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RepMut : a group processes and intergroup relations diagnostic tool
Illustrations in the field of sport and physical activity

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RepMut: the Theoretical Background

✓ Social psychology of identity processes and intergroup relations : mainly, Tajfel & Turner (1979), Turner & al. (1987) and Castel & Lacassagne (2005; 2011).
✓ Social Psychology of Language : the notion of co-construction in the social interactions (Ghiglione, 1985)

RepMut: the Methodology

RepMut (French acronym of "Représentations Mutuelles" : "Mutual Representations" in English) is **a methodological and statistical tool** that was created under the supervision of P. Castel and M.-F. Lacassagne within the Socio-Psychology and Sport Management Laboratory of the University of Burgundy. This tool permits, in an **automatically digitalized**, way to **explore as exhaustively as possible the mutual representations contents and identify the identity processes** involved in **inter-group relations** (between individuals belonging to different groups) or **intra-group or interpersonal relations** (between individuals belonging to the same group and/or their relation to another group), in a given context, like collective sports.
The methodology is based on a qualitative phase followed by a quantitative phase:

1. The **qualitative** phase **: collecting** representations content. According to the aims of the study, we can treat all or part of the **36 types of intra and intergroup representation** (representation of the out-group, representation of one's own group (the in-group), the meta-representation (i.e. the representations that individuals think that the out-group foster about the in-group), the stereo-representation (i.e. the representation that the individuals think that the in-group holds about the out-group), self-representation, supra-representation (the representation that the individuals have towards a super-ordinate group (i.e. a group gathering both in and out-group)...). Operationally, the participants are asked to produce adjectives that characterize the correspondent object (in-group, out-group, supra-group...). Instead of groups or oneself as object of the adjectives collecting, the object can also be traits, that are shown to be pertinent in terms of intergroup relations, instead of groups (i.e. certain aspects like warmth, or competence, physical skills...).

2. The **quantitative** phase consists of inviting participants to **evaluate their own answers** mainly on three basic **dimensions**: social status (how well people with this characteristic are at the top or bottom of the social scale), **value** (to what extent this characteristic reveals a positive/negative attitude) and **representativeness** (to what extent this characteristic characterizes the in-group and the out and the supra-group and oneself). As for the representativeness, other dimensions, justified by the theory or the practice, can be added, like the extent to which each characteristic is linked to a physical/manual dimension and/or an intellectual dimension and/or a relational one...

As soon as the data collecting finished, **an ensemble of more than 300 statistical indexes** (like conformity, discrimination...) can be **generated**, which permit to reveal exhaustive and **detailed patterns permitting to analyse** and go further in the measurement of **the psychosocial processes** that underpin the **dynamics between individuals** belonging to the same group and/or individuals from different groups.
As illustrations, hereafter two studies that made use of RepMut.

Illustrations in the field of sport and physical activity

The illustrations deal respectively with inter-ethnic relation in basketball and gender relation in soccer.
The literature about these intergroup relations emphases the classical effect of a hierarchical disequilibrium (top position for men in the field of soccer, see Chalabaev, Sarrazin & Fontayne, 2009 ; top position for Whites in the field of basketball, see Coakley, 2010).
Mental and physical skills are stereotypically attributed according to the gender (Prentice & Carranza, 2002) and skin colour (Norris & Jones, 1998).
Therefore, we wanted to question the admissibility of these intergroup positioning among the correspondent groups. In fact, we have not asked so far in the literature this relation structure (always assumed to be a dominated-dominant relation). Do people admit this relation structure configuration? How do they (specially Men-Women; Whites-Blacks) manage to acquire and maintain a positive identity according to the stereotypes each group holds, specially in sport domains (like soccer and basketball).

Study 1
Gender relation in the field of soccer

• **Participants: 64 men** (M_age = 19.87, SD = 1.70) and **44 women** (M_age = 19.56, SD = 1.48)
• **Procedure:**
  ✓ Qualitative phase : participants were asked to list 5 adjectives (traits) that characterize physical and mental skills for soccer player.
  ✓ Quantitative phase : participants were asked to assess the proportion they estimate members of each group (men/women) hold the listed traits.
• **Measures : from 0 [no one possesses this trait] to 100 [all of them possess this trait]**

Study 2
Race relation in the field of basketball

• **Participants: 50 white men** (M_age = 19.03, SD = 1.42)
• **Procedure:**
  ✓ Qualitative phase : participants were asked to list 5 adjectives (traits) that characterize Whites (in-group) and Blacks (out-group) basketball players.
  ✓ Quantitative phase : participants were asked to indicate at which point they believe each of these characteristics are (1) associated to exterior positions (central) and interior positions (non central) and (2) associated to mental and physical skills
• **Measures : from 0 [no one possesses this trait] to 100 [all of them possess this trait]**
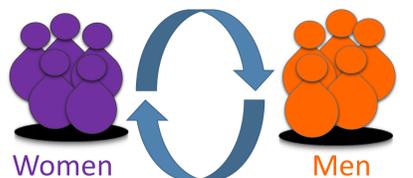
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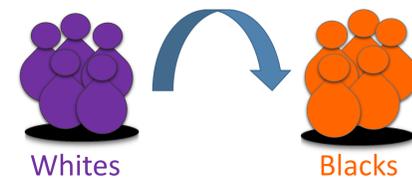
Women → Men
Physical and Mental skills attribution

Both men and women attribute physical qualities to men and mental qualities to women :

Physical : M_{Women} = 51.39, SD = 17.32 < **M_{Men}** = 67.74, SD = 15.95, p < .0001 , r = .74.
Mental : M_{Women} = 62.61, SD = 19.05 > **M_{Men}** = 58.23, SD = 18.59, p = .0011, r = .31

Men under-attribute mental qualities to women, whereas Women over-attribute these qualities to themselves:

For Men : M_{Women} = 60.38, SD = 18.03 = **M_{Men}** = 58.60, SD = 17.46, p = .0902, r = .25
For Women : : M_{Women} = 65.85, SD = 20.22 > **M_{Men}** = 57.69, SD = 20.31, p = .0226, d = .23

Whites → Blacks
Physical and Mental skills attribution

Mental and physical skills are differently attributed according to the skin colour :
Physical : M_{Whites} = 46.86, SD = 22.46 < **M_{Blacks}** = 69.54, SD = 17.98, p = .0001 , η_p^2 = .49
Mental : M_{Whites} = 53.52, SD = 23.04 > **M_{Blacks}** = 34.21, SD = 21.87, p = .0001 , η_p^2 = .46

Positions on the court :
White players for central positions and black players for non-central positions:
Central position attribution
M_{Whites} = 73.86, SD = 19.70 > M_{Blacks} = 67.92, SD = 21.88, p = .0841 , r = .24
Non-central position attribution
M_{Whites} = 52.03, SD = 21.97 > M_{Blacks} = 66.71, SD = 19.37, p = .0001 , η_p^2 = .29

Discussion and Conclusion

The study of the attribution of different types of quality or top place seems to be useful for knowing the identity spaces that are favourable to each group members.
The use of RepMut permits to enhance decision-making by offering a support to the reasoning upon the most pertinent way to envisage the equilibrium in terms of psychosocial dynamic (intergroup and/or intra-group), specially in the context of sport and physical activity.
For example, in order to enhance the performance, RepMut permits to study the perception that members of a team hold towards the adverse team or to understand the positionings of the players within their team for example after defeat. RepMut happens to be a valuable tool for decision-making in the field of physical activity, even if this tool suffers from the length of the procedure. But as pointed out above, this tool is flexible and adaptable to the fundamental/theoretical or practical aims of its use.

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