

Economic preferences and attitudes : origins, behavioral impact, stability and measurement

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Propositions
accompanying the dissertation

Economic preferences and attitudes: Origins, behavioral
impact, stability and measurement

by
Maria Zumbuehl

1. Parents who invest more effort in the upbringing of their children have children who are more similar to them with respect to risk and trust attitudes (Chapter 2).
2. Not only the level of individual preferences is important for cooperation, but also the match in preferences (Chapter 3).
3. The self-stated willingness to take risks is lower in times of high prevalence of economic topics in the news, but there is considerable heterogeneity in the sensitivity towards news between groups of individuals (Chapter 4).
4. Focal answers contain more information than is considered by standard regression analysis (Chapter 5).
5. The fact that individuals report different risk attitudes across domains does not mean that there cannot be a stable, underlying general risk preference. Considering the different settings can even help us measuring preferences better and reduce measurement error.
6. There are many questions in economics that cannot be answered causally, but still are very relevant.
7. The existence of one individual who made it from dishwasher to billionaire is neither proof of complete income mobility, nor does it refute findings of income immobility.
8. Trying to understand human motivation is a fascinating venture. We should however be careful with what we do with the knowledge gained that way, as long as so much remains unexplained.
9. The notions of similarity and difference are relative, a fact that is, sadly, often forgotten in the political discourse.