

The Changes of Standard of Fairness

Wenying Bai^{1,*,†} Yue Gao^{2,†} Qi Yin^{3,†}

¹ School of Psychology, Saint Louis University, St. Louis, MO 63103, United State

² School of Information Engineering, Nanjing University of Finance & Economics, Nanjing, Jiangsu 210046, China

³ School of social science, University of California Irvine, Irvine, CA 92697, United State

*Corresponding author. Email: wenying.bai@slu.edu

†These authors contributed equally

ABSTRACT

This paper demonstrates the relevance of fairness and social phenomena and provides four major aspects which affect the chances of the standards of fairness: behavioural economic development, social status hierarchy, cultural differences, and human development process as the main basis for supporting the general point. These propositions show the potential value and significance of human beings in the social fairness phenomenon. These main points are focused on the tendency of collectivist culture and individualism culture to autonomous and reciprocity. Preferences expressed in emotions and states play an important role in fair trading.; the difference in the group to which individual belongs and how fairness is evaluated. The influence of social information and individual maturity on tolerance of unfairness.

Keywords: Fairness, Reciprocity, Human development

1. INTRODUCTION

Fairness is often defined as a problem or strategy on “social exchange” or “reciprocity” and is one of the social ideologies that form the norms of human life and behavior [1]. Fairness not only reflects the relationship between people's rights and obligations in society, but also plays an extremely important role in economic stability, equality, and the construction of a just and harmonious society [2,3]. However, people's perception of the concept of fairness is not stable, as it is heavily influenced by many other factors, including economic status, social status, cultural factors, and the human-development stage. The difference in social status, especially the difference between class and the rich and the poor, causes people to have different understandings of fairness, so their judgment standards are also different [4-9]. The social information received in the process of human development [10], increased social experience, and gradual maturity of cognition all affect people's sense of justice [11, 12]. There are tons of studies that conducted in-depth excavations on a single targeted aspect, but none of them have taken a comprehensive view of the impact. In this literature review, multiple aspects of impact, including socioeconomic factors, cultural factors, and human developmental factors on fairness are reviewed and discussed to give a broader concept of fairness.

2. FAIRNESS & ECONOMIC

Behavioral economy is based on social cooperation system and good order, focusing on freedom, tolerance and corresponding reciprocal behavior [2, 3]. The first kind of moral ability of a person refers to the sense of justice, and the second kind of moral ability refers to the concept of kindness. The former belongs to the category of rationality, and the latter belongs to the category of rationality. The former mainly involves the principle of equality and freedom, while the latter mainly involves the conditions of unequal results, multiple facts, and mechanisms for appropriate adjustments and amendments [13]. Moretti's research found that people are willing to put forward those principles that everyone considers to be fair conditions for cooperation. If others put forward these principles, they are willing to acknowledge them; secondly, when others follow these principles, they will also commit to implementing these principles, even if This may harm their interests. It is not difficult to find that these two characteristics correspond exactly to the two moral abilities of free and equal people, namely rationality and sensibility [13]. The principles of social rationalism began to be applied to human beings themselves. For the first time, people are effectively used as resources by organizations. In distribution and exchange, the role of the market is more important than that of individuals. Human emotions promote the

structure and development of this society. Mainstream economic thought maintains the tension between ethics and economics. Human behavior and motivations are considered rational and selfish [14]. Behavioral economists claim that fairness plays an important role in predicting the economic behavior of producers, consumers, and politicians [15]. Van researched two main fairness modeling methods. The core of one method is to assume inequality aversion based on results, while the other method relies on intention-based reciprocity. Both methods assume that fairness involves fair returns [14]. In the unfair aversion model, the main object is the result of social interaction or the different results caused by any deviation between individual interests and fair interests. In the intention-based reciprocity model, more attention is paid to the willingness of the participants rather than the result of the interaction itself, and there is no concept of reward or goodwill. When people hope to return the perceived goodness with kindness, these feelings increase utility. In addition to personal returns, there is also a reciprocal motivation. Among them, the preference of emotional expression plays a certain role in promoting reciprocal behavior. Positive emotions will reinforce cooperative reciprocal behavior, while negative emotions are more likely to lead to selfish results [15]. Emotional structure not only determines people's thoughts and feelings but also determines people's behavior. Once certain needs

Developed in the emotional structure, behaviors consistent with these needs can not only make people obtain psychological and practical benefits satisfaction. It can be said that human emotions promote the development of society, and reciprocity promotes the development of the economy. On top of this, fairness restrains a stable order.

3. FAIRNESS & SOCIETY

Social status can exert a strong influence on people's distributive justice perceptions [4]. People judge their status in a group by the way they are treated [8]. This affects people's view of fairness to some extent. If they are being valued in this group that shows they have a higher status (rich people usually have been treated well), on the contrary, being ignored means low status (poor/low income). Such as, people tend to hold negative attitudes about poor people [5]. Thus, the negative perspective leads to the results that different income groups have different standards of fair or unfair [9]. The main difference is based on whether the individual is a group and how much benefit can be gained. Decisions that are beneficial to a certain group are often considered fair by people in this group. In the same way, individuals who get more benefits also tend to think that the result is fair. Low income causes more pain and inequality for young people, such as "double disadvantage" living and learning (depression, antisocial behavior), poor physical

health, educational failure [6]. This extreme difficulty and suffering lead them to believe full of unfairness in their life. However, in the An International Fairness Experiment conducted by Cappelen in 2010, the rich, as those who control fairness, are different from the fairness of those who accept the distribution of benefits. The fairness of the rich is based on their rights and the selfish bias in their social preferences.

The process of evaluating fair or unfair such as outcome fairness and procedural fairness also affect people's views of fairness from different angles [4]. Outcome fairness reflects people's understanding of their own status, their own rights, and their views and evaluation of the results that can be obtained. It reflects people's recognition that whether the outcome is fair depends on the difference of status. In other words, people agree that there are differences in status, so it is fair to have different results, which means that it is also fair for people with higher status to get more rights. The fairness of procedures is the importance of being able to express individual opinions [4]. Unlike decisive collective consensus, individual opinions are often more creative and able to take care of the interests of marginalized people. Lind emphasized that procedural fairness effects have a positive impact on people's relationship assessment and emotional response [16]. People are more willing to work and live in groups where they can freely express their opinions because they think that is fairer. Feather agrees with this idea and mentions procedures that express individual opinions are fairer [17].

4. CULTURAL FACTORS ON FAIRNESS

Moving onto a larger perspective, cultural differences also play an important role in influencing people's perception of fairness. Fairness is often defined as a problem or strategy on "social exchange" or "reciprocity" [1]. While the reciprocity aspect of fairness is valued as ethical or moral across all cultures [1], there is evidence that cultural difference is also a deviant factor in people's perception of fairness [18]. Based on the literature reviewed so far, typically within Western societies/individualistic societies, autonomy is placed a higher value on reciprocity than Asian societies/collectivist societies [19]. This finding can be observed in a cross-cultural study done by [20], in which groups of participants from North American and Asian countries are asked to rate their likelihood of accepting small gifts or favors from close friends/acquaintances, as well as the rationales. Compared to the North American samples (mainly from Canada) who are more focused on the attractiveness of the gift or favor, Asian samples (mainly from Hongkong) are more motivated by the obligation to reciprocate the favor. These might be caused by the interdependent nature of Asians' self-concept, which emphasizes more on connection and

relation of themselves and others. In contrast, North Americans tend to act and conceptualize themselves more independently [21]. Another study done on samples from India, Japan and America yields a similar result, in which compared to Indians, who value heavily on the social exchange factors of social norm and fairness, American samples associate greater satisfaction with acting autonomously [22]. These results are further supported by other studies done in Chinese society. The Chinese view on fairness is heavily weighted towards reciprocity and forms a service chain of favor and counter-favor as part of a network based on reciprocity [22]. This is particularly true in the study of Chinese rural areas and the chain of return and counter-return favor forms the fundamental rules of social exchange (“guanxi”) and interpersonal behaviors (“guanxi”) of Chinese villages [22]. However, there are also counterexamples on whether collectivist culture focuses more on reciprocity than individualist culture. In a cross-cultural experiment on dictator games, participants from the individualistic culture reciprocate more significantly than collectivist culture, particularly with negative punishment toward the norm violator [23]. It could be that collectivistic individuals tend to value collective goals and relationships over personal goals, which consequently results in a less negative response toward norm violators [23]. On the other hand, individualistic individuals placed a higher value on the autonomous nature of fairness and could be more driven to negative responses when they perceive unfair/negative treatment. Further studies might be needed to investigate this topic.

Other than the traditional separation of culture between the individualistic and collectivistic nature, there is also the economic status of the culture/country that plays an effect on the perception of fairness. There are a variety of studies done on trust games (and their variations, such as dictator game & ultimatum game) that show that participants from a less developed / less economically wealthy country tend to expect participants from developed / more economically wealthy countries to reciprocate. In a trust game experiment done by participants in Mozambique, Brazil, and Germany, subjects from a middle-income country (Brazil in this case) expect subjects from a higher-income country (Germany) to be reciprocated when formulating their strategy [24]. This consideration is not observed when such individuals are working with a lower-income country (Mozambique). This result is supported by a similar experiment done in another trust game experiment done with Croatian & American examples [25] and with French and German examples [26], which Croatian expect American to be fair but there is no difference in fair expectation between the French and German. It could be that the individuals from less developed countries typically expect ones from more developed countries to be more resourceful and thus have more opportunities to play fairly. Such individuals are

motivated to be more generous toward ones from even less developed countries due to a similar reason. However, such a tendency is not observed in other mediums. In a cross-cultural experiment done with players of World of Warcraft [27], the norm of fairness is respected by players from all communities alike. The rule of reciprocity is respected regardless of the vastly different cultural background. This trend is also observed in other gaming communities like League of Legends [28]. Perhaps further research should be done on this perspective.

5. FAIRNESS & HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

People’s ideas and changes about fairness have also been influenced by human development, which is embodied in two aspects: the degree to which individuals are affected by social information; and the degree of cognitive maturity and social experience. People’s sense of fairness will change under the influence of social information [10]. Ishikawa states that the sense of fairness has been observed in early infancy [7]. They show an absolute preference for good, believing that fairness is treating people who are well better and treating the bad worse. However, adults are different, they are more tolerant and flexible for the standard of fairness, especially focusing on intentions. Social interactions and media exposure influence adults’ evaluation of social information and push them to be likely to accept people who show their prosocial characters/ are willing to help others act unfairly. In other words, adult evaluation of fairness pays more attention to the intention of the behavior. If a person does something unfair to help the poor live a better life, most adults will understand and agree with this unfairness.

Cognitive maturation and social experiences shape children’s fairness preferences as well [29]. As children grow up, their cognition continues to develop, and their social experience gradually enriches will promote their change from the strict egalitarian fairness view to the libertarian fairness view. Almås found that children understand fairness differently in the 5th and 13th grades [29]. The fifth-grade students tend to distribute the rewards equally, while the 13th-grade students behave differently. When they get evidence of unequal input, they are willing to accept unequal results. Bašić tested the implementation of egalitarian norms in 9 to 18-year-olds in an environment with a punishment mechanism and found that children before the age of 10 strictly implement equal distribution, and normative deviations appear as they grow older [11]. Children from higher grades or in late adolescence show more meritocratic fairness views which require a distinction between different sources of inequality. Crone also mentions that fairness shaping is supported by cognitive maturation from a neurological perspective [12]. As adolescents have reduced self-attention in late adolescence and early

adulthood, replaced by increased impulse control and opinion acquisition, their assessment of fairness has changed. Students in the 13th grade can control their impulses, gain more information, and better understand that inequality that reflects differences in personal achievement is fair. Thus, they can accept those who put in more effort and have higher achievements should get more rewards than those who put in less.

6. CONCLUSION

Social information, cognitive maturity, and increased experience all promote the transformation of people's concept of fairness in human development, such as more tolerance for diverse fairness standards is a great hallmark. Social status affects people's fairness standards, but whether an individual is one of the groups that obtain benefits or is one of the groups that control the distribution of benefits is affected by more factors. In economics, mutually beneficial cooperation can achieve a state of fairness between both parties. The attribution of fairness intention is negative and positive reciprocal behavior. As for the cultural impact on the people's perception and behavior of fairness, individuals from collectivist cultures tend to be less autonomous and more reciprocate and unlikely to act negatively when encountering unfair treatment compared to ones from individualistic culture when dealing with problems of fairness.

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