

7 principles of behavioural economics

7 Principles of Behavioural Economics: Understanding Human Decision-Making and its Implications

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Abstract: This article explores seven core principles of behavioural economics, examining how they influence individual and collective decision-making. We will delve into the challenges and opportunities presented by understanding these principles, highlighting their applications in various fields, from public policy to marketing. The discussion will also consider the limitations and ethical considerations surrounding the application of these principles.

Introduction: Traditional economic models assume rational actors making optimal choices based on complete information. However, behavioural economics demonstrates that humans are predictably irrational, consistently deviating from this ideal. Understanding the 7 principles of behavioural economics allows us to design more effective policies, marketing strategies, and interventions that account for these cognitive biases and psychological factors.

1. Mental Accounting: Framing Matters

Mental accounting refers to the way individuals categorize and treat money differently depending on its source and intended use. We might be willing to drive across town to save \$5 on a \$15 item but not for a \$150 item, even though the savings are the same. This principle highlights the importance of framing effects, where the way information is presented influences choices. Challenges: This can lead to poor financial decisions, such as overspending on small purchases while neglecting larger savings goals. Opportunities: Marketing strategies can leverage mental accounting by framing products in appealing ways that align with consumers' mental accounts.

2. Loss Aversion: The Pain of Loss is Greater than the Pleasure of Gain

Loss aversion describes the tendency to feel the pain of a loss more strongly than the pleasure of an equivalent gain. People are often more motivated to avoid losses than to acquire gains. Challenges: This can lead to risk aversion and missed opportunities, such as failing to invest in potentially

lucrative ventures due to a fear of losses. Opportunities: Understanding loss aversion allows for the design of effective loss-framed messages, such as highlighting the potential losses associated with inaction (e.g., not getting vaccinated).

3. Anchoring Bias: The Power of First Impressions

The anchoring bias refers to the tendency to rely too heavily on the first piece of information received (the "anchor") when making decisions. This anchor can disproportionately influence subsequent judgments, even if it is irrelevant. Challenges: This can lead to suboptimal pricing strategies, negotiations, and investment decisions. Opportunities: Businesses can strategically use anchoring to influence consumer perceptions of value, setting initial prices high to make lower prices seem more attractive.

4. Confirmation Bias: Seeking Evidence to Confirm Existing Beliefs

Confirmation bias is the tendency to favor information that confirms pre-existing beliefs and to ignore or downplay information that contradicts them. This can lead to reinforcing existing biases and preventing objective evaluation of information. Challenges: This hinders rational decision-making, especially in areas involving complex issues or conflicting evidence. Opportunities: Recognizing confirmation bias allows for the development of strategies to mitigate its effects, such as actively seeking out dissenting viewpoints and engaging in critical thinking.

5. Availability Heuristic: Recency and Vividness Matter

The availability heuristic refers to the tendency to overestimate the likelihood of events that are easily recalled, often due to their recency or vividness. Events that are easily remembered are often perceived as more likely, even if statistically less probable. Challenges: This can lead to irrational fears and risk assessments, for instance, overestimating the risk of flying after a plane crash. Opportunities: Public health campaigns can utilize the availability heuristic by creating vivid and memorable messages to increase awareness and encourage preventive behaviours.

6. Present Bias: Immediate Gratification Trumps Long-Term Goals

Present bias, also known as hyperbolic discounting, is the tendency to favour immediate rewards over delayed rewards, even if the delayed reward is larger. We often struggle to resist immediate gratification, even when it undermines our long-term interests. Challenges: This can lead to procrastination, poor savings habits, and difficulty achieving long-term goals. Opportunities: Strategies like commitment devices (e.g., automatic savings plans) can help overcome present bias and promote better long-term decision-making.

7. Herd Behaviour: Following the Crowd

Herd behaviour describes the tendency to mimic the actions of others, often without critical evaluation. This is driven by a desire to conform, reduce uncertainty, and avoid social isolation.

Challenges: This can lead to speculative bubbles in financial markets, mass hysteria, and inefficient resource allocation. Opportunities: Understanding herd behaviour can be useful in designing social marketing campaigns that encourage positive behaviours by highlighting the popularity of those behaviours.

Conclusion: The 7 principles of behavioural economics provide invaluable insights into human decision-making, revealing the systematic deviations from rationality that shape our choices. By understanding these principles, we can design more effective interventions in diverse fields, improving public policy, marketing strategies, and individual well-being. However, ethical considerations must always be addressed, ensuring that the application of these principles respects individual autonomy and avoids manipulative practices.

FAQs:

1. What is the difference between classical economics and behavioural economics? Classical economics assumes rational actors, while behavioural economics acknowledges cognitive biases and psychological factors influencing decisions.
1. How can I apply these principles in my daily life? By being aware of your own biases, you can improve your financial decisions, health choices, and relationships.
1. Are there any ethical concerns about using behavioural economics? Yes, the potential for manipulation and coercion needs careful consideration.
1. Can behavioural economics predict future behaviour accurately? It improves prediction, but human behavior is complex and unpredictable.
1. What role does emotion play in behavioural economics? Emotions significantly impact decision-making, often overriding rational thought.
1. How is behavioural economics used in public policy? It informs policy design to encourage beneficial behaviours (e.g., nudges to increase savings or vaccination rates).

1. What are some examples of successful applications of behavioural economics? Organ donation opt-out systems, energy-saving programs, and improved tax compliance initiatives.
1. What are the limitations of behavioural economics? It's challenging to generalize findings across different contexts and cultures.
1. How can I learn more about behavioural economics? Explore academic journals, books, and online courses focusing on this field.

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Publisher: The Journal of Behavioural Economics, a peer-reviewed academic journal published by the prestigious Oxford University Press, known for its rigorous editorial standards and high-quality research in the field of behavioral economics.

Editor: Professor David Laibson, PhD in Economics, Harvard University. Professor Laibson is a leading figure in the field of behavioural economics, renowned for his contributions to understanding intertemporal choice and savings behaviour.

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7 principles of behavioural economics: *Animal Spirits* George A. Akerlof, Robert J. Shiller,

2010-02-01 From acclaimed economists George Akerlof and Robert Shiller, the case for why government is needed to restore confidence in the economy The global financial crisis has made it painfully clear that powerful psychological forces are imperiling the wealth of nations today. From blind faith in ever-rising housing prices to plummeting confidence in capital markets, animal spirits are driving financial events worldwide. In this book, acclaimed economists George Akerlof and Robert Shiller challenge the economic wisdom that got us into this mess, and put forward a bold new vision that will transform economics and restore prosperity. Akerlof and Shiller reassert the necessity of an active government role in economic policymaking by recovering the idea of animal spirits, a term John Maynard Keynes used to describe the gloom and despondence that led to the Great Depression and the changing psychology that accompanied recovery. Like Keynes, Akerlof and Shiller know that managing these animal spirits requires the steady hand of government—simply allowing markets to work won't do it. In rebuilding the case for a more robust, behaviorally informed Keynesianism, they detail the most pervasive effects of animal spirits in contemporary economic life—such as confidence, fear, bad faith, corruption, a concern for fairness, and the stories we tell ourselves about our economic fortunes—and show how Reaganomics, Thatcherism, and the rational expectations revolution failed to account for them. *Animal Spirits* offers a road map for reversing the financial misfortunes besetting us today. Read it and learn how leaders can channel animal spirits—the powerful forces of human psychology that are afoot in the world economy today. In a new preface, they describe why our economic troubles may linger for some time—unless we are prepared to take further, decisive action.

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great deal about cognitive bias and unconscious decision-making, challenging the orthodox economic model whereby consumers make rational and informed choices. But it is in the arena of health that it perhaps offers individuals and governments the most value. In this important new book, the most pernicious health issues we face today are examined through a behavioral economic lens. It provides an essential and timely overview of how this growing field of study can reframe and offer solutions to some of the biggest health issues of our age. The book opens with an overview of the core theoretical concepts, after which each chapter assesses how behavioral economic research and practice can inform public policy across a range of health issues. Including chapters on tobacco, alcohol and drug use, physical activity, dietary intake, cancer screening and sexual health, the book integrates the key insights from the field to both developed and developing nations. Also asking important ethical questions around paternalism and informed choice, this book will be essential reading for students and researchers across psychology, economics and business and management, as well as public health professionals wishing for a concise overview of the role behavioral economics can potentially play in allowing people to live healthier lives.

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what economics is and does. Along the way, she points out how we can break our addiction to growth; redesign money, finance, and business to be in service to people; and create economies that are regenerative and distributive by design. Named after the now-iconic “doughnut” image that Raworth first drew to depict a sweet spot of human prosperity (an image that appealed to the Occupy Movement, the United Nations, eco-activists, and business leaders alike), Doughnut Economics offers a radically new compass for guiding global development, government policy, and corporate strategy, and sets new standards for what economic success looks like. Raworth handpicks the best emergent ideas—from ecological, behavioral, feminist, and institutional economics to complexity thinking and Earth-systems science—to address this question: How can we turn economies that need to grow, whether or not they make us thrive, into economies that make us thrive, whether or not they grow? Simple, playful, and eloquent, Doughnut Economics offers game-changing analysis and inspiration for a new generation of economic thinkers.

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and review questions to help cement understanding

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7 principles of behavioural economics: *Choice, Behavioral Economics, and Addiction* Rudolph Eugene Vuchinich, Nick Heather, 2003-11-13 *Choice, Behavioural Economics and Addiction* is about the theory, data, and applied implications of choice-based models of substance use and addiction. The distinction between substance use and addiction is important, because many individuals use substances but are not also addicted to them. The behavioural economic perspective has made contributions to the analysis of both of these phenomena and, while the major focus of the book is on theories of addiction, it is necessary also to consider the behavioural economic account of substance use in order to place the theories in their proper context and provide full coverage of the contribution of behavioural economics to this field of study. The book discusses the four major theories of addiction that have been developed in the area of economic science/behavioural economics. They are: . hyperbolic discounting . melioration . relative addiction . rational addiction The main objective of the book is to popularise these ideas among addiction researchers, academics and practitioners. The specific aims are to articulate the shared and distinctive elements of these four theories, to present and discuss the latest empirical work on substance abuse and addiction that is being conducted in this area, and to articulate a range of applied implications of this body of work for clinical, public health and public policy initiatives. The book is based on an invitation-only conference entitled, *Choice, Behavioural Economics and Addiction: Theory, Evidence and Applications* held at the University of Alabama at Birmingham, March 30 - April 1, 2001. The conference was attended by prominent scientists and scholars, representing a range of disciplines concerned with theories of addiction and their consequences for policy and practice. The papers in the book are based on the papers given at the above conference, together with commentaries by distinguished experts and, in many cases, replies to these comments by the presenters.

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Nikolova, 2020-09-24 Behavioral Economics for Tourism applies behavioral perspectives to business and policy challenges in the tourism industry. The book enables professionals and early career researchers to succeed by focusing on market and consumer trends, technological advancements, and the modern tourist. It covers the transformation of purchasing decisions, tourism hosting dynamics, digital mediation and disintermediation of tourism organizations, service design, and planning policy considerations. The volume concludes with case studies illustrating successful and unsuccessful behavioral tactics and strategies for tourism businesses and organizations. - Provides behavioral profiling of the digitally-informed, mobile, self-managed tourist - Allows the tourism industry to better understand tourists, both cognitively and emotionally - Supports business success, technology development and sustainability in the tourism industry - Features case studies on behavioral tactics and strategies for use in tourism

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7 principles of behavioural economics: Behavioural Economics and Business Ethics Philip Alexander Rajko, 2013-03-01 Economics and moral philosophy have in recent years been considered to be distinct and separate fields. However, behavioural economics has started to reconcile various aspects of morality and economics, which has offered new conceptual opportunities to advance economics ethics and business ethics. This book aims to advance economic ethics and business ethics by combining normative principles and empirical evidence grounded on the key motivational forces in economic decision making. It has three core objectives: to assess order ethics as a theory of both economic ethics and business ethics, using behavioural economics methods and evidence; to identify cardinal virtues for modern business ethics; to set up valuable guidelines for the implementation of economic ethics and business ethics.

7 principles of behavioural economics: The Paradox of Choice Barry Schwartz, 2009-10-13 Whether we're buying a pair of jeans, ordering a cup of coffee, selecting a long-distance carrier, applying to college, choosing a doctor, or setting up a 401(k), everyday decisions—both big and small—have become increasingly complex due to the overwhelming abundance of choice with which we are presented. As Americans, we assume that more choice means better options and greater satisfaction. But beware of excessive choice: choice overload can make you question the decisions you make before you even make them, it can set you up for unrealistically high expectations, and it can make you blame yourself for any and all failures. In the long run, this can lead to

decision-making paralysis, anxiety, and perpetual stress. And, in a culture that tells us that there is no excuse for falling short of perfection when your options are limitless, too much choice can lead to clinical depression. In *The Paradox of Choice*, Barry Schwartz explains at what point choice—the hallmark of individual freedom and self-determination that we so cherish—becomes detrimental to our psychological and emotional well-being. In accessible, engaging, and anecdotal prose, Schwartz shows how the dramatic explosion in choice—from the mundane to the profound challenges of balancing career, family, and individual needs—has paradoxically become a problem instead of a solution. Schwartz also shows how our obsession with choice encourages us to seek that which makes us feel worse. By synthesizing current research in the social sciences, Schwartz makes the counter intuitive case that eliminating choices can greatly reduce the stress, anxiety, and busyness of our lives. He offers eleven practical steps on how to limit choices to a manageable number, have the discipline to focus on those that are important and ignore the rest, and ultimately derive greater satisfaction from the choices you have to make.

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7 principles of behavioural economics: Behavioral Economics Masao Ogaki, Saori C. Tanaka, 2018-02-05 This book is intended as a textbook for a course in behavioral economics for advanced undergraduate and graduate students who have already learned basic economics. The book will also be useful for introducing behavioral economics to researchers. Unlike some general audience books that discuss behavioral economics, this book does not take a position of completely negating traditional economics. Its position is that both behavioral and traditional economics are tools that have their own uses and limitations. Moreover, this work makes clear that knowledge of traditional economics is a necessary basis to fully understand behavioral economics. Some of the special features compared with other textbooks on behavioral economics are that this volume has full chapters on neuroeconomics, cultural and identity economics, and economics of happiness. These are distinctive subfields of economics that are different from, but closely related to, behavioral economics with many important overlaps with behavioral economics. Neuroeconomics, which is developing fast partly because of technological progress, seeks to understand how the workings of our minds affect our economic decision making. In addition to a full chapter on neuroeconomics, the book provides explanations of findings in neuroeconomics in chapters on prospect theory (a major decision theory of behavioral economics under uncertainty), intertemporal economic behavior, and social preferences (preferences that exhibit concerns for others). Cultural and identity economics seek to explain how cultures and people's identities affect economic behaviors, and economics of happiness utilizes measures of subjective well-being. There is also a full chapter on behavioral normative economics, which evaluates economic policies based on findings and theories of behavioral economics.

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7 principles of behavioural economics: General Theory Of Employment , Interest And Money John Maynard Keynes, 2016-04 John Maynard Keynes is the great British economist of the twentieth century whose hugely influential work The General Theory of Employment, Interest and * is undoubtedly the century's most important book on economics—strongly influencing economic theory and practice, particularly with regard to the role of government in stimulating and regulating a nation's economic life. Keynes's work has undergone significant revaluation in recent years, and Keynesian views which have been widely defended for so long are now perceived as at odds with Keynes's own thinking. Recent scholarship and research has demonstrated considerable rivalry and controversy concerning the proper interpretation of Keynes's works, such that recourse to the original text is all the more important. Although considered by a few critics that the sentence structures of the book are quite incomprehensible and almost unbearable to read, the book is an essential reading for all those who desire a basic education in economics. The key to understanding Keynes is the notion that at particular times in the business cycle, an economy can become over-productive (or under-consumptive) and thus, a vicious spiral is begun that results in massive layoffs and cuts in production as businesses attempt to equilibrate aggregate supply and demand. Thus, full employment is only one of many or multiple macro equilibria. If an economy reaches an underemployment equilibrium, something is necessary to boost or stimulate demand to produce full employment. This something could be business investment but because of the logic and individualist nature of investment decisions, it is unlikely to rapidly restore full employment. Keynes logically seizes upon the public budget and government expenditures as the quickest way to restore full employment. Borrowing the * to finance the deficit from private households and businesses is a quick, direct way to restore full employment while at the same time, redirecting or siphoning

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richest. The south forged a society that created incentives, rewarded innovation, and allowed everyone to participate in economic opportunities. The economic success thus spurred was sustained because the government became accountable and responsive to citizens and the great mass of people. Sadly, the people of the north have endured decades of famine, political repression, and very different economic institutions—with no end in sight. The differences between the Koreas is due to the politics that created these completely different institutional trajectories. Based on fifteen years of original research Acemoglu and Robinson marshal extraordinary historical evidence from the Roman Empire, the Mayan city-states, medieval Venice, the Soviet Union, Latin America, England, Europe, the United States, and Africa to build a new theory of political economy with great relevance for the big questions of today, including: - China has built an authoritarian growth machine. Will it continue to grow at such high speed and overwhelm the West? - Are America's best days behind it? Are we moving from a virtuous circle in which efforts by elites to aggrandize power are resisted to a vicious one that enriches and empowers a small minority? - What is the most effective way to help move billions of people from the rut of poverty to prosperity? More philanthropy from the wealthy nations of the West? Or learning the hard-won lessons of Acemoglu and Robinson's breakthrough ideas on the interplay between inclusive political and economic institutions? *Why Nations Fail* will change the way you look at—and understand—the world.

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