

Debate against  
humans being  
rational.. humans are  
irrational



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It has largely been believed that we humans are rational animals and that we act rationally with full knowledge of the consequences of his actions.

Economics suggest that a person will not go into any transaction which can not provide monetarized benefits to him or her. In this piece of writing, I will argue that human beings are essentially not rational in their behavior and approach and that he sometimes behaves in ways which defy the set rules of logic, economics and psychology that essential advocate the rational behavior of the humans.

Altruism is one of the much talked of phenomenon as it mostly deviate from the conventional wisdom of humans acting as a rational animal. Altruisms is necessarily being counted under the voluntary giving away of one's financial resources or acting in a way which deliberately provides benefit to the other person at the cost of their own benefit. Hence in this way, humans act irrational defying the rules of the rationality. (Jensen, 2008).

The expected utility model which is essential model which is based on the rational behaviors however it is not the case in all conditions. Through anchoring people are often overly influenced by outside suggestion. People can be influenced even when they know that the suggestion is not being made by someone who is better informed. (Kahneman & Tversky, 1999).

Besides Expected Utility theory also do not seem to be in conformity with the rationality. The famous experiments conducted by Tversky and Kahneman suggested a revolutionary shift from the expected utility theory and clearly suggested than we humans are not essentially rational. These experiments were:

If only asked to decide between (A) or (B), Most people prefer (A).

(A) Saving 200 lives.

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(B) Saving all 600 lives with 1/3 probability.

If only asked to decide between (C) and (D),

Most people prefer (D).

(C) Losing 400 lives.

(D) Losing all 600 lives with 2/3 probability.

Few of the surveys conducted by Stuart Sunderland widely suggest that the irrational behavior is far more widespread and is normal than the supposed.

(Sutherland, 1994). According to Sunderland there are various natural phenomenon which suggest that the man can act in irrational way. There is also a growing debate among the cognitive psychologists which suggest that we act according to the principal that differ from those we ought to follow.

(Stein, 1997)

There is also a phenomenon called framing effect which basically outlines that we decide differently depending on how we frame the decision based on the losses and gains. (Wang & Fischbeck, 2004) This therefore necessarily does not mean that in all situations we act rationally.

From the above arguments, it has been comprehensively explored that man is irrational in its behavior.

We don't always seem to be behaving according to rationality. The deviation from the rationality seems to be due to Satisficing and heuristics effects. The use of heuristics as a cognitive framework can lead us to errors and similarly satisficing seems to be denying the rationality also. The phenomenon of self deception under which a person seems to be acting against what is expected. (Kakures, 1996).

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