

Material and Methods

The cyberball game consisted of four players that were orientated in a diamond shape. The goal was to pass along a (base)ball. The bottom player was controlled by the participant while the other three players were computer-controlled agents. The background picture was minimalistic baseball field and each player had an assigned glove and base. The agents additionally had photos and nametags that were ordered in a balanced manner for each new participant and were gender typed to be equal to the gender of the participant. Female names were Jennifer, Emily, and Madelon whereas the male names were David, Maarten, and Koen.

When the experiment started the participant selected a (baseball) glove and the agents were allotted one of the remaining glove options. The ball started in possession of the participant at game start. The player would then select an agent to throw the ball towards. The throw and subsequent pass were graphically appealing and included an animated glove and slightly varying movement speed, spin, and height of the ball. At the start and end of the pass an appropriate sound was played. When the ball was passed to an agent it would retrieve a new target from a pseudo-random balanced stack, decrement the stack and after a small varying delay throw the ball. The target stack was based on the pseudo-random criterion that there were no two of the same targets in repetition and that each player was targeted an equal number of times. When the stack was empty an agent selected a legal target at random. Unbeknown to the participant a behavioral switch was made when either <ENTER VALUE HERE> passes from the participant were made or when all the agent stacks were empty (initial size was < ENTER VALUE HERE>). This switch entailed that the middle-top player was no longer considered a legal target for the agents. After the switch the agent stacks were refilled with a balanced <ENTER VALUE HERE> number of legal targets and pseudo-randomly re-ordered. When the middle-top agent remained empty and when it received a ball it would default to selecting a legal target at random. A short pause was introduced after <ENTER VALUE HERE> throws from the participant. The game ended when either <ENTER VALUE HERE> passes from the participant were made or when all the computer-controlled player stacks were empty.

The time the participant needed to make a target choice was timed from the moment the ball pass finished. <YOU SHOULD REALLY DO THIS:> The decision time for the first pass at the start of the game and the first pass after the pause were excluded in analysis.