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Low opinion makes people reject even money

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Tags: University College London | money | authors | addition

People are prepared to even lose money rather than accept it from those they have a low opinion of, researchers have suggested.

Research done in the Universities of Granada (Spain), Freiburg (Germany) and University College London (UK) has demonstrated that when we have a low opinion of somebody, we are more likely to reject their money, even though the offer is attractive, because the social information we have on that person influences our decision.



(Low opinion makes people...)

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Furthermore, people are prepared to even lose money rather than accept it from those they do not hold in high consideration.

The article is based on a study in which the researchers worked with two groups of 36 individuals, made up of 18-27 year-old University of Granada students.

To carry out the work, the authors used an economics-based game called "The Ultimatum Game", in which participants receive offers on divisions of sums of money from a partner.

The researchers found - replicating previous studies - that most participants tended to reject offers of an unfair nature, a reaction that seems to be affected by a negative emotional response to injustice.

Maria Ruz from the Mind, Brain and Behaviour Research Centre (CIMCYC) of the UGR, believes that this study shows that "the opinion we have on moral aspects of the people we interact with also affects whether we accept or reject the financial offers they make".

Thus, if we have a high opinion of the other person, we accept their money more often than if not. The author also highlights that, "on the other hand, if we have low opinion of someone, we are more likely to reject their money. Both things occur as much in fair offers as in unfair ones".

In addition, during the study, "the people were playing with real money (the more offers they accepted, the more money they were paid)".

The results, therefore, are counter-intuitive, "but that is what we found: we are prepared to lose money rather than accept it from those we have a low opinion of", the authors conclude.

The study has been published in the journal *Frontiers in Decision Neuroscience*.

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