

When Do Psychopathic Traits Affect Cooperative Behavior?

An Iterated Prisoner's Dilemma Experimental Study

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Abstract

Abstract. Personality traits have been long recognized to have a strong impact on human decision-making. In this study, a sample of 314 participants took part in an online game to investigate the impact of psychopathic traits on cooperative behavior in an iterated Prisoner's dilemma game. We found that disinhibition decreased the maintenance of cooperation in successive plays, but had no effect on moving toward cooperation after a previous defection or on the overall level of cooperation over rounds. Furthermore, our results underline the crucial importance of a good model selection procedure, showing how a poor choice of statistical model can provide misleading results.