

The Alter-Globalization Movement in Germany and France

Why do people participate?

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Guest Talk at Carleton University, November 23,
2010

Goals of this Inductive Study

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graph TD; A[STEP 1:  
Explain the development in Membership of Attac  
Germany and France] --> B[STEP 2:  
Establish General Patterns of Engagement  
(Based on insights from the interviews with members, former  
members, and sympathizers of Attac)]; B --> C[STEP 3:  
Predict the Development of SMOs More Generally];
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STEP 1:
Explain the development in Membership of Attac
Germany and France

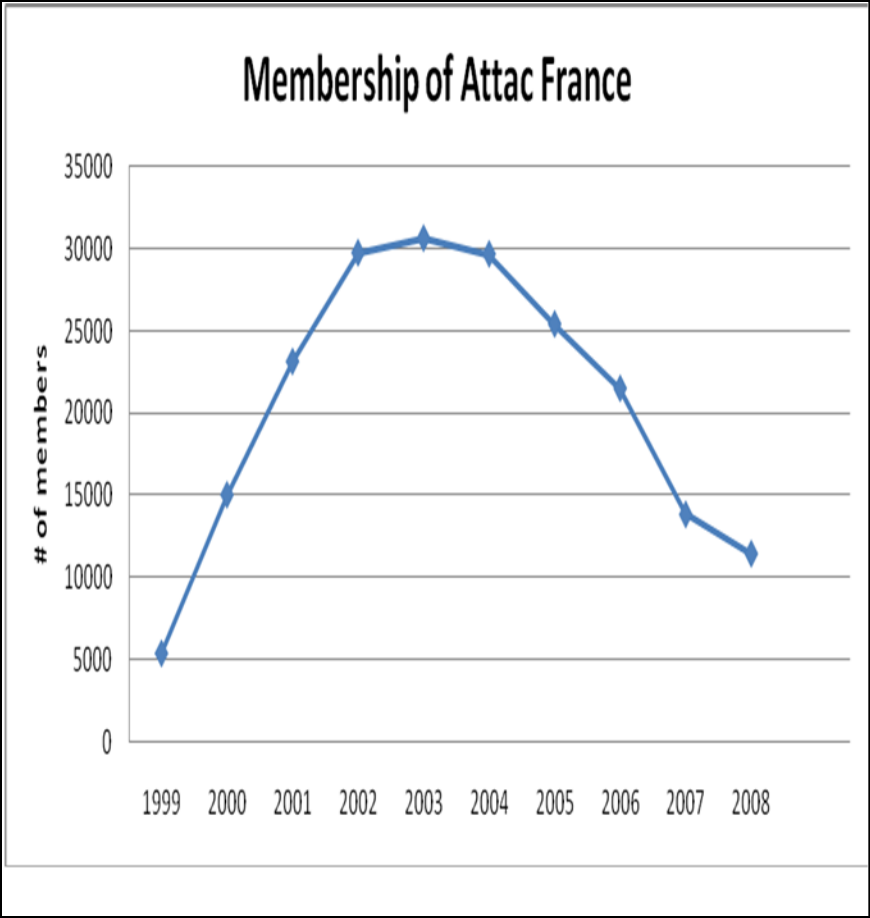
STEP 2:
Establish General Patterns of Engagement
(Based on insights from the interviews with members, former
members, and sympathizers of Attac)

STEP 3:
Predict the Development of SMOs More Generally

Why Attac Germany and France?

- Why Attac?
 - Representative New Social Movement Organization
 - One of the most influential alter-globalization groups world wide
 - Group that attracts a wide variety of interests
- Why the German and French branches of Attac?
 - Similar structural conditions
 - Organization has identical ideology, goals
 - Emerged within same protest cycle
 - BUT DISTINCT DEVELOPMENT

Attac Germany/France



Demand and supply side nexus can help us shed some light upon these distinct trajectories

Individual motifs for involvement (Demand side explanations)

**Ideology
Motif**

Provide appealing
Frames and
rationales for
action

**Instrumentality
Motif**

Stage effective
campaigns

**Identity
Motif**

Provide an
accommodating
structure and a
pleasant
environment

Organization's ability to satisfy individual motifs (Supply side explanations)

Open Questions in the literature

So we know there are different motives, but...

How do they interact/ play out?

Demand side puzzles

1. Which one of the motives is more important to explain why people participate in SMOs ?
2. What are mobilizational patterns of different sorts of activists?

Supply side puzzles

1. What happens to a SMO if it fails to provide any of the three motifs ?
2. Under what conditions does a SMO wane?

How do Demand and Supply Interact for Attac?

METHODS

Purpose: Understand how organizational features and decisions by the leadership have impacted activists

Format: Open/Semi-Structured Interviews

Sample Size: 182 activists, former activists and sympathizers of Attac

Lead Question: What renders engagement a satisfying endeavor?

Follow-up Questions: asked them precisely about any of three motifs

Final Question: Distribute a total of 10 points to the 3 motifs.

Other methods/materials:

- Participant Observation of Attac meetings/events.
- Official Attac documents, e-mails, newspaper articles

Sample Characteristics of Attac Members

- High education
- Secure financial situation
- Lots of network connections/ high amount of Civic Skills
- Post-materialist values
- Activists have acquired these post-materialist values prior to their entry into Attac



Sample characteristics are very similar between Germany and France

Explaining the Membership of ATTAC FRANCE

□ Attac France:

□ **Attractive during first 7 years because it...**

- Offered a novel ideology
- Staged successful campaigns
- Provided a structure that facilitated the activists' entry from other organizations

□ **Shattered by an internal crisis in its 7th year, the organization began to decline**

- some left because they do not want to be in a group that denigrates each other
- instrumentally-oriented members have left
- mainly ideologues have remained faithful

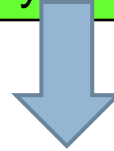
Explaining the Membership of ATTAC GERMANY

- Attac Germany:
 - ▣ Took off one year after the organization's creation
 - ▣ Has continued to grow since then thanks to
 - an appealing ideology
 - some very successful campaigns
 - an attractive structure
 - ▣ Current membership is mainly composed of rationalist oriented members. Ideologues make up around 20 percent of the activists, purely identity oriented members are absent.

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STEP 3:
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Engagement Patterns: Instrumentally-Oriented Activists

- ❑ Choose (from a pool of organizations that broadly match their values) the one with maximum policy impact
- ❑ Have no special attachment to one group
- ❑ Display engagement that is short-term oriented
- ❑ Show fluctuating patterns of engagement (the more a campaign has policy impact, the more they are involved).

Ideologically-Oriented Activists

- ❑ Concerned with organization's positions: The higher the match between an individual's values and the organization's positions, the higher his or her involvement
- ❑ Show stable patterns of engagement
- ❑ Are long-term oriented
- ❑ Seek to acquire knowledge, create a microcosm of preferred world
- ❑ See political relevancy/strength of campaigns and actions as secondary

Identity-Oriented Activists are absent

Rather the identity motif is complementary to the two other motifs:

- ▣ almost all activists do not see their political engagement as a fun, free time activity
- ▣ Chip away time from other activities (family, friends, sports clubs) for their political engagement.

But: functioning group dynamics have a different value for different sorts of activists, in particular for those more instrumentally-oriented people, these functioning group dynamics are a necessary condition for engagement

Impact of an unpleasant group ambiance

- Some activists leave because they deem activism in a group that is internally desintegrated annoying and not deem it worth their time.
- Instrumentalists leave because a crisis evaporates all political leverage
- Only ideologues, who believe in the project stay if the crisis does not change the ideological composition of the group

Unpleasant group atmosphere
(most likely triggered by an internal crisis)

The importance of the Identity motif for leaving a SMO

Identity Motif

or

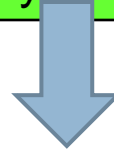
Rationality Motif



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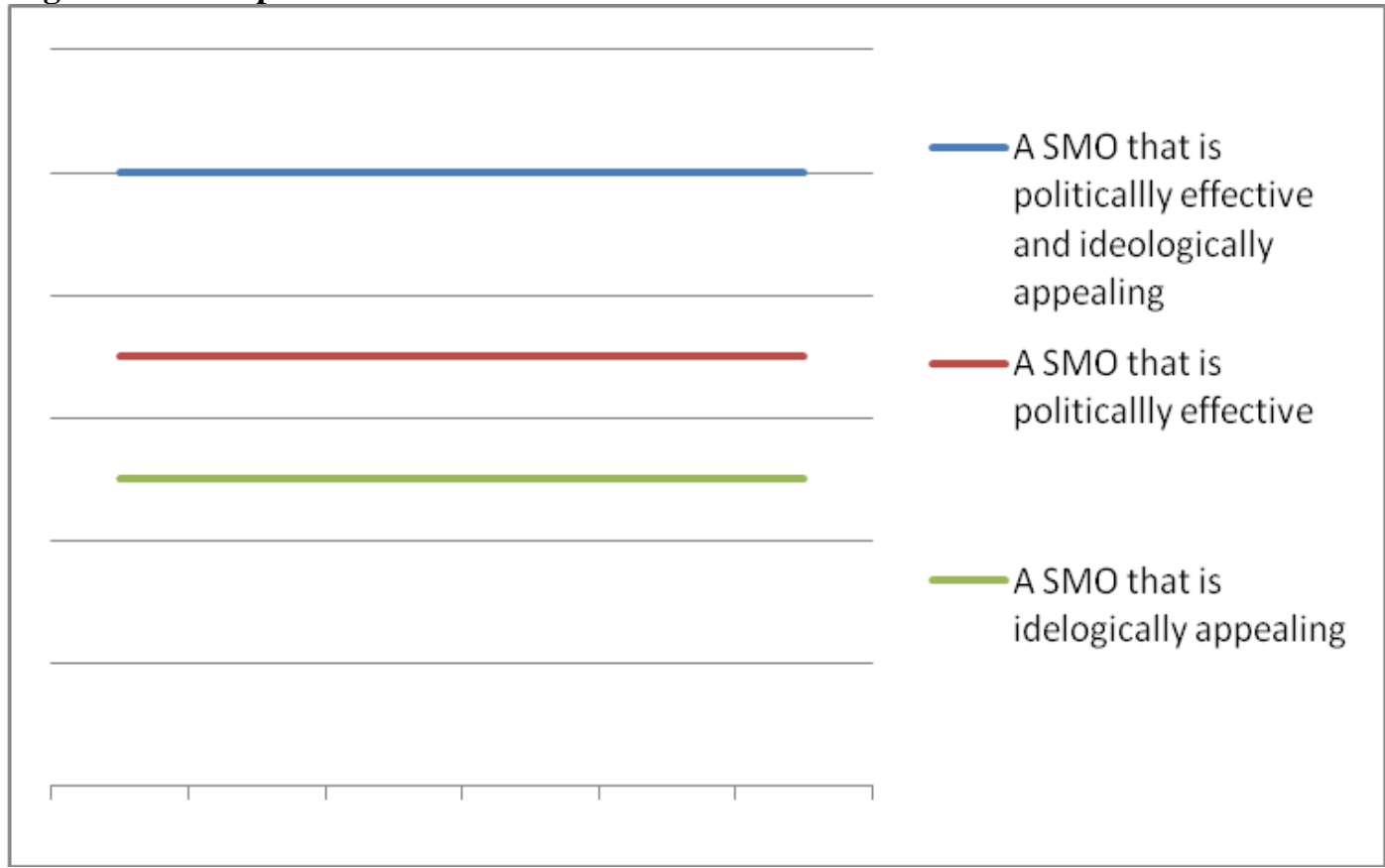
3. From Engagement Patterns to General Predictions about Membership in SMOs

A typology of SMOs

Type of SMOs	Politically effective and ideologically appealing SMO	Politically effective SMO	Ideologically appealing SMO
Membership	High	Relatively high	Relatively low

Membership of the Three Ideal Types of SMOs

High membership



No membership

Tentative predictions about the development of SMOs

- Once a SMO loses its political leverage *it will never regain it again and can at best exist as an ideologically appealing group.*
- An internal crisis will, at best, take away an organization's political leverage (instrumentally oriented people will leave). At worst, it will destroy an association (both rational and ideologically-oriented people leave)
- An ideologically driven organization can be durable, but will never (re)-gain political leverage and rational driven members, it will exist until it loses its ideologues

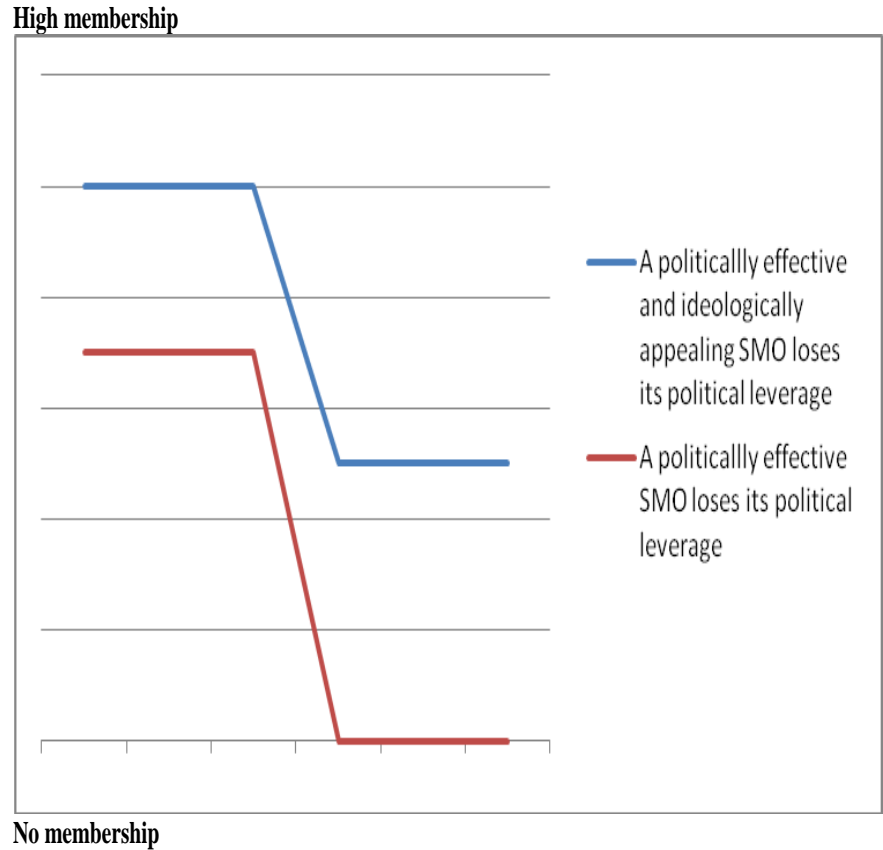
Conclusions/ Future research

- ❑ In addition to explaining the membership of Attac Germany and France, this study is a first step toward the development of a general theory that both:
 - ❑ establishes engagement patterns of activists in SMOs
 - ❑ explains and predicts the membership of SMOs
- ❑ Future research:
 - ❑ Conduct similar studies on other groups
 - ❑ Examine rightist groups
 - ❑ Include Non-western groups

Development of Membership if a Group Loses its Political Leverage

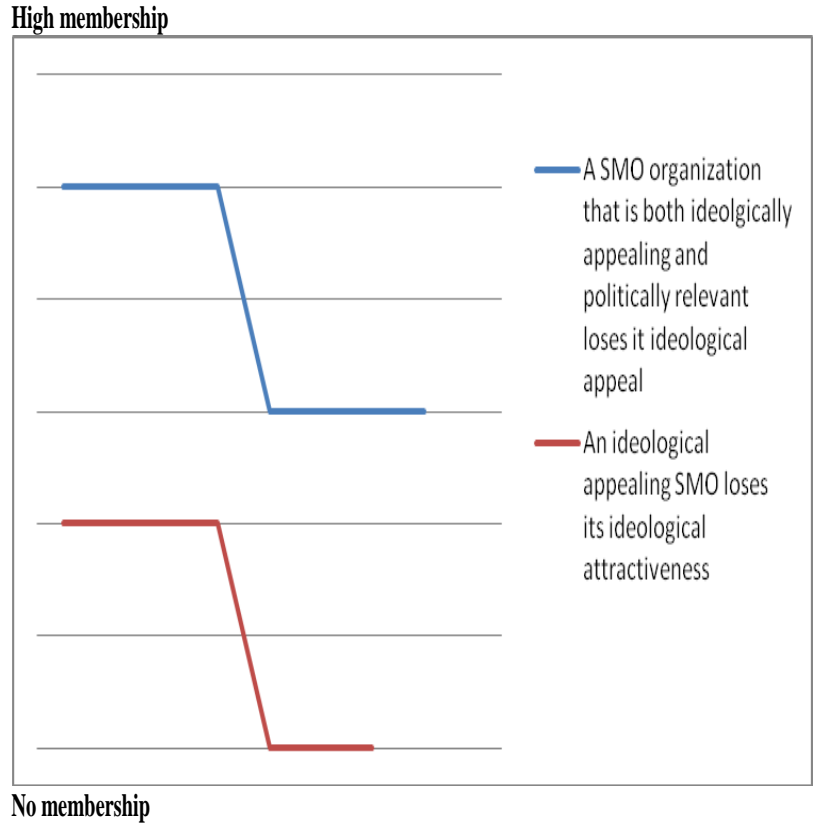
-Once an SMO loses its political leverage *it will never regain it again.*

-However, providing that it has ideologues it will exist until it loses these ideologues



Development of a Group if it Loses its Ideological Appeal

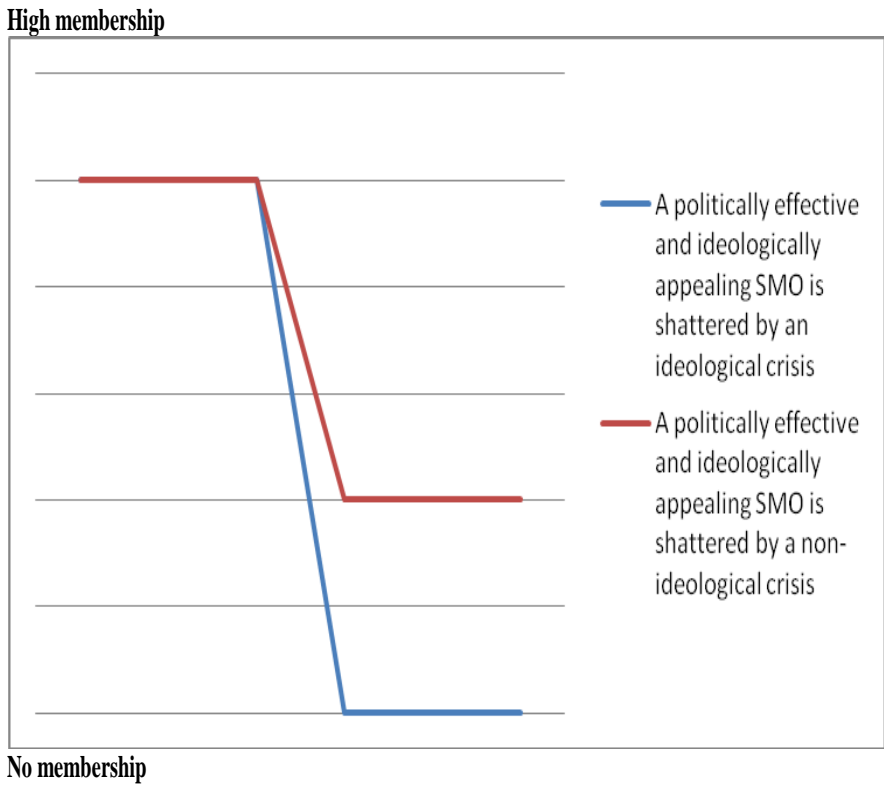
- If a SMO loses its ideological appeal, it will at best become a politically relevant group



Development of an Effective/Appealing SMO Faced with an Internal Crisis

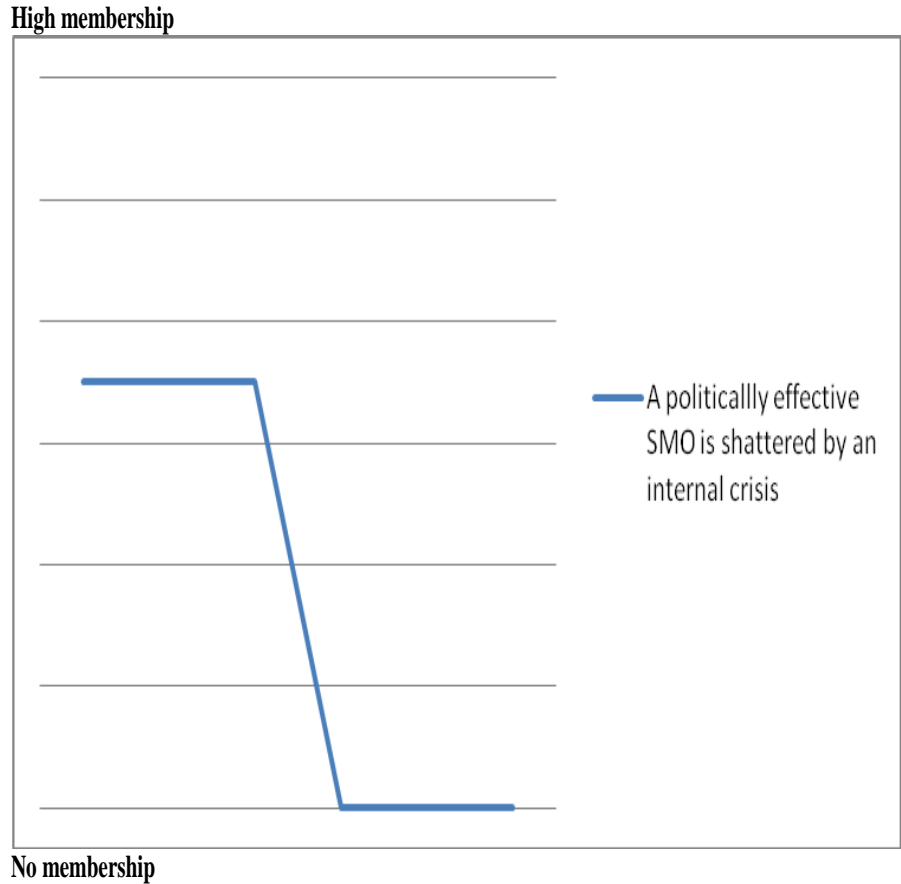
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-At worst, an internal crisis will destroy an association (both rational and ideologically-oriented people leave)



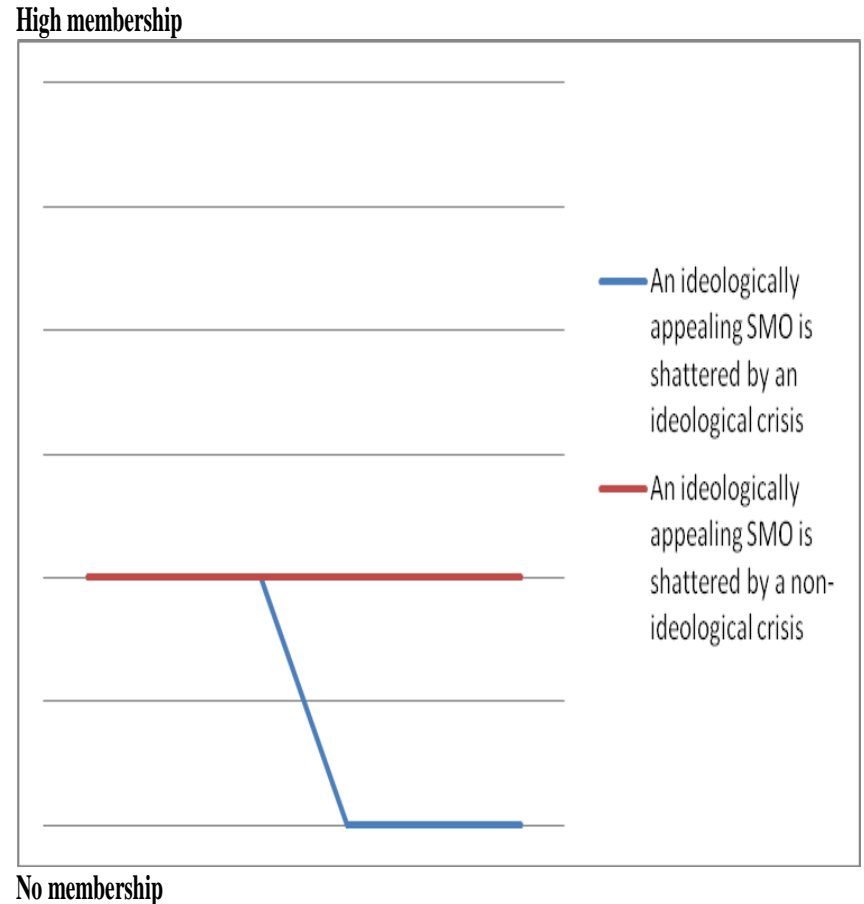
Development of a Politically Effective SMO Faced with an Internal Crisis

A politically relevant organization will vanish because a crisis signifies that an organization will lose its political clout



Development of an Ideologically-Appealing group Faced With an Internal Crisis

An ideologically driven organization can be durable, but will never (re)-gain political leverage and rational driven members



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