

Esther Duflo and Randomized Controlled Trails

Gang He

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Esther Duflo

- 2019 Nobel Prize in Economics
- Professor in Economics in MIT

RCTs

But Abhijit immediately understood the power of RCTs, not just as a tool to evaluate programs, but as a way of turning development economics on its head by giving us the freedom to put any theory to the test.

– [Esther Duflo Biographical](#)

Noteable RCTs

- 1747 scurvy trial by James Lind
- UK Medical Research Council's (MRC) trial of patulin for common cold in 1943
- The Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab

Why RCTs had so much impacts

- Identification of causal effects (power of randomized)
- External validity?
- Observing unobservables
- Data collection
- Experiments

Read more: [Esther Duflo](#)

Thoughts for evaluation

- Natural experiments
- Causal identification strategies
- Pros and cons of RCTs

Further readings

- [Why randomized controlled trials matter and the procedures that strengthen them](#)