

Asymmetrical intergroup relationship in multidimensional context : an intersectional and social identity approach

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INTRODUCTION

The studies presented below analyse to what extent two statuses, acquired from two specific ingroups memberships, interact on individuals willingness to engage in collective action in order to enhance the status of the most disadvantaged ingroup. More precisely, our studies aim to determine the impact of status differences between two ingroups on support for social change. The pertinence of this multi-dimensional research question is supported by the intersectional approach (see point 1). We build our predictions on social identity theory (point 2), integrating a multi-dimensional operationalization (point 3).

1. INTERSECTIONAL APPROACH: THE MULTIDIMENSIONALITY OF DOMINATIONS AND OPPRESSIONS

Over the last thirty years, racialized women have developed the intersectional approach (Crenshaw, 1994) to study the interlocking systems of domination (e.g. class, gender and race systems) and the consequences, notably for social change, of the fact that individuals occupy different status in these different hierarchical systems and therefore a specific position in the multi-dimensional "matrix of domination" (Collins 2000). This theoretical approach gives us a conceptual framework to analyze the mutually constitutive relations among hierarchical social identities, as, for example, the impact of the position on a hierarchical system (e.g. being an immigrant) on the processes related to other hierarchical systems (e.g. the activism against sexism).

2. SOCIAL IDENTITY THEORY: A THEORY OF SOCIAL CHANGE

According to SIT (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), the choice for collective action strategy by low status group members requires social identity salience (in opposition to individual identity), permitting intergroup behaviors (in opposition to interindividual behaviors). Moreover, many studies have shown that the level of ingroup identification predicts individuals willingness to engage in intergroup competition in order to enhance ingroup status (e.g. Ouwerkerk, de Gilder, & de Vries, 2000). In sum, the more a subordinated social identity is salient in a given context and the more individuals identify with this social identity, the more they will be oriented toward social change. However, according to intersectional perspective, can we assume that a second salient ingroup membership, with a specific status, and not directly convergent with the former one, can have an impact on this process?

3. THE MULTIDIMENSIONALITY IN SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY RESEARCH

By adopting a multi-dimensional operationalization of hierarchical status memberships, Roccas (2003) has experimentally shown that individuals identify stronger with a high status group when they are simultaneously members of a low status group than when they are simultaneously members of two high status groups. Thus, « reactions to an ingroup are affected not only by the status of that group, but also by the status of another group of which an individual is simultaneously member » (Roccas, 2003, p. 351).

HYPOTHESES

• When two ingroups with different statuses are made salient, people tend to identify more with the ingroup having higher status than with the second ingroup, having lower status. The high status ingroup acts as an identity resource (Gianettoni & Simon-Vermot, 2010), repairing the negative social identity acquired by low status ingroup.

• The identity resource obtained with high status ingroup reduces peoples' willing to support social change in favor of their low status ingroup

STUDY 1

POPULATION

111 1st year bachelor Social Sciences students : 43 men and 68 women, age m=21.32

PROCEDURE

1) Low status Social Sciences student identity activation

All Participants read a vignette presenting results of a bogus study about young graduates employment. In order to activate a low status Social Sciences students identity, the results of this study explained that Social Sciences graduates have much more difficulty to find a job than Business & Administration.

2) Gender identity (low for women, high for men) activation

- In the "two salient groups condition", 62 participants (22 men, 40 women) had to read a second vignette, presenting results of a second bogus study about women and men access to jobs with responsibilities. The vignette explained that a large majority of jobs with responsibilities and power are given to men, to the detriment of women.

→ Two salient groups condition : Social Science student low status identity AND gender identity (low status for women, high status for men) were made salient.

- In the "one salient group condition", 49 participants (21 men, 28 women) didn't read this second vignette.

→ One salient group condition : only Social Science low status identity was made salient.

3) Questionnaire

Participants were invited to fill a questionnaire, "in order to know their opinion about the Social Sciences graduates employment

EXPERIMENTAL DESIGN

Participants gender (PG)

Number of Groups identities activated (NGIA)	Participants gender (PG)	
	Men	Women
	Only Social Sciences student identity (low status)	Only Social Sciences student identity (low status)
	Social Sciences student identity (low status) + man identity (high status)	Social Sciences student identity (low status) + woman identity (low status)

MEASURES

Ingroups identification (inspired from Doosje, Ellemers, & Spears, 1995)

- Gender identification e.g. « I identify with other people of my gender » (1= does not apply at all, 6=applies very much) 4 items, Cronbach Alpha=.766.
- Social Sciences students identification e.g. « I identify with other Social Sciences students » (1= does not apply at all, 6=applies very much) 4 items, Cronbach Alpha=.858.

MEDIATOR : Identification differential (IDDIF)

« Social Science students identification » – « gender identification »

DV1 : Support for social change in favor of Social Sciences students (SUPSCH)

To what extent could you support the following measures in favor of Social Sciences students ?

e.g. « create an association promoting Social Sciences students graduates in work market » (1=absolutely not, 6=totally), 4 items, Cronbach Alpha=.674

DV2 : Activism intention (AI)

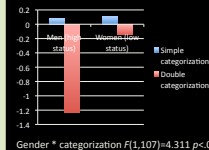
To what extent are you disposed to participate in following actions in favor of Social Science Students ?

e.g. « sign a petition » (1= not at all, 6= yes, absolutely), 5 items, Cronbach Alpha=.863

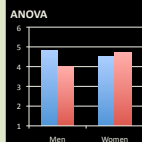
RESULTS

Identification differential (IDDIF) : ANOVA

IDDIF= « Identification with Social Sciences students » – « Identification with gender »

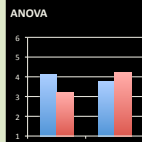


Support for social change in favor of Social Sciences students (SUPSCH)



Gender * categorization $F(1,107)=8.456$ $p<.01$

Activism intention (AI)



Gender * categorization $F(1,107)=10.192$ $p<.01$

MODERATED MEDIATION (Muller, Judd, & Yzerbyt, 2005)							
Predictors	Equation 4 (Criterion SUPSCH)		Equation 5 (Criterion IDDIF)		Equation 6 (Criterion SUPSCH)		
	b	t	b	t	b	t	
X : NGIA	-0.990	-3.139**	-0.861	-2.780**	-0.566	-1.749	
MO : PG	-0.684	-2.289*	-0.364	-1.239	-0.473	-1.622	
X*MO	1.278	2.908**	0.896	2.076*	0.794	1.796	
ME : IDDIF					0.804	2.782**	
ME*MO					-0.518	-1.862	

Note. SUPSCH= support for social change; IDDIF=identification differential; X= independent variable; NGIA=number of groups activated; MO= moderator variable; PG=Participants gender; ME=mediator variable. * $p<.05$. ** $p<.01$.

MODERATED MEDIATION (Muller et al., 2005)							
Predictors	Equation 4 (Criterion AI)		Equation 5 (Criterion IDDIF)		Equation 6 (Criterion AI)		
	b	t	b	t	b	t	
X : NGIA	-1.002	-3.192**	-0.861	-2.780**	-0.505	-1.610	
MO : PG	-0.747	-2.511*	-0.364	-1.239	-0.500	-1.770	
X*MO	1.397	3.192**	0.896	2.076*	0.831	1.937	
ME : IDDIF					0.934	3.335**	
ME*MO					-0.594	-2.203*	

Note. AI=activism intention; IDDIF=identification differential; X=Independent variable; NGIA=number of groups activated; MO= moderator variable; PG=Participants gender; ME=mediator variable. * $p<.05$. ** $p<.01$.

STUDY 2

POPULATION

109 1st year bachelor UNIL students : 59 men and 50 women, age m=21.12

PROCEDURE

Participants were invited to be the subjects of a supposed Swiss research organised in order to determine the psychosocial profile of university students in Switzerland. To do so, Participants had to realize two bogus tests.

1) Low status "holistic" ingroup identity activation

All Participants were invited to make a supposed "visual perception test", in order to determine if their perception mode was "holistic" or "analytic" (experimental manipulation inspired from Roccas, 2003). At the end of the test, all participants received the same feedback, informing them that their visual perception mode was "holistic". It was then explained that "holistic" students had generally less success in their student career than "analytic" students. Thus, "holistic" students had a low status.

2) "Dominant" (high status) or "follower" (low status) ingroup identity activation

Participants were then invited to make a supposed "personality test", in order to determine their personality. Participants were randomly assigned to receive one of two feedback about their membership in the "dominant" or "follower" group. It was then explained that "dominant" people had much more chances to have access to high status jobs than "follower" people. Thus, participants categorized as "dominant" had a high status, when participants categorized as "followers" had a low status. → 55 participants were categorized as "holistic" – "follower" (low status - low status) → 54 participants were categorized as "holistic" – "dominant" (low status - high status) After the tests, participants were invited to fill a questionnaire, "in order to know their opinion about the effect of psychosocial characteristics on people life.

MEASURES

Ingroups identification (inspired from Doosje, Ellemers, & Spears, 1995)

- « holistics » identification 4 items, Cronbach Alpha=.914.
- 2nd ingroup (« dominant » or « follower ») identification 4 items, Cronbach Alpha=.889.

MEDIATOR : Identification differential (IDDIF)

= « 2nd ingroup (« dominants » or « followers ») identification » – « holistics identification »

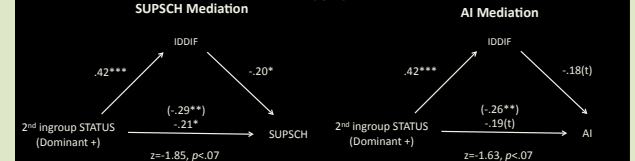
DV1 : Support for social change in favor of « holistic » students (SUPSCH)

3 items, Cronbach Alpha=.829

DV2 : Activism intention (AI)

3 items, Cronbach Alpha=.845

RESULTS



DISCUSSION

- When two non convergent ingroups with different statuses (e.g. being a woman in gender relations and being white in racial relations) are simultaneous made salient, people tend to identify more with the ingroup with high status than with the ingroup with low status (e.g. identify more with racial ingroup than gender ingroup). Thus, support for a collective action in order to improve their low status group situation (e.g. support for feminist movement) is reduced.
- In real life, social debates about hierarchical intergroup relations bring actually often more than one dimension, therefore more than a single ingroup – outgroup relationship into play. For example, debates about gender relations are often interconnected with race relations (for an example, see Gianettoni & Roux, 2010). In other ways, social debates often put individuals simultaneously at different status levels in different hierarchical systems : one can simultaneously be in a low status position in gender relations and in a high status position in race relations. Even if race and gender seem independent by nature, status inherited by the position in each of these two social systems interact not only on identification, but also on intergroup attitudes and behaviors. It seems thus important to take more intersectional perspective into account in asymmetrical intergroup relations studies.

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