

Popular children more likely to give less to pals at Christmas

December 19 2018



Popular children more likely to give less to pals at Christmas. Credit: University of Exeter

Popular children are likely to be less generous towards their friends at Christmas than other kids, but only if their giving takes place in private and their classmates won't be told.

Less popular children tend to be more generous overall and will also choose to give the same amount to their pals, regardless of whether their decisions will be revealed to others, or not.

Dr. Cecilia Chen, who is a Lecturer in Economics at the University of Exeter Business School has previously carried out [research](#) into this area.

"We found that for less popular children it didn't matter whether or not others would learn what they'd chosen to give; they chose to give the

same amount in both instances. They also tended to be more generous overall than their more popular friends," she said.

"The decision making was different among more popular children – they were generally more generous when they knew their friends would be told what they'd chosen to give," she said.

Dr. Chen's research was with children aged 6-12 and involved giving them choices as to what they would like to give to pals. They were also told whether or not their choices would be revealed to classmates.

With children's gift giving often impacting on the bank of mum and dad at this time of year, age can also be a factor.

"We also found that [older children](#) tended to be more generous towards their friends than younger ones," added Dr. Chen. "Again, this was particularly true if they knew their friends were going to find out what they were giving."

Dr. Chen says the research on [decision-making](#) has wider implications in a business setting.

"The research suggests that adopting transparent, open [decision making](#) within teams and organisations can be really beneficial," she said. "This is because its [openness](#) can encourage the generosity of some members of the team (perhaps especially the most popular leaders) without detrimentally impacting on how the others behave."

Provided by University of Exeter

Citation: Popular children more likely to give less to pals at Christmas (2018, December 19) retrieved 24 April 2024 from

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