Validation of Everyday Knowledge: The role of Consensus and Perceived Heterogeneity

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ABSTRACT

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In this EASP Small Group Meeting in Honor of Serge Moscovici, we aim at presenting studies that we have been conducting to analyze the role of consensus and group heterogeneity on the perceived validity of everyday knowledge, as well as its moderators, mediators, and present new avenues of research. The general framework guiding these investigations is rooted in the system and metasystem dichotomy introduced by Moscovici in 1976, and other developments as the social representations theory (Moscovici, 1984) and its articulation with the groups' shared knowledge framework (Levine & Higgins, 2001).

In everyday life, people and groups (i.e., juries, staff, work teams, committees) are called to construct knowledge and meaning about

reality in order to make decisions, judgements or form opinions that are important to regulate social life and the ways individuals relate with each other and with society in general (Lopes et al., 2014). However, knowing that group decisions and opinions are valid is very important not only to people involved in the discussion process, but also to people outside the decision group and who are affected by these decisions in real life. Moreover, the assurance of perceived validity in everyday decisions and opinions is one of the fundamental dimensions of cultural life (Kluckhohn, 1951) and can be associated with people's epistemic needs. More importantly, the perception of validity in everyday knowledge appears to be a basic human motivation (Festinger, 1954).

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