family
4. Crime and violence in many spheres of life
5. Sleaze in politics
6. Job insecurity resulting from the increased use of technology
7. Lack of British control over decisions taken in the European Union
8. Breakdown of law and order
9. Too much selfishness in our society
10. Spoiling of the environment

II. From the above list of social issues, please write down which you think are the four most important issues to solve in order of importance.

1. First most important: __________________________________________
2. Second most important: ________________________________________
3. Third most important: _________________________________________
4. Fourth most important: ________________________________________
III. Now you will be required to think about the issue of ‘Spoiling of the environment’. You will be provided with four possible actions that you could take in order to help solve this particular issue. I would like to know what you think about each of the proposed actions. There are several questions relating to each action. The first action is given in the box below.

**ACTION ONE**

**Issue: Spoiling of the environment**

**Proposed Action: Write to your MP**

- Please tick the appropriate box:

Before you were 65, did you ever take this action? Yes □ No □

Since you have been 65 or over, have you ever taken this action? Yes □ No □

If you have taken this action at any time in your life: Would you do it again? Yes □ No □

If you have never taken this action: Would you take it in the future? Yes □ No □

- Please indicate how effective you think this action is by entering the appropriate number in the box, using the following rating scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very Ineffective</th>
<th>Neither ineffective nor effective</th>
<th>Effective</th>
<th>Very Effective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please enter numbers 1-5

How effective do you think this action is? □

On the following page, there is a list of things some people may consider to be barriers to the action of writing to your MP. A barrier to action would be anything that either makes it difficult for you to take this particular action or prevents you from taking this action.

In column one, please tick whether or not you would consider each of these things to be a barrier to the action of writing to your MP.

For example, for barrier no. 1, if you feel that you do lack the energy to write to your MP, then you would tick the ‘Yes’ box. If you feel that a lack of energy is not a barrier to this particular action, then you would tick the ‘No’ box.
...Please continue to think about the issue of spoiling of the environment and the proposed action of writing to your MP...

**Column One**

Do you think that this barrier applies to you?

Please tick the appropriate box

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Column Two**

Do you expect this barrier will remain permanent or that it will be removed?

Please enter numbers 1-5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>If Yes</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

1. I lack the energy
2. I am not the sort of person who does this kind of thing
3. I find it difficult to communicate my point of view to others
4. Others may perceive my action as an imposition
5. People of my age lack the desire to influence these things in this way
6. People of my age are not united in seeking change in this way
7. Others are unwilling to accept that older people have useful experience in this area
8. Others think that older people should not take this type of action
9. The way society is organised discourages older people from taking this action
10. Society does not give power to older people for this type of action

Now please look back at your answers in column one. For each one that you ticked ‘Yes’, please rate the extent to which you think this barrier will remain permanent or that it will be removed. Please enter a number in the box in column two above, using the following scale:

If applicable, please write down any other barriers which you think would either make it difficult for you or prevent you from carrying out the action of writing to your MP. For each barrier, please rate the extent to which you think the barrier will remain permanent or that it will be removed (i.e. rate as for column two).

Please enter numbers 1-5

1. ____________________________________________________________________________________
2. ____________________________________________________________________________________
3. ____________________________________________________________________________________
ACTION TWO

Issue: Spoiling of the environment

Proposed Action: Explain to other people about the importance of this problem

• Please tick the appropriate box:
  Before you were 65, did you ever take this action? Yes ☐ No ☐
  Since you have been 65 or over, have you ever taken this action? Yes ☐ No ☐
  If you have taken this action at any time in your life:Would you do it again? Yes ☐ No ☐
  If you have never taken this action:Would you take it in the future? Yes ☐ No ☐

• Please indicate how effective you think this action is by entering the appropriate number in the box, using the following rating scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Effective</th>
<th>Neither ineffective nor effective</th>
<th>Ineffective</th>
<th>Very ineffective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
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<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How effective do you think this action is? ☐

On the following page, there is a list of things some people may consider to be barriers to the action of explaining to other people about the importance of this problem. As before, a barrier to action would be anything that either makes it difficult for you to take this particular action or prevents you from taking this action.

In column one, please tick whether or not you would consider each of these things to be a barrier to the action of explaining to other people about the importance of this problem.

For example, for barrier no. 1, if you feel that you do lack the energy to explain to other people about the importance of this problem, then you would tick the 'Yes' box. If you feel that a lack of energy is not a barrier to this particular action, then you would tick the 'No' box.
...Please continue to think about the issue of spoiling of the environment and the proposed action of explaining to other people about the importance of this problem...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Column One</th>
<th>Column Two</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do you think that this barrier applies to you?</td>
<td>Do you expect this barrier will remain permanent or that it will be removed?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Please tick the appropriate box</td>
<td>Please enter numbers 1-5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| | | | | |</p>
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<td>No</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. I lack the energy
2. I am not the sort of person who does this kind of thing
3. I find it difficult to communicate my point of view to others
4. Others may perceive my action as an imposition
5. People of my age lack the desire to influence these things in this way
6. People of my age are not united in seeking change in this way
7. Others are unwilling to accept that older people have useful experience in this area
8. Others think that older people should not take this type of action
9. The way society is organised discourages older people from taking this action
10. Society does not give power to older people for this type of action

Now please look back at your answers in column one. For each one that you ticked 'Yes', please rate the extent to which you think this barrier will remain permanent or that it will be removed. Please enter a number in the box in column two above, using the following scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>It will remain permanent</th>
<th>It may remain permanent</th>
<th>Unsure</th>
<th>It may be removed</th>
<th>It will be removed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If applicable, please write down any other barriers which you think would either make it difficult for you or prevent you from carrying out the action of explaining to other people. For each barrier, please rate the extent to which you think the barrier will remain permanent or that it will be removed (i.e. rate as for column two).

Please enter numbers 1-5

1. ____________________________________________________________________________________
2. ____________________________________________________________________________________
3. ____________________________________________________________________________________
ACTION THREE

Issue: Spoiling of the environment

Proposed Action: Join a group demonstrating

- Please tick the appropriate box:

Before you were 65, did you ever take this action? Yes □ No □

Since you have been 65 or over, have you ever taken this action? Yes □ No □

If you have taken this action at any time in your life:
Would you do it again? Yes □ No □

If you have never taken this action:
Would you take it in the future? Yes □ No □

- Please indicate how effective you think this action is by entering the appropriate number in the box, using the following rating scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very Ineffective</th>
<th>Neither ineffective nor effective</th>
<th>Effective</th>
<th>Very Effective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please enter numbers 1-5

How effective do you think this action is? □

On the following page, there is a list of things some people may consider to be barriers to the action of joining a group demonstrating. As before, a barrier to action would be anything that either makes it difficult for you to take this particular action or prevents you from taking this action.

In column one, please tick whether or not you would consider each of these things to be a barrier to the action of joining a group demonstrating.

For example, for barrier no. 1, if you feel that you do lack the energy to join a group demonstrating, then you would tick the ‘Yes’ box. If you feel that a lack of energy is not a barrier to this particular action, then you would tick the ‘No’ box.
...Please continue to think about the issue of spoiling of the environment and the proposed action of joining a group demonstrating...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Column One</th>
<th>Column Two</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do you think that this barrier applies to you?</td>
<td>Do you expect this barrier will remain permanent or that it will be removed?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Please tick the appropriate box</td>
<td>Please enter numbers 1-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No ☐ Yes ☐</td>
<td>If Yes ⇒ ☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No ☐ Yes ☐</td>
<td>If Yes ⇒ ☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No ☐ Yes ☐</td>
<td>If Yes ⇒ ☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No ☐ Yes ☐</td>
<td>If Yes ⇒ ☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No ☐ Yes ☐</td>
<td>If Yes ⇒ ☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No ☐ Yes ☐</td>
<td>If Yes ⇒ ☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No ☐ Yes ☐</td>
<td>If Yes ⇒ ☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No ☐ Yes ☐</td>
<td>If Yes ⇒ ☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No ☐ Yes ☐</td>
<td>If Yes ⇒ ☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. I lack the energy
2. I am not the sort of person who does this kind of thing
3. I find it difficult to communicate my point of view to others
4. Others may perceive my action as an imposition
5. People of my age lack the desire to influence these things in this way
6. People of my age are not united in seeking change in this way
7. Others are unwilling to accept that older people have useful experience in this area
8. Others think that older people should not take this type of action
9. The way society is organised discourages older people from taking this action
10. Society does not give power to older people for this type of action

Now please look back at your answers in column one. For each one that you ticked 'Yes', please rate the extent to which you think this barrier will remain permanent or that it will be removed. Please enter a number in the box in column two above, using the following scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>It will remain permanent</th>
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<th>Unsure</th>
<th>It may be removed</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If applicable, please write down any other barriers which you think would either make it difficult for you or prevent you from carrying out the action of joining a group demonstrating. For each barrier, please rate the extent to which you think the barrier will remain permanent or that it will be removed (i.e. rate as for column two).

Please enter numbers 1-5

1. ____________________________________________

2. ____________________________________________

3. ____________________________________________
ACTION FOUR

Issue: Spoiling of the environment

Proposed Action: Join an informal discussion group

- Please tick the appropriate box:

  Before you were 65, did you ever take this action?  
  Yes [ ]  No [ ]

  Since you have been 65 or over, have you ever taken this action?  
  Yes [ ]  No [ ]

  If you have taken this action at any time in your life:  
  Would you do it again?  
  Yes [ ]  No [ ]

  If you have never taken this action:  
  Would you take it in the future?  
  Yes [ ]  No [ ]

- Please indicate how effective you think this action is by entering the appropriate number in the box, using the following rating scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very Ineffective</th>
<th>Ineffective</th>
<th>Neither ineffective nor effective</th>
<th>Effective</th>
<th>Very Effective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

  How effective do you think this action is?  
  [ ]

On the following page, there is a list of things some people may consider to be barriers to the action of joining an informal discussion group. As before, a barrier to action would be anything that either makes it difficult for you to take this particular action or prevents you from taking this action.

In column one, please tick whether or not you would consider each of these things to be a barrier to the action of joining an informal discussion group.

For example, for barrier no. 1, if you feel that you do lack the energy to join an informal discussion group, then you would tick the 'Yes' box. If you feel that a lack of energy is not a barrier to this particular action, then you would tick the 'No' box.
...Please continue to think about the issue of spoiling of the environment and the proposed action of joining an informal discussion group...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Column One</th>
<th>Column Two</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do you think that this barrier applies to you?</td>
<td>Do you expect this barrier will remain permanent or that it will be removed?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Please tick the appropriate box</td>
<td>Please enter numbers 1-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No [ ] Yes [ ]</td>
<td>If Yes [ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No [ ] Yes [ ]</td>
<td>If Yes [ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No [ ] Yes [ ]</td>
<td>If Yes [ ]</td>
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<td>No [ ] Yes [ ]</td>
<td>If Yes [ ]</td>
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<td>No [ ] Yes [ ]</td>
<td>If Yes [ ]</td>
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<td>No [ ] Yes [ ]</td>
<td>If Yes [ ]</td>
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<td>No [ ] Yes [ ]</td>
<td>If Yes [ ]</td>
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<tr>
<td>No [ ] Yes [ ]</td>
<td>If Yes [ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No [ ] Yes [ ]</td>
<td>If Yes [ ]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Now please look back at your answers in column one. For each one that you ticked ‘Yes’, please rate the extent to which you think this barrier will remain permanent or that it will be removed. Please enter a number in the box in column two above, using the following scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>It will remain permanent</th>
<th>It may remain permanent</th>
<th>Unsure</th>
<th>It may be removed</th>
<th>It will be removed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If applicable, please write down any other barriers which you think would either make it difficult for you or prevent you from carrying out the action of joining an informal discussion group. For each barrier, please rate the extent to which you think the barrier will remain permanent or that it will be removed (i.e. rate as for column two).

Please enter numbers 1-5

1. ____________________________________________________________________________________
2. ____________________________________________________________________________________
3. ____________________________________________________________________________________
PART II

IV. Below there is a list of statements of people's feelings about politics. Please read each statement, decide how much you agree or disagree and enter the appropriate number in the box, using the following rating scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please enter numbers 1-5

1. People like me have no say in what government does
2. Voting is the only way that people like me can have any say in the way government runs things
3. Sometimes politics and government seem so complicated that a person like me cannot really understand what is going on
4. I don't think public officials care much about what people like me think
5. Generally speaking, those we elect as MP's to Westminster lose touch with the people pretty quickly
6. Parties are only interested in people's votes, not in their opinions

V. Below there are four questions about how much you trust the political system. Please indicate how much you trust the system for each of the questions by entering the appropriate number in the box, using the following rating scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Almost never</th>
<th>Only some of the time</th>
<th>Uncertain</th>
<th>Most of the time</th>
<th>Just about always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please enter numbers 1-5

1. How much do you trust the government in Westminster to do what is right?
2. When people in politics speak on television, to the newspapers, or in Parliament, how much do they tell the truth?
3. How much do you trust a British government of any party to place the needs of this country and the people above the interests of their own political party?
4. How much do you trust that this country is run for the benefit of all the people?
VI. Below there is a list of statements that refer to working and co-operating within a group of people. Please read each statement, decide how much you agree or disagree and enter the appropriate number in the box, using the following rating scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please enter numbers 1-5

1. People should not be expected to do anything for the community unless they are paid for it
2. Working with others is usually more trouble than it's worth
3. In the long run, the only person you can count on is yourself
4. I work better in a group than on my own
5. Old people must act as a group rather than as individuals
6. Improvements in conditions and opportunities for old people will only be achieved through collective action

VII. The statements below are related to how you feel about old people. Please read each statement, decide how much you agree or disagree and enter the appropriate number in the box, using the following rating scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please enter numbers 1-5

1. I feel strong ties with old people
2. I identify strongly with old people
3. Being old is central to the way I think of myself
4. I rarely think of old people as a group
5. I am an old person
VIII. Below there are some statements about the extent to which old people can successfully bring about changes in society. Please read each statement, decide how much you agree or disagree and enter the appropriate number in the box, using the following rating scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Not at all</th>
<th>To a limited extent</th>
<th>To some extent</th>
<th>To a considerable extent</th>
<th>To a great extent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

• To what extent do you think that...

1. Old people have confidence that they can bring about changes in society
2. Old people believe they can be very effective at bringing about changes in society
3. Old people expect to be powerful in bringing about changes in society
4. Old people can solve any problem they encounter when they try to bring about changes in society
5. Old people can achieve a lot of societal change if they put their mind to it
6. No social issue is too difficult for old people to tackle
7. Old people expect to have a lot of influence over changes in society
**PART III**

IX. Below you are presented with a list of views about yourself.

Please read each statement, decide how much you agree or disagree and enter the appropriate number in the box, using the following rating scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please enter numbers 1-5

1. If I can't do a job the first time, I keep trying until I do _ _
2. I seem to be capable of dealing with most problems that come up in life _ _
3. I find it easy to make new friends _ _
4. I do not know how to handle social gatherings _ _
5. I avoid trying to learn new things when they look too difficult for me _ _
6. I give up easily _ _
7. My physical health makes it difficult to deal with situations that arise _ _
8. My physical fitness is good enough to tackle any problem _ _
9. My eyesight makes it very difficult for me to be self-reliant _ _
10. I am confident that my hearing is good enough to carry out any activity _ _
X. Below there is a list of aspects which refer to you. Please consider how important each of the listed aspects is for you and enter the appropriate number in the box, using the following rating scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Not important at all</th>
<th>Not important</th>
<th>Neither important nor unimportant</th>
<th>Important</th>
<th>Very important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please enter numbers 1-5

1. My nationality
2. My social class
3. My age
4. Being male/female

Please decide how much you see each of these aspects as positive or negative and enter the appropriate number in the box, using the following rating scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very negative</th>
<th>Negative</th>
<th>Neither positive nor negative</th>
<th>Positive</th>
<th>Very positive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please enter numbers 1-5

1. My nationality
2. My social class
3. My age
4. Being male/female
XI. Below there is a list of statements concerned with what most people may think about old people in relation to bringing about changes in society. Please indicate how well you think each statement represents what most people think.

Please read each statement, decide how much you agree or disagree and enter the appropriate number in the box, using the following rating scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Most people think that old people trust the political system
2. Most people think that old people have the desire to influence what is happening in society
3. Most people think that old people have wisdom
4. Most people think that old people have a great desire to be needed
5. Most people think that old people have no views in common with young people
6. Most people think that old people are interested in political activities
7. Most people think that old people keep the family together
8. Most people think that old people live in the past
9. Most people think that old people believe that the other generations do not appreciate their experience of life
10. Most people think that old people are happy to take risks
11. Most people think that old people want to impose their beliefs on other people
12. Most people think that old people find it difficult to communicate their views to younger people
13. Most people think that old people can effectively bring about change in society
14. Most people think that old people are prejudiced against young people
15. Most people think that old people are too apathetic to bring about changes in society

Please enter numbers 1-5
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

16. Most people think that old people would rather be involved in local issues than national issues
17. Most people think that old people feel they have some influence in the political system
18. Most people think that old people cannot manage to co-operate within a group of people in order to bring about changes in society
19. Most people think that old people have a lot of time if they want to engage in collective action
20. Most people think that old people do not take enough responsibility for what is going on in society
21. Most people think that old people are a minority
22. Most people think that old people are too concerned about themselves to bring about changes in society
23. Most people think that young people are prejudiced against old people
24. Most people think that old people are narrow minded
25. Most people think that old people lack the collective awareness to bring about changes in society
26. Most people think that old people feel other age groups want to know about their opinions
27. Most people think that old people cannot be involved in action to bring about changes in society
28. Most people think that old people prefer the past to the present
29. Most people think that old people are a powerful group in society

Please enter numbers 1-5
PART IV

XII. Finally, please could you supply the following personal details?:

- Are you male or female? (please tick one box)
  - Male [ ]
  - Female [ ]

- What is your age? ________ years

- What is your marital status?
  (please tick the most appropriate to your present situation)
  - Single [ ]
  - Married [ ]
  - Divorced [ ]
  - Separated [ ]
  - Widow/Widower [ ]

- If applicable, please indicate your occupation before retirement:
  __________________________________________

- If applicable, please indicate your partner’s occupation before retirement:
  __________________________________________
- Are you a member of any organisation? (e.g. political; environmental; concerned with retired people; leisure; religion…)

(please tick the appropriate box)

Yes □ No □

- If Yes, which organisations do you belong to?

(in case you belong to more than one, write down a maximum of three: one on each numbered line)

1. __________________________________________

- In what ways are you involved? (With the first organisation, please tick the appropriate box. You may need to tick more than one box)

I am just a member. I do not participate in any of the activities that are organised □
Sometimes I participate in some of the activities that are organised □
I often participate in some of the activities that are organised □
Sometimes I help to organise some of the activities □
I often help to organise some of the activities □
I have an official responsibility in the organisation □
Others: Please specify __________________________

2. __________________________________________

- In what ways are you involved? (With the second organisation, please tick the appropriate box. You may need to tick more than one box)

I am just a member. I do not participate in any of the activities that are organised □
Sometimes I participate in some of the activities that are organised □
I often participate in some of the activities that are organised □
Sometimes I help to organise some of the activities □
I often help to organise some of the activities □
I have an official responsibility in the organisation □
Others: Please specify __________________________
• In what ways are you involved? (with the third organisation, please tick the appropriate box. You may need to tick more than one box)

I am just a member. I do not participate in any of the activities that are organised  
Sometimes I participate in some of the activities that are organised  
I often participate in some of the activities that are organised  
Sometimes I help to organise some of the activities  
I often help to organise some of the activities  
I have an official responsibility in the organisation  
Others: Please specify __________________________________________

• Please answer to the following statement. Decide how much you agree or disagree and enter the appropriate number in the box, using the following rating scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

My answers will give the impression that age related barriers to the different proposed actions in this questionnaire are more important than they actually are  

Please could you provide your name, address and phone number in case we need to contact you? (We comply with the Data Protection Act). Please be assured that your answers will be treated in complete confidence: your name will not be linked to the research in any report, nor will I divulge it to any third party.

NAME: ___________________________________________
ADDRESS: ________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________
TEL No.: ___________________________________

THIS IS THE END OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE
THANK YOU FOR TAKING YOUR TIME TO HELP WITH THIS STUDY

If you wish, you can write below any comments you might have.
We shall be most interested to read what you have to say. Please continue overleaf if necessary.
This research is funded by the European Commission (Marie Curie Fellowship) and ESRC (Economic and Social Research Council) and is being conducted under the supervision of Prof. Glynis Breakwell and Dr. Evanthia Lyons.
APPENDIX SEVEN

Additional Analyses

(Study Three)
Table 1: Correlations between items of perceived effectiveness for each of the actions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Effectiveness: Write to MP</td>
<td></td>
<td>.377**</td>
<td>.362**</td>
<td>.304**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(337)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(339)</td>
<td>(339)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Effectiveness: Explain to other people about the importance of the problem</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>.407**</td>
<td>.480**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(334)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(333)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Effectiveness: Join a group demonstrating</td>
<td>--</td>
<td></td>
<td>.435**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(336)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Effectiveness: Join an informal discussion group</td>
<td>--</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**p<.001

Table 2: Summary of one-way repeated measures ANOVA for each of the items at each level measuring perceived barriers across the four actions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels</th>
<th>ANOVA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Intraindividual level</td>
<td>F (3, 36)= .917, ns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 1 x 4 actions</td>
<td>F (3, 75)= 1.50, ns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 2 x 4 actions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Interpersonal level</td>
<td>F (3, 45)= 2.25, ns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 3 x 4 actions</td>
<td>F (3, 60)= 1.34, ns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 4 x 4 actions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Intragroup level</td>
<td>F (3, 84)= 1.87, ns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 5 x 4 actions</td>
<td>F (3, 279)= 2.07, ns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 6 x 4 actions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Intergroup level</td>
<td>F (3, 174)= .63, ns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 7 x 4 actions</td>
<td>F (3, 102)= .35, ns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 8 x 4 actions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Group/Societal level</td>
<td>F (3, 195)= 1.12, ns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 9 x 4 actions</td>
<td>F (3, 195)= 2.22, ns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 10 x 4 actions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3: Internal reliability for each of the items at each level measuring perceived barriers across the four actions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels</th>
<th>Alpha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Intraindividual level</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 1 x 4 actions</td>
<td>.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 2 x 4 actions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Interpersonal level</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 3 x 4 actions</td>
<td>.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 4 x 4 actions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Intragroup level</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 5 x 4 actions</td>
<td>.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 6 x 4 actions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Intergroup level</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 7 x 4 actions</td>
<td>.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 8 x 4 actions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Group/Societal level</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 9 x 4 actions</td>
<td>.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 10 x 4 actions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4: Labels of listed variables in cluster analysis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Label</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SR_22</td>
<td>Most people think that old people are too concerned about themselves to bring about changes in society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SR_15</td>
<td>Most people think that old people are too apathetic to bring about changes in society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SR_5</td>
<td>Most people think that old people have no views in common with young people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SR_27</td>
<td>Most people think that old people cannot be involved in action to bring about changes in society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SR_24</td>
<td>Most people think that old people are narrow minded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SR_12</td>
<td>Most people think that old people find it difficult to communicate their views to younger people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SR_3</td>
<td>Most people think that old people have wisdom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SR_10</td>
<td>Most people think that old people are happy to take risks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SR_11</td>
<td>Most people think that old people want to impose their beliefs on other people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SR_21</td>
<td>Most people think that old people are a minority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SR_26</td>
<td>Most people think that old people feel other age groups want to know about their opinions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SR_8</td>
<td>Most people think that old people live in the past</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SR_23</td>
<td>Most people think that young people are prejudiced against old people</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Loadings on the discriminant function were as follows:

Table 5a: Standardised Canonical Discriminant Function Coefficients.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Function 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SR_22</td>
<td>.356</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SR_27</td>
<td>.327</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SR_15</td>
<td>.289</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SR_21</td>
<td>.222</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SR_11</td>
<td>.198</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SR_12</td>
<td>.198</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SR_8</td>
<td>.175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SR_5</td>
<td>.171</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SR_23</td>
<td>.158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SR_24</td>
<td>.145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SR_3</td>
<td>-.220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SR_10</td>
<td>-.213</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SR_26</td>
<td>-.208</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5b: Structure matrix coefficients.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Function 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SR_22</td>
<td>.540</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SR_24</td>
<td>.466</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SR_15</td>
<td>.426</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SR_27</td>
<td>.385</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SR_5</td>
<td>.375</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SR_8</td>
<td>.370</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SR_25</td>
<td>.369</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SR_23</td>
<td>.355</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SR_12</td>
<td>.343</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SR_14</td>
<td>.328</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SR_11</td>
<td>.327</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SR_18</td>
<td>.291</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SR_9</td>
<td>.259</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SR_21</td>
<td>.257</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SR_20</td>
<td>.256</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SR_28</td>
<td>.243</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SR_16</td>
<td>.150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SR_19</td>
<td>.120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SR_1</td>
<td>.066</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SR_13</td>
<td>-.232</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SR_2</td>
<td>-.223</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SR_26</td>
<td>-.215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SR_3</td>
<td>-.199</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SR_29</td>
<td>-.187</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SR_10</td>
<td>-.130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SR_6</td>
<td>-.119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SR_7</td>
<td>-.106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SR_4</td>
<td>-.072</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SR_17</td>
<td>-.071</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 6: $\chi^2$ between the two clusters and total number of types and antitypes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clusters</th>
<th>Types</th>
<th>Antitypes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SR (-)</td>
<td>395</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SR (+)</td>
<td>288</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$(\chi^2 = 2.041, df=1, n.s.)$

Table 7: $\chi^2$ between the two clusters and types/antitypes for the action of writing to the MP.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clusters</th>
<th>T1</th>
<th>T2</th>
<th>T3</th>
<th>A1</th>
<th>A2</th>
<th>A3</th>
<th>A4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SR (-)</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SR (+)</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$(\chi^2 = 6.89, df=6, n.s.)$

Table 8: $\chi^2$ between the two clusters and types/antitypes for the action of explaining to other people about the importance of the problem.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clusters</th>
<th>T1</th>
<th>T2</th>
<th>T3</th>
<th>T4</th>
<th>A1</th>
<th>A2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SR (-)</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SR (+)</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$(\chi^2 = 9.125, df=5, n.s.)$

Table 9: $\chi^2$ between the two clusters and types/antitypes for the action of joining an informal discussion group.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clusters</th>
<th>T1</th>
<th>T2</th>
<th>T3</th>
<th>T4</th>
<th>T5</th>
<th>A1</th>
<th>A2</th>
<th>A3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SR (-)</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SR (+)</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$(\chi^2 = 12.85, df=7, n.s.)$

Table 10: $\chi^2$ between the two clusters and types/antitypes for the action of joining a group demonstrating.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clusters</th>
<th>T1</th>
<th>T2</th>
<th>T3</th>
<th>T4</th>
<th>A1</th>
<th>A2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SR (-)</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SR (+)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$(\chi^2 = 4.52, df=5, n.s.)$
APPENDIX EIGHT

List of Quotes of Barriers

(Study Three)
LIST OF QUOTES OF BARRIERS

Additional barriers identified by the respondents in the questionnaire were classified according to five levels, i.e. intraindividual, interpersonal, intragroup, intergroup and societal:

**Intraindividual:**

- **Age** - Age
- **Cog** - Cognition
- **Dem** - Action: Demonstrating
- **Exp** - Action: Explain to other people about the importance of the problem
- **Inter** - Interest
- **Kno** - Knowledge
- **Mot** - Motivation
- **MP** - Action: write to the Member of Parliament
- **Other** - Others
- **Out** - Outcome
- **Pers** - Personality
- **P-ex** - Personal experience
- **Ph-h** - Physical/health
- **P-pol** - Political orientation
- **Ppri** - Personal priorities
- **Res** - Resources: Material/Non-material constraints
- **S-eff** - Self-efficacy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Cat.</th>
<th>Quote</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MP</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>“I hate writing letters”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MP</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>“Poor composition of letter” (MP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MP</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>“I campaigned for my MP in last election; I find it embarrassing to write to him now”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MP</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>“I prefer to speak for feedback” (ref. to MP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Res</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>“I do not have the time”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Res</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>“Costs (money)”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Res</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>“I lack the resources”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Res</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>“It takes a lot of effort”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dem</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>“Dislike of crowds” / “Large groups demonstrating”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ph-h</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>“Falling off of hearing ability / My hearing is not good in groups”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ph-h</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>“Physical handicap/health” / “physical limitations” - and in the future</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ph-h</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>“Loss of mobility” / “Poor mobility”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ph-h</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>“Standing for long periods makes it difficult”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ph-h</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>“Disability”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ph-h</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>“Illness”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ph-h</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>“Loss of agility”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cog</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>“Mental health” / “Dementia” / “Memory”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>--------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cog</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>“Lack of concentration”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>“My age and infirmity” / “increasing age clearly increases the difficulties of action” / “Increasing age a great barrier: 65-75 easy; 75+ difficult”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>“Old age diminishes interest in civic matters”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pers</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>“I am shy of public speaking”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pers</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>“I lack persistence in effort” / “Laziness”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pers</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>“I lack obsession on the subject” / “I do not feel strongly enough about the issue” / “not a major concern of mine”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pers</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>“Inability to produce a logical argument”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pers</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>“My self-assurance”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pers</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>“My Openness”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pers</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>“My personality and temperament”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pers</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>“My procrastination” (delay, postponing until tomorrow)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pers</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>“Selfishness”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pers</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>“Cynicism”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pers</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>“I may lack the determination if no immediate threat”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S-eff</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>“My contribution is small amount of influence”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S-eff</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>“Lack of personal power”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S-eff</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>“Difficulty in ascertaining the facts”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S-eff</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>“My fear that I should be unable to recall the facts”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S-eff</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>“My confidence”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mot</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>“Insufficient motivation” / “apathy” / “lack of interest to influence things”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mot</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>“I am not interested in this action for this particular issue”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mot</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>“Disillusionment”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mot</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>“Inertia”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mot</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>“Lack of encouragement”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inter</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>“Living in a beautiful country area where this type of action is unnecessary makes one less interested in others actions, although not unsympathetic”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inter</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>“I would be ineffective because of my inactivity. Just one more body”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exp</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>“For this action one has to be literate, intelligent and able to argue for the cause” (explain...)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kno</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Knowledge: “Not knowing where and when a demo. will take place” / “Poor publicity about existing groups” / “lack of information early enough to alter”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kno</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>“Not enough knowledge about the issue”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kno</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>“The difficulty of knowing all the relevant points”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kno</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>“No educational background to the problem”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P-pol</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>“My democracy”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P-pol</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>“My political will”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P-pol</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>“My political interest”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P-pol</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>“I lack the confidence in politicians”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pexp</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>“Personal experience on other issues would suggest it is pretty useless”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Pexp 20 “Due to my past experience: Disillusioned in the light of past effort”
Ppri 27 “I have to help my partner (increasingly dependent)”
Ppri 36 “I am very active on other issues and can’t split my priorities”
Ppri 43 “My own problems and duties” / “Individual priorities”
Ppri 56 “I prefer negotiation because it is more long lasting”
Ppri 21 “Lack of thought given to the problem”
Out 30 “Frustration”
Out 34 “My fear of consequences”
Other 33 “My entrenched (established) attitudes”
Other 63 “My class”
Other 35 “Distractibility”
Other 50 “Physical danger”

Interpersonal:

Cont - Contact
Dem - Action: Demonstrating
Int - Intrusion
MP - Action: Write to the member of Parliament
Ofee - Other people’s feelings
Opri - Other people’s priorities
Other - Others
Pers - Personality
Res - Resources
S-co - Self-confidence
Taut - Tautology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Cat.</th>
<th>Quote</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cont 1</td>
<td>“to be ridiculed” / “I would be too embarrassed”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cont 5</td>
<td>“Most people do not want to bother” / “get discouraged by lack of response”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cont 7</td>
<td>“People have different ethics”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cont 16</td>
<td>“Lack of contact with like-minded people”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cont 17</td>
<td>“I have never been asked to join”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cont 18</td>
<td>“Necessity to be asked for opinion”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Int 3</td>
<td>“People think that you may be intruding into their business” / “Too much interference with other people’s way of life” / “Freedom of speech and action”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S-co 4</td>
<td>“Lack of confidence in public”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pers 10</td>
<td>“Lack of and difficulty in communication” / “Type of person/people relationships”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Res 9</td>
<td>“Difficult to have access to groups”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opri 11</td>
<td>“Others are too busy to take me”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ofee 13</td>
<td>“The wish not to hurt the feelings of the other person”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taut</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>&quot;No need to ‘preach the converted’ / (you don’t need to tell them because they have the same ideas as you)&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>&quot;Facts are twisted to suit the case&quot; (in explaining...)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>&quot;I don’t believe in brain-washing&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>&quot;Too much attention is paid to people who I would describe as “do gooders”. They have generally overlooked the need for discipline and standards in society to make it function practically&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MP</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>&quot;Writing too often might reduce the effectiveness. They might think ‘oh not her/him again!’&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dem</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>&quot;Many people who demonstrate do so for the sake of protest rather than because they hold their views by rational thought processes or open minded discussion&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Related to age:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Cat.</th>
<th>Quote</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cont</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>&quot;Very little contact with people since retirement&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cont</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>&quot;Older contacts are dying&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cont</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>&quot;As you get older, you tend to mix with more like-minded people&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Intragroup:**

- **Dem** - Action: Join an group demonstrating
- **Dis** - Action: Join an informal discussion group
- **Int** - Interest
- **Lon** - Loneliness
- **Min** - Minority
- **Ppri** - Personal priorities
- **SMob** - Social mobility
- **Uni** - Applicable to all age groups

**Related to older people:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Cat.</th>
<th>Quote</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SMob</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>&quot;Too many older people feel everything modern is “terrible”&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMob</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>&quot;People of my age already set in their opinions/habits&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMob</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>&quot;To care about the environment is something new and strange to older people&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lon</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>&quot;Older people becoming isolated-lonely&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Int</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>&quot;People with good secondary pensions not interested&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uni</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>&quot;The old are no more united than the young&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uni</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>&quot;I do not think anything significant can be done by people of any age&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
"Me and the group":

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Cat.</th>
<th>Quote</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>&quot;The group might not have my political views&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>The people who join them are often too fond of the sound of their own voices. Time is better spent listening to experts and making up one's own mind separately&quot; (discussion groups)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>&quot;The type of people involved in the group&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>&quot;I feel antagonistic towards people like 'swampy, hunt suboteurs, etc&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>&quot;Joining a group would be talking to the converted&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>&quot;Others in such groups tend to be the lonely and bored and would therefore be ineffective&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>&quot;Lack of funds to pursue our aims&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>&quot;Motivation for joining is reduced by perception that I would do so for the pleasure of debate, not from any expectation of effectiveness&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

"Structural group":

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Cat.</th>
<th>Quote</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>&quot;The structure of the group&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>&quot;Lack and difficulty of organisation and lack of provision of such groups&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>&quot;The group would have no influence/power&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>&quot;A suitable forum that is truly representative&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>&quot;The group not addressing 'real' issues</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>&quot;Lack of one organised retired voice&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>&quot;Local discussion groups are ineffectual&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>&quot;People are not united&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>&quot;Party discipline is too strict&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>&quot;Groups tend to quarrel among themselves&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>&quot;It is only recently that people have become better educated and better informed -only a minority of my generation had a university education&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>&quot;Lack of clarity and objectives&quot; (demos)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>&quot;Visible results in reasonable time scale&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>&quot;The group is not an answer to the problem&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>&quot;Such groups appear to be too small to be effective and attended by those who do not need them&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Others:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Cat.</th>
<th>Quote</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dis</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>&quot;Uncertainty as to the value of such discussions&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dis</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>&quot;Lack of discussion groups with any authority&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dis</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>&quot;Discussion groups talk, talk and talk and too few solutions&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dem</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>&quot;Demonstrators back by the wrong motive&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dem</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>&quot;The rhetoric and language used at a group demonstrating is often inappropriate&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Min</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>&quot;Only a minority of people wish to use this method and they are therefore regarded as minority interests&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ppri</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Ingroup deviation: &quot;I do a lot of work for community care and my church and do not want to take on more&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Intergroup:

Young - old:

**Inter** - Interaction

**Mot** - Motivating

**Ope** - Other's perceptions of the group

**Pow** - Power

**Res** - Lack of responsibility

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Cat.</th>
<th>Quote</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ope</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>&quot;Younger people are unable to welcome you&quot; / &quot;The ‘anti-old’ attitude of many younger people&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ope</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>&quot;Younger people think older people have lost the ability to think&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ope</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>&quot;Young people would consider me a ‘fuddy duddy’&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ope</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>&quot;Younger people don’t listen&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Res</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>&quot;Leave it to younger ones&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intera</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>&quot;Nearly all people I meet regularly are 65+, so I do not reach the young&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ope</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>&quot;Younger, especially middle age approach to old age&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intera</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>&quot;Older people tend to talk among themselves rather than to younger people&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mot</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>&quot;Future: succeeding generations will learn to care&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mot</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>&quot;Future: succeeding generations may unite on this&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pow</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>&quot;Notoriety of the older generation&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Structural:

**Auth** - Authorities

**Dem** - Action: Demonstrating

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Cat.</th>
<th>Quote</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Auth</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>“The initiative by the local authority has only just begun - so far it seems muddled and inefficient”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auth</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>“Politicians do not respond to such groups” / “They do not listen”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dem</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>“Demos are always taken over by other militant groups, often with different objectives than that being demonstrated”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dem</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>“Demonstrations annoy the majority” / “alienate the public”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Societal:

**MP** - Action: Write to the Member of Parliament

**Dem** - Action: Demonstrating

**Res** - Resources

**Med** - Media

**Auth** - Authorities

**Tem** - Temporal dimension

**Nat** - National identity

**Inter** - Interest

**Mot** - Motivation

**Other** - Others

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Cat.</th>
<th>Quote</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MP</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>“knowing that the MP will not respond himself but send a bland government statement” / “inefficiency” / “no influence” / “unsympathetic MP”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MP</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>“MP’s only want power”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MP</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>“MP is pressured and gets burn-out”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MP</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>“Power is drifting to MEP’s, who are in the grip of Brussels bureaucrats”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MP</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>“The MP supports and votes only according to his party’s wishes”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MP</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>“MP’s ‘toe the party line’ if in power”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MP</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>“MP’s are very unlikely to take up new causes”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MP</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>“Main problem is our voting system. Always having to live in an area where your MP is not from your favoured party. We need to switch to proportional representation”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MP</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>“MP’s are not always of the same political persuasion as the votes”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MP</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>“MP is too busy”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MP</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>“MP’s allegiance to ‘Party’ is greater than to constituents”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Res</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>&quot;Expense/physical hardship/threat of legal action or proceedings&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Res</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>&quot;There is a lack of easily accessible local organisations&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Res</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>&quot;Lack of suitable public transport&quot;/ &quot;transport difficulties&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Res</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>&quot;Distance&quot;/ &quot;difficulty in travelling&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Res</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>&quot;Late meetings -evening&quot; -fear/ &quot;confrontation of aggressive types&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Res</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>&quot;Lack of office facilities to organise&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Res</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>&quot;Who finances any decisions made?&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Med</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Lack of media publicity/attention for successful actions. It hampers further success</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Med</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>&quot;The press-media have too much influence/distortion&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Med</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>&quot;If any proposed action was over-publicised&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Med</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>&quot;Media perception of anyone over 45&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dem</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>&quot;Often violence ensues&quot;/ &quot;existing violent pressure groups&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dem</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>&quot;Manipulated (demo.)&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dem</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>&quot;Lack of national structure for campaigning&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dem</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>&quot;Many groups are law-breakers&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dem</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>&quot;Demonstrating outdoors in winter weather&quot;/ &quot;extreme heat&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dem</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>&quot;Implications of breaking the law&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dem</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>&quot;There are too many pressure groups&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dem</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>&quot;Too many 'demos' are politically biased&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dem</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>&quot;Demonstrators tend to hold extreme views&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mot</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>&quot;Apathy amongst less civic minded&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auth</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>&quot;The system of voting leads to Electoral Dictatorship. True representation is an illusion in the small irregular constituencies&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auth</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>&quot;Public and private authority’s&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auth</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>&quot;Government in this society does not listen to the old nor the young&quot;/ &quot;Lack of effort in the present and long term structure of the government system&quot;/ &quot;lack of will&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inter</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>(explain...): &quot;Most people are not influenced simply by reason but by their own psychological needs&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inter</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>&quot;The average person has little desire to do anything&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inter</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>&quot;Society today is not interested&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inter</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>&quot;At least 50% of people (including older people) have no interest at all in public affairs&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tem</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>&quot;Increasing personal isolation brought about by Internet&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tem</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>&quot;No social stigma over immorality&quot; (social morals are not as they used to be...)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tem</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>&quot;The useful experience may be irrelevant now. Times have changed already&quot; / &quot;my own feeling that things have changed so enormously&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nat</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>&quot;British do not discuss controversial points&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>&quot;Capitalism would get in the way&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>&quot;Church attendance is low; leaders ineffective&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>&quot;Certain issues overlap&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>&quot;Lack of referendum on policies&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>“People feel helpless”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
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<td>------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>“People are very busy”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>“The car owning and television owning society keeps people at home”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>“Society discourages action”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>“The main barrier is society itself; it is interested in short-term profitability as against long-term environmental and ecological richness”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>“Societal accusation of ‘scaremongering’ (spreading rumours of disaster) - environmental groups, especially Friends of the Earth and Greenpeace”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>“Ageism stereotyping”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
"Life is not easy for any of us. But what of that? We must have perseverance and above all confidence in ourselves. We must believe that we are gifted for something and that this thing must be attained."

Marie Curie (Maria Skłodowska-Curie); 1867-1934.