

Topic/Titel	Prototypicality and Hypertypicality in the categorization of faces as “Arab”
Project description	<u>Theoretical Background:</u> Faces are potent social cues that perceivers use in order to determine racialized or ethnic group membership of individuals. The current research focuses on categorization of MENA (Middle East and North Africa) faces and perceivers mental representations of prototypicality. Prior research in German and European contexts indicates that most perceivers do not have a valid representation of the perceptual variability of faces from MENA regions but instead seem to apply a simplified visual prototype based on ethnic stereotypes. Moreover, social cognition research typically focuses on male stimuli when investigating intergroup bias without little representation of female group members. <u>Procedure:</u> The current exploratory research aims to investigate the mental representation of MENA face prototypes, employing a simple rating procedure in which German participants judge faces for their group typicality. We employ a set of face images of self-identified Arab and White women. Applying computational modeling approaches developed by Lakshi et al. (2025), we test whether subjective social category typicality is judged to be highest for average category exemplars or for ideal representatives with accentuated stereotype-specific attributes. This research project is developed and conducted in collaboration with Anjana Lakshmi (Indiana University, USA). <u>Specific Knowledge & Abilities:</u> We expect an interest and prior knowledge in socio-cognitive research on social categorization and stereotyping. While the conduction of a simple rating study is easily implemented, the computational modeling approach (under guideline from Dr. Lakshmi) is highly advanced. Also, preparation of images is highly time-consuming. <i>Please note the special instructions for working on research theses on the website of the Department of Social Psychology.</i>
Literature	Correll, J., Lakshmi, A., Wittenbrink, B., Ma, D. S., Singh, B., Bansemer, E., & Harvey Jr, L. O. (2025). The mental representation of ingroup and outgroup faces. <i>Journal of Personality and Social Psychology</i> . Dotsch, R., Wigboldus, D. H., Langner, O., & Van Knippenberg, A. (2008). Ethnic out-group faces are biased in the prejudiced mind. <i>Psychological Science</i> , 19(10), 978-980.
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Capacity	The project can be implemented by one MSc student.