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“Communication, Coordination and Networks”

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Abstract

We study experimentally how the network structure and length of pre-play communication affect behavior and outcome in a multi-player coordination game with conflicting preferences. Network structure matters but the interaction between network and time effects is more subtle. Under each time treatment, substantial variations are observed in both the rate of coordination and distribution of coordinated outcomes across networks. But, increasing the communication length improves both efficiency and equity of coordination. In all treatments, coordination is mostly explained by convergence in communication. We also identify behaviors that explain variations in the distribution of coordinated outcomes both within and across networks.