

# Review of: "Collective rationality in interactive decisions: Evidence for team reasoning" by Andrew M. Colman, Briony D. Pulford, Jo Rose

## Introduction

Approach of decision theory and game theory based on assumption, that each player try to maximize his utility function. But for some interactive cases it seems reasonable to maximize utility function of whole group of players.

Fundamental assumptions of expected utility theory and subjective expected utility theory are *rationality* of a player and attemption to maximize self *utility* by player in all circumstances. We can measure individual preferences of each player with utility, and in game it is payoff. Russel's interpretation of rationality is "the choise of the right means to an end that you wish to achive".

Research into judgment and decision making for interactive decisions or games shows that humans often deviate from full rationality in practice, because they are limited by bounded rationality that constrains them, in difficult decisions, to use rough-and-ready judgmental heuristics that are faster but that sometimes generate biased judgments and decisions.

In such games persons often try to increase *collective* utility instead of individual one. *Team reasoning* — based on collective preferences decision making approach. Theories of team resoning assume that players motivate to maximize either collective or individual utilities depending on circumstances.

## Payoff dominance

In two-player game, a *Nash equilibrium* (is an outcome from which neither player could profit by deviating unilaterally and that therefore gives neither player retrospective grounds to regret the chosen strategy) is a pair of strategies that maximaize paoyoff of player choosing it, given to strategy choosen by co-player. If game has only one Nash equilibrium, rational player should choose it, according the game theory, because it's only one variant to maximaize payoff in this case for both players. For game with multiple equilibrium, where one better than any other for both players, it natural to assume for rational player to choose *payoff-dominant* strategy. But such choise can't be justified by game theory fundamental assumption.

Team reasoning offers the solution for payoff-dominance problem. Players identify profile of strategies that maximize collective payoff. If it is unique, they choose it.

## Rationale and hypotheses

Team reasoning solves the payoff–dominance problem. The question is: "Do decision makers from collective preference on practice?" We can't observe directly preferences or modes of reasoning. Predictions can be made about choices that would result from collective utility maximization and team reasoning, and that behavior can be observed directly. For these aim where constructed two experiments. Games with unique Nash equilibria and disunique *Pareto–dominant* disequibrial outcomes — outcomes that were not Nash equilibria, but offered higher payoffs for both player, were used in experiments.

## Experiment 1

### Participants

The 81 participants were choosen as decision makers at this experiment (36 men and 45 women). Mostly undergraduatre students, aged 16–45. Each participant earned between £4.00 and £13.00 according to the payoffs in a single game selected randomly from among those used in the experiment.

### Fund-raising

You and other students collect funds for charity. In the first hour, you and your best friend each raise some money. Here is a list of the possible options:

	You raise	Your friend raises
Option A	£1	£7
Option B	£3	£3
Option C	£5	£6
Option D	£6	£4
Option E	£4	£1

Which option do you prefer?  
A B C D E (circle one)

What do you expect the other person to choose?  
A B C D E (circle one)

### GM site

You are involved in a group of people who are against a proposed test site for genetically modified crops. You and another group member spend half an hour in the local town collecting money for publicity opposing the new test site. Here is a list of the possible options:

	You collect	Other person collects
Option A	£1	£7
Option B	£4	£5
Option C	£4	£6
Option D	£6	£3
Option E	£4	£0

Which option do you prefer?  
A B C D E (circle one)

What do you expect the other person to choose?  
A B C D E (circle one)

**Figure 1.** Decision vignettes designed to prime collective preferences (team-reasoning vignettes), with Option A maximizing altruism, B equality-seeking, C collective rationality, D individual rationality, and E competition.

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**Figure 2.** Decision vignettes designed to prime individual rationality. Option A maximizes altruism, B equality-seeking, C collective rationality, D individual rationality, and E competition.

## Materials

On the Figure1 you can see *team-resoning vignettes*. Authors hypothesized that collective preferences would be primed by vignettes describing decisions in which the payoffs contribute to a respected public good, provided that the individuals play their parts in the collectively rational outcome. Both games symmetric  $5 \times 5$  and has a singular Nash equilibrium where both choose D and a collectively rational outcome wherer both choose C.

On the Figure2 described 2 vignettes designed to prime individualistic preferences, owing to the fact that payoffs provide culturally acceptable benefits to individuals rather than public goods. Authors hypothesized that individualistic preferences would be primed by frames involving competitive gambling and recreational games with individual payoffs to the winners. Both games symmetric  $5 \times 5$  games, each with a singular Nash equilibrium where both players choose D and a collectively rational outcome where both choose C.

In each vignette, players chose from a list of five options for assigning substantial monetary payoffs to self and an unidentified co-player, and they also indicated which options they expected their co-player to choose. The five options invariably represented altruism (maximizing coplayer's payoff), equality-seeking (minimizing absolute difference between own and co-player's payoff), collective rationality (maximizing joint payoff), individual rationality (maximizing own payoff), and competition (maximizing own minus co-player's payoff).

## Results

Full result you can see in Figure 3. In "Fund-raising" vignette substantial majority of players (59.26%) chose the collectively rational option (C), and most

	A	B	C	D	E
Fund-raising	0.00	4.94	59.26	34.57	1.23
GM site	2.47	11.11	49.36	35.80	1.23
Prize draw	1.23	16.05	23.46	54.32	4.94
Poker	1.23	6.17	22.22	59.26	11.11

Note. A = altruism, B = equality-seeking, C = collective rationality, D = individual rationality, E = competition.

**Figure 3.** Experiment 1 results (percentages), for lifelike vignettes designed to prime collective rationality (Fund-raising and GM site) and individual rationality (Prize draw and Poker).

of the rest (34.57%) chose the individually rational option associated with the unique Nash equilibrium (D). Ignoring five players who chose other options as predicted by theories of team reasoning, a large majority (77.08%) of the players who chose the collective option expected their co-players to choose it also.

In the team-reasoning “GM site” vignette a majority (49.36%) chose the collectively rational option (C), and most of the rest (35.80%) chose the individually rational option associated with the unique Nash equilibrium (D). The proportion who chose the collectively rational option was larger than the proportion who chose the individually rational option. Once again, a large majority (77.50%) of the players who chose the collective option expected their co-players to choose it.

Of the two vignettes designed to encourage individual rationality (Figure 2), “Prize draw” elicited 54.32% individually rational and 23.46% collectively rational choices, and “Poker” 59.26% individually rational and 22.22% collectively rational choices. The majority preferences in these vignettes were individually rational, in line with the predictions of game theory.

The results of this experiment suggest that the interpretive framing of the games had a moderately powerful effect on the outcome preferences and mode of reasoning adopted by the players, with predominantly collective rationality and team reasoning only in the vignettes designed to prime it, although each of the four games had a Pareto-dominant outcome—one that yielded higher payoffs to both players than the Nash equilibrium. However, it is impossible to judge how much influence interpretive framing had on collective rationality and team reasoning in the team-reasoning vignettes. Experiment 2 was therefore performed in order to seek evidence for team reasoning in abstract games without interpretive framing.

## **Experiment 2**

### **Participants**

The same participants as for Experiment 1. Experiment 2 followed immediately after Experiment 1, without any debriefing until both experiments were completed.

Participants earned between £5.00 and £9.00 according to their payoffs in the randomly selected game.

### **Materials**

### **Results**

### **Conclusions**