

Project Summary

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Culture is the cradle that fosters human beings' civilization and, to a large extent, shapes social behavior as well. Therefore, people might intuitively assume that agents respectively from two culturally different regions would behave variously in certain social contexts. Surprisingly, we found the opposite. By adopting meta-analysis, we compared the data in the context of Voluntary Contribution Mechanism game from North America and East Asia, both geographically and culturally distant. However the results illustrated little difference of behavior in this particular game. Given the predominant student pool and the highly controlled experiments, we questioned the validity of these lab researches when applied to the realistic environment, and we also suspected two factors that might be responsible for the low validity: subjects' representatives and framing effect. In order to test the hypotheses, we conducted another analysis by comparing data from students and non-students within the same region. The primary results supported our assumption that these two kinds of group, though bearing the same cultural influence, behaved differently. Overall, this research by taking validity of lab experiments into account indicates the future approach of studying cultural difference.