

POSITIVE DISCRIMINATION IN CHILDHOOD AND ADOLESCENCE: CULTURE AS A DETERMINANT FACTOR OF INDIVIDUAL BEHAVIOUR.

Abstract

Most of the researchers that try to observe how children and adolescents behave have focused their efforts on age and gender as the main drivers of individual monetary decisions. In this paper we study the decisions made regarding culture and ethnical characteristics. That means, how children and adolescents behave when they have to make decisions regarding people from different ethnic or cultural groups. We develop an extensive economic game through three games on a population ranging from 6 to 18 on a total of 350 primary, secondary and bachelor students in Spain. Specifically, dictator game, ultimatum game and trust game.

The analysis of experimental literature has shown how individual behaviour is not only governed by the rationality and selfishness that classical economy predicts. While selfishness is a common feature in children around three years old, altruism and egalitarianism develop with age, what refutes the *homo economicus* concept. Moreover, trust follows the same path, being more accurate as age increases.

But our task consists of studying culture as a new variable and observing whether the behaviour is different when white subjects face people from different ethnic groups, specifically with black and Asian subjects. And determine if culture plays an important role in the decisions made by children and adolescents and if they promote discriminatory attitudes based on prejudices and stereotypes in the same way as occurs in the reduced literature that studies this topic.

Finally it has been demonstrated that ethnicity is binding in the economic decision making process of the Spanish child population. However, in this case, discrimination between ethnic groups does not conform to the negative context that has always been framed but from the results obtained, discrimination can also be considered as a positive factor.