
F. Ceren Ay - Abstracts of Works in Progress

Work in Progress **Information Avoidance and Image Concerns in Reciprocal Decisions**

This paper provides evidence on strategic use of information to dampen moral pressure when making decisions. Strategic use of information refers to people actively avoiding or acquiring information rather than exogenously given setting. In a manipulated trust game two aspects of information about the consequences of the decision is varied: time of the information and exogenous information / ignorance. Results show that when people make decisions under exogenous ignorance, reciprocity drops substantially compared to the settings with exogenous information. When people are given the chance to choose whether to know or not to know the consequences of their decisions, there is a clear relation between more selfish decisions and information avoidance. Contrary to previous literature, this pattern is observed both before making the decision (ex-ante) and after the decision is already made (ex-post). This provides evidence on the psychological utility of information by signalling the prosociality to one's self both in ex-ante and ex-post perspective. This study provides an insightful view on information preferences in a relatively complex social settings by showing how information preferences are used to make more selfish decisions.

Work in Progress **Strategic Curiosity - joint with Katrine B. Nødvedt (NHH) and Joel Berge (NHH)**

This study provides experimental evidence on a novel phenomenon in information preferences: people strategically collect additional non-instrumental information to justify morally questionable decisions. We conduct a virtual dice-rolling experiment in which we vary the extent to which participants can collect additional information before reporting as well as the content of information. We document a tendency to systematically collect more information -be more curious-when tempted to misreport. Curiosity is positively correlated with the size of the lie. Interestingly, neither curiosity nor dishonesty respond to the content of information as people roll the dice and misreport to the same extent even when information is irrelevant to the decision. Our study provides new insights into how individuals actively shape their information environment in pursuit of self-interest.

Work in Progress **Reasoning Avoidance - joint with Hallgeir Sjøstad (NHH) and Steven Sloman (Brown University)**

This research project aims to investigate individuals' behavior when they are asked to explain a spurious relation between a main event and a side effect which can potentially challenge existing beliefs on the main event in an experimental setup. The main contribution of the present research is showing how causal relations can be misconceived by individuals when they challenge the beliefs and preferences about the main event -policy.

Work in Progress **An International Collaboration on Social and Moral Psychology of Covid-19 - joint with Jay van Bavel and others**

The goal of this collaboration is to bring together scholars from around the globe to examine psychological factors underlying the attitudes and behavioral intentions related to Covid-19. To date, data from over 44.000 citizens in 67 countries are collected. [Working Paper](#) and [Project website](#)